In Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Red-Headed League", Sherlock Holmes, and Dr. John Watson both observe Jabez Wilson carefully, yet their differing interpretations of the same details reveal the difference between a "Good Reader" and a "Bad Reader." Watson can only describe what he sees; Holmes has the knowledge to interpret what he sees, to draw conclusions, and to solve the mystery.

Understanding literature need no longer be a mystery -- Thomas Foster's book will help transform you from a naive, sometimes confused Watson to an insightful, literary Holmes. Professors and other informed readers see symbols, archetypes, and patterns because those things are there -- if you have learned to look for them. As Foster says, you learn to recognize the literary conventions the "same way you get to Carnegie Hall. Practice."

**Note to students:** These short writing assignments will let you practice your literary analysis and they will help me get to know you and your literary tastes. Whenever I ask for an example from literature, you may use short stories, novels, plays, or films (Yes, film is a literary genre). Please note that your responses should be paragraphs -- not pages!

Even though this is analytical writing, you may use "I" if you deem it important to do so; remember, however, that most uses of "I" are just padding. For example, "I think the wolf is the most important character in 'Little Red Riding Hood'" is padded. As you compose each written response, re-phrase the prompt as part of your answer. In other words, I should be able to tell which question you are answering without referring back to the prompts.

Concerning mechanics pay special attention to pronouns. Make antecedents clear. Say Foster first; not "he." Remember to capitalize and punctuate titles properly for each genre.

This is your summer AP assignment. We will be discussing this when school starts, so be prepared to participate in class discussions. The written part of this assignment is due on September 5, 2012 -- NO exceptions or extensions! Please type it in 12-point font and double-space your answers. Make sure you identify your responses under the headings given.
Introduction: How did He Do That?
How do memory, symbol, and pattern affect the reading of literature? How does the recognition of patterns make it easier to read complicated literature? Discuss a time when your appreciation of a literary work was enhanced by understanding symbol or pattern.

Chapter 1 -- Every Trip Is a Quest (Except When It is Not)
List the five aspects of the QUEST and then apply them to something you have read (or viewed) in the form used on pages 3-5.

Chapter 2 -- Nice to Eat with You: Acts of Communion
Choose a meal from a literary work and apply the ideas of Chapter 2 to this literary depiction.

Chapter 3: --Nice to Eat You: Acts of Vampires
What are the essentials of the Vampire story? Apply this to a literary work you have read or viewed.

Chapter 4 -- If It's Square, It's a Sonnet
Select three sonnets and show which form they are. Discuss how their content reflects the form. (Submit copies of the sonnets, marked to show your analysis).

Chapter 5 --Now, Where Have I Seen Her Before?
Define intertextuality. Discuss three examples that have helped you in reading specific works.

Chapter 6 -- When in Doubt, It's from Shakespeare...
Discuss a work that you are familiar with that alludes to or reflects Shakespeare. Show how the author uses this connection thematically. Read pages 44-46 carefully. In these pages, Foster shows how Fugard reflects Shakespeare through both plot and theme. In your discussion, focus on theme.

Chapter 7 -- ...Or the Bible
Read "Araby". Discuss Biblical allusions that Foster does not mention. Look at the example of the "two great jars". Be creative and imaginative in these connections.

Chapter 8 -- Hanseldee and Greteldum
Think of a work of literature that reflects a fairy tale. Discuss the parallels. Does it create irony or deepen appreciation?

Chapter 9 -- It's Greek to Me
Write a free verse poem derived or inspired by characters or situations from Greek mythology. Research Greek mythology if you are rusty. Be prepared to share your poem with the class.
Chapter 10 -- It's More Than Just Rain or Snow
Discuss the importance of weather in a specific literary work, not in terms of plot.

Interlude -- Does He Mean That

Chapter 11 --...More Than It's Gonna Hurt You: Concerning Violence
Present examples of the two kinds of violence found in literature. Show how the effects are different.

Chapter 12 -- Is That a Symbol?
Use the process described on page 106 and investigate the symbolism of the fence in "Araby." (Mangan's sister stands behind it.)

Chapter 13 -- It's All Political
Assume that Foster is right and "it is all political." Use his criteria to show that one of the major works assigned to you as a freshman is political.

Chapter 14 -- Yes, She's a Christ Figure, Too
Apply the criteria on page 119 to a major character in a significant literary work. Try to choose a character that will have many matches. This is a particularly apt tool for analyzing film -- for example, Star Wars, Cool Hand Luke, Excalibur, Malcolm X, Braveheart, Spartacus, Gladiator and Ben-Hur.

Chapter 15 -- Flights of Fancy
Select a literary work in which flight signifies escape or freedom. Explain in detail.

Chapter 16 -- It's All About Sex...
Chapter 17 -- ...Except the Sex
OK ...the sex chapters. The key idea from this chapter is that "scenes in which sex is coded rather than explicit can work at multiple levels and sometimes be more intense that literal depictions" (141). In other words, sex is often suggested with much more art and effort than it is described, and, if the author is doing his job, it reflects and creates theme or character. Choose a novel or movie in which sex is suggested, but not described, and discuss how the relationship is suggested and how this implication affects the theme or develops characterization.

Chapter 18 -- If She Comes Up, It's Baptism
Think of a "baptism scene" from a significant literary work. How was the character different after the experience? Discuss.

Chapter 19 -- Geography Matters...
Discuss at least four different aspects of a specific literary work that Foster would classify under "geography".

Chapter 20 -- ...So Does Season
Find a poem that mentions a specific season. Then discuss how the poet uses the season in a meaningful, traditional, or unusual way. (Submit a copy of the poem with your analysis.)

Interlude -- One Story
Write your own definition for archetype. Then identify an archetypal story and apply it to a literary work with which you are familiar.

Chapter 21 -- Marked for Greatness
Figure out Harry Potter's scar. If you aren't familiar with Harry Potter, select another character with a physical imperfection and analyze its implications for characterization.

Chapter 22 -- He's Blind for a Reason, You Know
Chapter 23 -- It's Never Just Heart Disease...
Chapter 24 -- ...And Rarely Just Illness
Recall two characters who died of a disease in a literary work. Consider how these deaths reflect the "principles governing the use of disease in literature" (215-217). Discuss the effectiveness of the death as related to plot, theme, or symbolism.

Chapter 25 -- Don't Read with Your Eyes
After reading Chapter 25, choose a scene or episode from a novel, play or epic written before the twentieth century. Contrast how it could be viewed by a reader from the twenty-first century with how it might be viewed by a contemporary reader. Focus on specific assumptions that the author makes; assumptions that would not make it in this century.

Chapter 26 -- Is He Serious? And Other Ironies
Select an ironic literary work and explain the multi-vocal nature of the irony in the work.

Chapter 27 -- A Test Case
Read "The Garden Party" by Katherine Mansfield, the short story starting on page 245. Complete the exercise on pages 265-266, following the directions exactly. Then compare your writing with the three examples. How did you do? What does the essay that follows comparing Laura with Persephone add to your appreciation of Mansfield's story?

Envoi
Choose a motif not discussed in this book (as the horse reference on page 280) and note its appearance in three or four different works. What does this idea seem to signify? This section should be done as a technology presentation. By this, I mean you should delve into research and develop a 10-minute computer presentation and NOT a PowerPoint that you read from the slides to us. Show your interest and expertise!!!