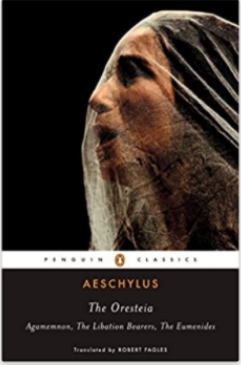


English IV IB Language & Literature: Summer Reading Assignment

The following is your summer reading assignment for IB Language and Literature next year. Please feel free to contact me this summer if you have any questions or concerns. I can be reached by e-mail at riroberts@uplifteducation.org. **Please obtain the following book before the start of the 2021-2022 school year: *The Oresteia* by Aeschylus.** It is important that we all have the same translation. You should get the version with this cover:

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The Oresteia: Agamemnon; The Libation Bearers; The Eumenides Paperback – February 7, 1984
by Aeschylus (Author), Robert Fagles (Editor, Translator, Introduction), & 1 more
★★★★☆ 342 ratings

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In the *Oresteia* Aeschylus addressed the bloody chain of murder and revenge within the royal family of Argos. As they move from darkness to light, from rage to self-governance, from primitive ritual to civilized institution, their spirit of struggle and regeneration becomes an everlasting song of celebration. In *Agamemnon*, a king's decision to sacrifice his daughter and turn the tide of war inflicts lasting damage on his family, culminating in a terrible act of retribution; *The Libation Bearers* deals with the aftermath of Clytemnestra's regicide, as her son Orestes sets out to avenge his father's death; and in *The Eumenides*, Orestes is tormented by supernatural powers that can never be appeased. Forming an elegant and subtle discourse on the emergence of Athenian democracy out of a period of chaos and
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Summer Reading:

Read the play *The Oresteia/The Oresteian Trilogy* in its entirety. This means you are reading three plays that all make up *The Oresteia: Agamemnon, The Libation Bearers, and The Eumenides*. We will be discussing and analyzing each play in class. **You will have a graded discussion and a reading test first quarter over this text.** I recommend annotating the text. Marking and annotating allows the active reader to ask questions, comment on meaning, and mark events and passages he or she wants to revisit. You will then watch one of the movie options below and write an MLA formatted, double-spaced, 2-3 page compare/contrast essay.

(Optional) Zoom Meeting for summer reading May 4:

<https://zoom-uplifteducation-org.zoom.us/j/86564654430?pwd=REU4TXRzQUY2a1Z2ckxXVTJlYTVVNz09>

Meeting ID: 865 6465 4430

Passcode: 968070

(Optional) Zoom Meeting for summer reading May 10:

<https://zoom-uptlifteducation-org.zoom.us/j/83757998262?pwd=U3pTMUpPhNE96bjd3UHUxQ2FGSVNQQT09>

Meeting ID: 837 5799 8262

Passcode: 406356

Pre-Reading before *The Oresteia*:

The Oresteia trilogy was written by Greek playwright Aeschylus in 5th century BCE. The trilogy tells the cursed story of the house of Atreus and the way the curse affects each family member. The first play, *Agamemnon*, follows the return of King Agamemnon to his home after the Trojan War. He expects to find a ‘welcome home party’ waiting for him, but instead his wife and her new lover murder him upon his arrival. The second play, *The Libation Bearers*, follows Agamemnon’s death and the consequences inherited by his children. His son Orestes feels compelled to avenge his father’s death by killing his own mother. His mother’s ghost commands terrible creatures called harpies to haunt her son until vengeance is paid for her death. The third play *The Eumenides* tells the story of Orestes handling the harpies and going to trial for killing his mother. The goddess Athena organizes the trial and plays a significant role in it. The trilogy deals heavily with conflicting understandings of justice and the nature of law.

The Assignment:

After reading *The Oresteia* and annotating it, you have several options of content to watch alongside your reading. You must watch ONE. ***Please be mindful that there are many different pieces of media here with different ratings.*** Please research these titles and learn about the content they contain before choosing which to watch. I chose each of these pieces for specific reasons; each in its own way deals with the same issues that *The Oresteia* does. This includes the struggle of discerning between justice and revenge, conflict between generations (child vs. parent), the consequences of ‘blood crimes’, and the capacity for memories to ‘haunt’ us.

