

AP Lit/Comp
Ms. Hathaway

“The students said they would do some thinking themselves.”
Mrs. Dalloway - Beyond Comprehension Questions

Here are the assignments that have been posted on the website as we have been reading. Continue to use the comprehension questions to guide you as you read, but these will form the basis for our class discussion.

Chunks:

3-29	82-102
29-48	102-128
48-70	128-151
70-82	151-194

3-29 –

As you read, take two-column notes focusing on the following:

Read carefully to explore Woolf's use of clocks and time. Using the two-column format, begin on the left and make a list of every reference to the time of day or the striking of clocks in today's reading. In the right-hand column, note the tone of the passage, the characters in the scene, and the function of the reference (for example, a transition, establishment of setting, reflection of plot or character).

Even if you have already read this part of the novel, go back and read again, carefully and slowly.

Read pages 29-48.

- Note character development, as always (make a character list?)
- Pay attention to things that are on the theme/motif list on the reading guide
- Make a 2-column chart for Clarissa and Peter's meeting - in one column what they actually say out loud to each other; in the second column what they think but do not say about each other

Some people have said, "I don't like to take notes as I'm reading." Okay, read the first time for plot without taking notes, and then go back through the text to take the necessary notes. You will get more out of the second and subsequent reads, anyway. Remember, this isn't you on a beach reading for pleasure (although perhaps you will enjoy it) - this is a careful study of the literature.

Read pages 48-70 - Track Peter's thoughts and those of Septimus.

Continue to note the passing of time.

Note the various lovers' triangles in the first 70 pages. Find a way to make these relationships "visible".

Bring two discussion questions to class from the first 70 pages.

82-102

This section focuses primarily on Septimus and is located at the center of the novel, raising the question of whether this gives it additional significance.

Look for and note the hinges, times and places where the events/characters in the section intersect with other events/characters

Watch for and note shifts in points of view - we learn about more characters than just Septimus even though he is the focus. When other characters speak, what do they reveal about other characters vs. what do they reveal about themselves?

102-128

Lunch with Lady Bruton – Consider the ways in which this section offers social commentary. Continue to note that when characters speak and comment on others, they actually reveal important information about themselves.

Richard and Clarissa – What prompts Richard's impulse to buy flowers for Clarissa? How does this act/motif echo in the novel? When Richard and Clarissa talk, take notes of what they think vs. what they say aloud, similar to your notes on Peter and Clarissa. Compare and contrast these sections and draw conclusions.

Elizabeth, Miss Kilman and Clarissa – Untangle the thoughts/feelings each has for the other two. What techniques does Woolf use to create this?

By the end of this chapter, how has Woolf added to the complexity of Clarissa as a character? In other words, she seems to give more details in this section that portray Clarissa as shallow and sheltered. Has this section affected your overall reaction to and opinion of Clarissa?

128-151

Miss Kilman at tea and in the church – how and to whom is Kilman a foil in the novel? Or is that the purpose of this section? There is a focus on Kilman's hunger and her hands. What can we make of these details, symbolically? Do her actions and thoughts echo any other characters in the novel? Is Miss Kilman a vampire, a la Foster?

Elizabeth – How does Woolf develop Elizabeth as the new post-war woman? Compare and contrast her character, life and thoughts with the memories of Bourton that the other characters share.

Septimus' death – read slowly and carefully and in context of all you know about Septimus. What do you see as the significance of his last words? His flying/falling/impalement as Woolf's choice for his means of death?

Rezia after his death – she compares Septimus to the tolling of the hour she hears – to what degree is this an apt comparison?

151-194

After you read the last section, go back over your notes. Brainstorm a list of all the themes/motifs that meet together in the last section.

Woolf herself saw Septimus as fully connected to Clarissa. What do you see by the end of the novel.

Finish this sentence in no more than 50 additional words: *Mrs. Dalloway* is a novel about _____.

What is satisfying for you as a reader about this novel? What is unsatisfying? While a list is fine here, be ready to offer commentary to your answers.