

British Literature Summer Reading Assignment 2017

Ms. Surat

Roberts, Jason. *A Sense of the World: How a Blind Man Became History's Greatest Traveler*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2007. Print.

This biography was selected for several reasons:

1. The author creates an inspirational view of the life of a nineteenth century British traveler, James Holman. During his life Holman covered more than 250,000 miles through five continents and two hundred distinct cultures. Unstoppable, Holman refused to let his blindness deter him from his dream of traveling the world.
2. The biography covers the time periods and characteristics of both the Romantic and Victorian eras of British literature.
3. The text provides an interdisciplinary approach to our study of the literature and lifestyles of the British.

ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS

- A. **Explore the text** before delving into the biography. Consider the quotation from Seneca, the brief "Introduction," and "The Prelude." Peruse the maps of Holman's voyages and the images that the author includes. Explore the "P.S." section including an interview with Roberts and his comments on the writing process.
- B. **Annotate the text. Mark 4-6 quotations** throughout the book that will be useful for group discussion during our first week.

Note: Close reading involves getting to know the text through annotation. Annotation is metacognitive; it is consciously thinking about thinking. You are not simply reading for pleasure; rather, you will be reading contemplatively and purposefully as a scholar, with a pen in hand, marking passages or making notations about whatever you feel is striking or important that relates to theme, style, or characterization.

Most importantly, annotation facilitates understanding, but it is also a practical referencing tool. When you return in the fall and need to refresh your memory to write an essay, your notations will prove invaluable. Plan to bring your annotated text to class on the first day of school.