No Country for Old Men
Hereditary (warning: horror movie)
The Godfather (Part I)
Mystic River
The Royal Tenenbaums

The Tree of Life
Kill Bill (Vol. 1)
Munich
Ida

Compose a 2-3 page comparison essay between the trilogy and the chosen film or series. You must address both the piece of media and the *Oresteia*. For your essay, answer one of the prompts on the next page.

Essay Requirements:
MLA formatting
Must meet page requirements
Double spaced

Choose ONE of these prompts on which to write your 2-3 page essay.

1. Surface vs. Interior

- a. Since the camera can only show the surface, film has to use some other methods to express people's thought. This difference between film and plays actually gives the audiences and readers different experiences. **Do the characters and the overall cinematography successfully reveal on the surface a theme or message that the play reveals silently? How does the film handle the character's inner thoughts differently from the text? Why?**

2. Silence vs. Sound

- a. It is true that the sound of the film could greatly enhance the audiences' comprehension. The sound in the film can be classified into three types, namely, speech, music, and noise. Though not as accurate as the novel can achieve, the sound in the film can create an environment in which the audience can feel the characters' emotion. By contrast, the play can only describe things through words. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the multilayered film is much more powerful in creating 'real life' than the play. **Consider the way tone translates from text to film through sound; how does the film create tone? What cinematic factors contribute to the tone? Describe the way the film handles silence and music and why.**

3. Symbols and Images

- a. A symbol is an object, an image, a person, an action, or an event that stands not only for itself, but also for something else. Symbols are of two types. Conventional symbols have a widely accepted meaning outside of the story (for example: a famous painting, a nation's flag, a crucifix, etc) and can help develop and then reinforce meaning. Other symbols have meaning only within the story. These are called contextual symbols. They usually have no special meaning except within the context of the story. Symbols and motifs are oftentimes images that appear multiple times throughout the course of a novel, film, or television series. They can be small and discreet or glaringly repetitive, but either way, they contribute meaning to the overall message of the film. **Describe the symbols and/or motifs used in**

the film and plays, both those that have meaning outside of the story and those which have meaning only within the story. What does each stand for, and how does that contribute to the message of the works?

	Analysis	Development	Style	Organization
100-90: You taught Ms. Roberts something and you wrote exceptionally well; you engaged in the universal and abstract.	The essay demonstrates a thorough and perceptive understanding of the meaning of the text. There is an exceptional analysis of textual features and authorial choices; there is a great evaluation of how such features shape meaning.	There is a convincing and insightful interpretation of larger implications and subtleties in the text and references to the text are well-chosen and effectively support the thesis statement.	Language is very clear, effective, and carefully chosen and precise, with a high degree of grammatical accuracy, vocabulary and sentence construction.	The presentation of ideas is effectively organized, coherent, and well-focused. There is no deviation from the argument that is being made.
90-80: Good paper, technically correct--probably leaving out universal claims.	The essay demonstrates a thorough understanding of the meaning of the text. There is a convincing interpretation of many implications in the text. References are relevant and support the thesis statement.	The argument and development of ideas is logical in its progression with few deviations. The references are well-chosen and support the argument being made.	Language is clear and carefully chosen with a good degree of accuracy in grammar and vocabulary.	The presentation of ideas is adequately focused and organized well.
80-70: You wrote satisfactorily but there are many weaknesses.	The essay demonstrates some understanding of the meaning of the text. There is an attempt at interpretation of the text. References are few and mildly relevant.	The argument and development of ideas lacks logic and has several deviations. Lack of references and lack of argument.	Language is clear but with several degrees of inaccuracy and grammatical mistakes	There is some organization in a generally coherent manner. There is some focus in the analysis.

70-60: Yikes. You did not try and it shows.	The essay demonstrates little analysis of the text. References to the text are infrequent or rarely appropriate.	There is little to no development of an argument; severely lacking in logic.	Language is rarely clear, there are many errors in grammar, making little sense	Little organization is apparent in the text; little to no discernible focus.
60 and below	The work does not reach any standard.			

