

12 AP English Literature Summer Assignment

- **To prepare** for the rigor of AP Literature, you are to engage in a close reading of the following:
 1. **Ian McEwan's *Saturday***
 2. Excerpts from Darwin's *The Origin of Species* (separate attachment)
 3. **Four poems: "[Dover Beach](#)" by Matthew Arnold, "[Design](#)" by Robert Frost, "[A London Thoroughfare, 2 A.M.](#)" by Amy Lowell, and "[Consciousness](#)" by Joanie Mackowski.**
- **Use close reading** of all sources to generate and develop ideas for your written responses. Read with pencil in hand, making annotations related to theme, style, characterization, etc. Bring annotated copies to the first class.

Directions: Answer the first question and two others. Answers should be 250-350 words each. Follow MLA format and be sure to quote from appropriate excerpts in supporting your answers.

1. Henry Perowne refers to Darwin's work several times. How might Darwin's ideas and/or language relate to the specific elements of Henry's day? Consider several specific incidents from the novel.
2. The reader meets the protagonist, Henry Perowne, a neurosurgeon, on the opening page (11). How does Henry's professional training and love of his work affect his consciousness? Read Mackowski's "Consciousness" and decide if Henry's perspective reflects a dulled or heightened awareness about life's path and purpose.
3. Henry does not join the peace march because "The world must improve, if at all, by tiny steps. People mostly take an existential view—having to sweep the streets for a living looks like simple bad luck. It's not a visionary age. The streets need to be clean. Let the unlucky enlist." (74)

To what extent does Henry's view tie him to or detach him from the physical world? Compare this with the perception of the speaker in "A London Thoroughfare, 2 A.M." If you wish, you may incorporate references to the Darwin excerpts.

4. Consider Henry's relationship with his wife and with each of his children. In what ways do the unique personalities complement his own? How much of Henry is in Theo or Daisy? What details show this?
5. Read carefully and select passages from pages 3, 282, and 289 that relate to ideas depicted in "Dover Beach"; passages should portray either Henry's or Baxter's character and major themes in the novel about love, fear, and pain. Clearly explain connections between the poem and the novel.
6. In his analysis of Frost's sonnet, poet Jay Parini states: "Design is a frightening poem, one that confronts the dire possibility that the universe is not only godless but that God is evil." In what ways does this philosophical argument play out in McEwan's novel? How do the characters grapple with Frost's final question, "If design govern in a thing so small?"

You may consult Parini's article if you wish:

http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/a_f/frost/design.htm

