The Fountainhead
By Ayn Rand

On the surface, this book is the story of one man, Howard Roark, and his struggles as an architect in the face of a successful rival, Peter Keating, and a newspaper columnist, Ellsworth Toohey. But the book addresses a number of universal themes: the strength of the individual, the tug between good and evil, the threat of fascism. The confrontation of those themes, along with the amazing stroke of Rand's writing, combine to give this book its enduring influence.

Assignments:

1. You must submit a set of organized notes in the format described in the “Notes Assignment” section below
2. There will be a reading check with sections on identifying quotations and short answer questions.
3. During the first full week of class, students will participate in a debate on one of three topics from the novel.

To prepare for the debate and the reading check, you should actively take notes as you read the novel. Please keep in mind that as AP students, you are expected to read independently, not consulting notes or commercial study aids.

Taking Notes on Literature

You don’t want to read a novel, then find out a few days later before the reading check that you have forgotten the entire story and have no choice but to reread all or part of the novel. Even worse, how can you remember the important elements of the novel for a debate, essay, or project, many weeks or months later? Taking solid, reliable notes will make your life easier and give you material to study when you need it. Thus, the following suggestions.

- Rather than attempting to take notes simultaneously as you read, I recommend that you take breaks to write up notes at the end of each chapter or whatever section you have read for the day – it’s a great way to test your recall of what you have just read, and it’s a more natural process than constantly stopping to jot notes as you are reading.
- I strongly suggest that you handwrite notes rather than typing them – this is proven to enhance recall and understanding of the notes you take.
- I recommend getting in the habit of creating a note shorthand that you take down as you read. One process I use works like this:
  o I break up my notes into sections for each chapter
As I read, I create new lines in the notes for each page and I start each line of notes with the page number. I don’t necessarily have notes for every page, but by recording the page numbers I can easily find information later.

On each line I jot down shorthand notes for any interesting observations; I look for things such as:

- **Consider chapters**—is there any thematic significance to the organization of the story? Do chapter titles, if chapters have titles, have any significance?
- **Consider the characters**—address how they have changed and the significant events that have affected them in each chapter or section of the novel.
- **Note the Setting**—list the locale, time period, and length of time that passes in each section of the novel.
- **Consider themes and motifs**—reflecting on your earlier notes can be helpful with this, especially as you progress through the piece. Do you see any repetition of concepts? Images? Significant meaning in the piece?
- **Consider the author’s style**—what literary devices are important to the author’s style? Which are used most often? What effect do they have?
- **Quotations**—although at this point it is difficult to predict exactly which quotations will be useful for future assignments and tests, you should still make note of powerful lines or scenes, lines that are well-written or are particularly interesting to you, and lines that reflect important qualities or changes in characters. Record in your notes the page number and some description of the quotations that you find important.

Here’s a screenshot from someone on the web using a similar note-taking strategy

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**Notes Assignment**

After taking notes throughout the reading process, you will prepare a condensed, summary version for easier reference and to show that you have understood and processed the material. You will submit this typed, formal notes assignment in the first few days of class. Your submission must include the following sections:

1. **Themes**
   a. List 2-3 major themes from the novel: we’re looking for big messages and ideas here. For each theme list at least one quote, with page numbers, from a scene that exemplifies the theme.

2. **Motifs**
   a. List 2-3 major recurring symbols, ideas, or themes from the novel. For each one list at least TWO quotes, with page numbers

3. **Characters**
   a. List major characters from the novel along with the page where each one is first introduced. For each main character:
      i. List the main traits of the character
ii. Describe the most common ways in which the author reveals those traits (e.g. speech, actions, events, etc.)

iii. Describe a character’s reactions to 2-3 major events in the novel

iv. Explain how and/or why a character changes throughout the novel. List at least one quote, with page numbers, relating to each character - look for quotes that tell us something useful or important about the character or illustrate an important action or event which the character was part of