Supplementary Support Materials

Character List:

Clytaemestra (pronounced kleye-tem-es-tra): Clytaemestra is the only character to appear in all three plays of the trilogy. She dominates the action of *Agamemnon* but has smaller roles in the other two plays. Many critics consider Clytaemestra the most impressive and fascinating woman in Greek tragedy. Her most important characteristic, as pointed out by the watchman in *Agamemnon*, is her "male strength of heart." She is proud, efficient, shrewd, and strong, and all these traits come into play when, practically unaided and without arousing suspicion, she plans and carries out a plot to commit murder. Indeed, Clytaemestra is so confident and so superior to those around her, including *Agamemnon*, that she often alludes to her plans more or less openly without fear of being detected. Clytaemestra is by far the strongest character in the play. This is most clearly demonstrated when, at various points, she forces *Agamemnon*, *Aegisthus*, and the Elders of Argos to bend to her will.

Orestes (pronounced or-es-tees): Orestes is the central figure of the trilogy. He is the main character of the second and third plays, and, though he does not appear in *Agamemnon*, he is mentioned frequently and his return home is predicted. Orestes' most important characteristic is his belief in the justice of his cause and his determination to carry out the command of *Apollo* despite the moral and emotional qualms he occasionally feels. After the slaying of Clytaemestra, Orestes is embittered and on the verge of madness, but he never doubts that he has done the right thing. Even years of torment by the *Furies* in *The Eumenides* do not weaken this belief. Thus, though his dilemma is real and frightening, Orestes is a one-dimensional character who cannot arouse real empathy. That *Aeschylus* intended this is shown in *The Eumenides*, where Orestes is turned into a human symbol in the great moral conflict that is fought out on stage between *Apollo*, as representative of *Zeus*, and the *Furies*, as representative of the primitive, pre-Olympian religion.

Electra: Electra does not have anything near the importance given her by other playwrights; Aeschylus uses her mainly to provide information for Orestes and to help strengthen his resolution by her presence. She has no real part in the plot to kill Clytaemestra and Aegisthus, and disappears early in *The Libation Bearers*, the only play of the trilogy in which she appears.

Agamemnon: Agamemnon is a powerful king, a great conqueror and leader of men, but as characterized by Aeschylus he has certain crucial weaknesses that lead to his downfall. Agamemnon is complacent, egotistical, and shallow. In his dramatic confrontation with Clytaemestra, Agamemnon blusters a bit and echoes some conventional religious sentiments, but he is easily trapped by her wily use of his own defects as weapons against him. Clytaemestra murders Agamemnon to avenge Iphigenia but would not have succeeded if his other sins — the desecration of the Trojan temples and his sacrilegious insolence in walking on the tapestry — had not aroused the wrath of the gods against him.

Aegisthus (pronounced ay-gis-thus): Aegisthus appears briefly in *Agamemnon*. Through an old enemy of Agamemnon and an accomplice in his murder, Aegisthus seems at base to be an ordinary man with no special attributes. He has common sense and some political ability but is no match for Clytaemestra, the woman whom he aids and eventually marries. It's clear that Clytaemestra is the real ruler of Argos, though she pays Aegisthus some deference for the sake of appearances since he is a man and therefore officially the king.

Apollo: God of the sun and prophecy. He appears as the defender of Orestes in *The Eumenides*.

Athene: Goddess of wisdom and war and patroness of Athens. In *The Eumenides*, she establishes the new court, casts the deciding vote at the trial of Orestes, and afterward placates the Furies.

Cassandra: The prophetess daughter of the king of Troy, she is the concubine of Agamemnon in *Agamemnon*. Her curse is that her prophecies are true, but no one believes her.

Cilissa: The former nurse of Orestes

A Herald: Announces the return of the army in *Agamemnon*.

Hermes: The messenger god and patron of travelers, a mute character in *The Eumenides*.

Pylades: The companion of Orestes

A Watchman Speaks the prologue of Agamemnon.

The Elders of Argos The chorus in Agamemnon.

Captive Serving Women The chorus in The Libation Bearers.

The Furies The chorus in The Eumenides. Ancient creatures, three goddesses of vengeance and retribution who punished men for crimes against the natural order. They were particularly concerned with homicide, unfilial conduct, offenses against the gods, and perjury.

Useful Terms:

Mis en Scene: unlike montage, this is physically what is in a shot or scene and does not involve editing. It can involve camera movement and focus, lighting, scenery, placement of people or objects, and other elements a director can make happen on the set rather than later on in the editing process.

Montage: The shots are put together deliberately with transitions and by theme so that "elements should follow a particular system, and these juxtapositions should play a key role in how the work establishes its meaning, and its emotional and aesthetic effects" (Manovich 158). Montage certainly includes editing, the process that begins when the film has been shot and work on the project moves from set and actors to computers and post-production.

Shot vs. Scene: a **shot** is part of a film presented without any editing, as seen from a single camera's perspective. A shot can include close-ups, panoramic shots, camera movement and other techniques. Put shots together and one has a scene, a series of connected shots that establish location and continuity. The **scene** ends by cutting (often using a visible transition) to another location, time, or person. A "car-chase scene" is a rather common example where several cameras follow the action from different perspectives. The footage later gets edited to make one long scene.

Transition: the type of editing technique used to connect shots. Sometimes there is no transition, and others can be quick complicated. Fading to black is a popular transition, as are wipes and dissolves.

Types of Shots: The entire camera can move or the focus of the lens can change.

Camera Movement: cameras can remain stationary and move side to side (a pan), up and down (a tilt). They can move along on a vehicle or set of tracks straight backward or forward (a track or tracking shot). The camera can be carried for a wobbly (but often powerful) handheld shot. Other shots (some with the camera remaining stationary) include:

Bird's-eye View: Most disorienting because it shows something from being filmed directly overhead. The subject matter becomes unrecognizable and abstract. The viewer becomes like an all-powerful god.

Deep-focus Shot: Is usually a long shot consisting of a number of focal distances and photographed in depth.

Extreme Long Shot/ Establishing Shot: Is a shot taken from a great distance, serves as reference for the location and is often shown at the beginning of a sequence.

Eye-level Shots: The normal angle in which camera shots are filmed.

High-angle Shots: Less dramatic, reduces the height of the objects and the importance of the setting or environment is increased. A person seems harmless and insignificant when photographed from above; useful in conveying a character's self-contempt.

Low-angle Shots: Have the opposite effect as they increase height and thus suggest verticality. They also heighten the importance of a subject. The figure looms threateningly over the spectator who is made to feel insecure and dominated. A person photographed from below inspires fear and awe.

Medium Shot: Contains a figure from the knees or waist up.

Oblique Angle: Lateral tilt of the camera, the horizon is skewed.

Backlighting: When it is as if an aura is around the characters, often done in romantic scenes.

High Contrast Light: Often done for tragedies and melodramas with the harsh shafts of light and dramatic streaks of blackness.

Bottom of the Frame: Vulnerability and powerlessness, objects placed in this area are in danger of slipping out of the frame completely.

Character with His or Her Back to the Camera: Suggests a character's alienation from the world, it is useful in conveying a sense of concealment.

Full-Front Position: The most intimate, the character is looking in our direction, inviting out complicity. This allows the audience to be privileged and observe them with their defenses down, vulnerability exposed.

Left and Right Edges of the Frame: Suggests insignificance because the characters are the farthest away from the center. Often are shot with darker light, suggesting the unknown.

Three-Quarter Turn: Character seems unfriendly or anti-social, rejecting out interest.

Top of the Frame: Sometimes suggests ideas dealing with power, dominance, authority and aspiration.

Quarter Turn: Most commonly occurs when characters are lost in their own thoughts.

Upper Part of the Composition: It is heavier than the lower, therefore objects like sky scrapers seem more top heavy, so if the sky dominates and looks more heavy, it can make the inhabitants seem overwhelmed from above.

Thematic Elements in Film:

Anti-hero: A central figure in a work that repels us by his or her actions or morality, yet who is not a villain. The Anti-hero accomplishes a useful purpose or even does heroic deeds. Max of *The Road Warrior* and many Clint Eastwood characters epitomize the 1970-80s anti-hero.

Black Comedy: a subgenre of humor that uses cruelty or terrible situations to make the reader or viewer laugh, sometimes uncomfortably. Horror comedies such as *Zombieland* exemplify black comedy in film.