4. Major Settings
   a. List some 2-5 major settings in the novel. For each setting
      i. Give the basic information for each setting: time and geographic location (setting information may be objective or subjective depending on the novel)
      ii. List at least one quote, with page number, describing the setting

5. Style
   a. List 2-5 major and/or recurring rhetorical techniques employed by the author
   b. List at least one quote, with page number, illustrating each technique in action

AP Debate Topics

Students will be split into groups of 2-4 in the first few days of class. Each group will be assigned a pro or con stance on one of three issues from the novel that will be debated before the class. Each of the three debates will follow a standard debate format. You should have these guidelines read by the time the year starts. The topics are:

1. The world would be a better place if the values and behavior modeled by Roark in The Fountainhead were embraced by the majority.

2. Dominique is meant to be Rand’s representation of the ideal female.

3. Gore Vidal: “[Rand] has a great attraction for simple people who are puzzled by organized society, who object to paying taxes, who dislike the welfare state, who feel guilt at the thought of the suffering of others but would like to harden their hearts. For them, she has an enticing prescription: altruism is the root of all evil, self-interest is the only good…” [use The Fountainhead as the basis for your argument]

Debate Guidelines

Each of the three debates will follow standard debate format – see the chart below for a graphical representation of the procedure and ordering of the group.

The first person on each team will deliver the constructive segment, the second will deliver the rebuttal, and the third will deliver the summation. There will be a 3 minute break preceding the rebuttal phase for the teams to coordinate their notes. There will be a 2 minute break before the summation phase for final preparation. Although individuals are responsible for their delivery, the content of each segment should be the result of group effort.
Each team will have 10-12 minutes to present their arguments. Teams going over that time limit will be stopped. Each group must include two or three quotations from the novel as support for their thesis.

Those who are observing the debate, the audience, will have partial responsibility in deciding which team has been most convincing. They are to take notes which include the criteria mentioned above as well as the sense of teamwork they evidence. They need to consider the question and whether the book or author allowed one side to be naturally more persuasive.

### Order of Debate Segments

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative Arguments</th>
<th>Negative Constructive</th>
<th>Affirmative Rebuttal</th>
<th>Negative Rebuttal</th>
<th>Affirmative Summation</th>
<th>Negative Summation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thesis 1</td>
<td>Thesis 1</td>
<td>Best Arguments</td>
<td>Best Arguments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thesis 2</td>
<td>Thesis 2</td>
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<td>Thesis 3</td>
<td>Thesis 3</td>
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### Grading

Each person will be graded on the following four criteria:

1. Use of Quotations/facts/examples—Every major point must be well supported with specific evidence from the text.
2. Presentation style—Team members consistently use good oral skills and keep the attention of the audience. Presentations are given with confidence and enthusiasm.
3. Organization of ideas—All arguments are clearly tied to a main thesis and the points are not overlapping.
4. Understanding of the Topic—An in-depth understanding of the topic and the novel being discussed is evidenced in the discussion.

### Listening

When you debate you will spend as much or more time listening as you spend speaking. It is your listening skills as much as your speaking skills that will determine the quality of your performance in the round. You will need to listen actively to understand your opponents’ argument so that you can develop a proper response.

Some elements of active listening:
• Come to class prepared
• Listen for the main ideas that organize each speech
• Distinguish between the speaker’s argument and their support
• Take notes
• Ask yourself how each part of a person’s speech supports (or does not support!) their thesis
• Identify gaps in your understanding of the speaker’s argument. Are they due to incomplete understanding on your part? Are they due to flaws in the speaker’s reasoning or communication?
• Wait until the speaker has completed a thought before you evaluate it
• Give great attention to the particular words a speaker chooses. The meaning of vocabulary chosen by the speaker can have great effect on the meaning of an entire argument
• At the end of each speech ask yourself whether the speaker supported all the claims they made in their thesis
• Demonstrate that you are listening attentively by making eye contact and responding, (verbally or non-verbally), where appropriate

Questions about the assignment should be directed via email to Mr. Ionescu at mionescu@johncarroll.org