



**Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County
9th Grade Summer Reading Assignment**

Required Reading

To prepare for 9th grade literature, students are required to read and annotate *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, the Standard Version (pages 1-99 in Andrew George's translation). For a guide to annotating, please consult the third page of this assignment.

Book: *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

Translator: Andrew George

ISBN: 9780140449198

Writing Prompt

Choose **one** of the following prompts and write a 500 word response, typed in APA style (double-spaced, Times New Roman, size 12). You do not need to write an introduction and conclusion, but you should use topic sentences and concluding sentences to start and end paragraphs. Cite textual evidence – at least **three direct quotations** – from *Gilgamesh* to support your response. Then, **explain** how your quotations illustrate or support your points. Be specific and think deeply. You may include connections from other literature or historical events that relate to *Gilgamesh*, but focus on Gilgamesh. Include the word count on the last page of your response.

1. How should a person relate to others in a community? Discuss one of the human relationships represented in the epic -- friendship, family and marriage, a leader and country. What dangers or sorrows lie in isolation or lack of human community?
2. What does it mean to be civilized in *Gilgamesh*? How is civilization (or the civilized human) contrasted with wilderness, animals, or savagery in the epic? Discuss a character, symbol, or setting that illustrates this theme. You might also consider where the boundary between civilization and savagery breaks down.
3. How does Gilgamesh's ultimate quest for eternal life change him? Consider the role that suffering, grief, and failure plays in his heroic (and personal) journey.

APA Style

First, add a heading in the upper left hand corner:

Name

Teacher

Course

Date

To cite the text, write quotations in the following format, using page numbers in parentheses and a slash (/) to indicate line breaks:

The poet of *Gilgamesh* writes, “He came a far road, was weary, found peace, / and set all his labours on a tablet of stone” (p. 1).

The bolded sections indicate what you need to add to the quotation to introduce it and cite it. You may also use quotation introductions such as “**The poet writes**,” or “**Gilgamesh exclaims**,” depending on who (the narrator or a character) is saying the lines. (You may also refer to the poet as an author.) For more information on APA style, please consult Ascent’s APA style guide. You can find the guide on Ms. Lind’s website under the “Resources” page:

<https://sites.google.com/ascentclassical.org/slind/resources>

Deadline

The written response and book annotations will be due on the first day of school, Monday, August 29, 2022, at the beginning of class. Students should bring their *Gilgamesh* books everyday to class starting on the first day of school.

Please email Ms. Lind at slind@ascentclassical.org with questions.

A quick guide to annotating

Annotating means 'to note' or 'to make notes.' The purpose of annotating is to *notice* what's present in the text, and, if possible, make a connection with it. Annotations are a record of your thinking as you read the text. Annotations also provide footholds into difficult texts; annotating encourages you to take your time to understand confusing passages. Therefore, annotations should not be a burdensome task! They are designed to help and serve the student.

Annotating can be broken down into three steps:

1. As you read the page, ask yourself: What stands out about the passage? What seems important? What do you *notice* about the passage?
2. Mark (i.e. circle, highlight, underline, etc) line(s), phrase(s), or word(s) on the page that stood out or caught your eye.
3. Write a note in the margin next to your mark. The note should express why you marked those lines or phrases. Examples include something about
 - **character** ("Gilgamesh is full of himself here"),
 - **plot** ("Enkidu challenges Gilgamesh to a duel"),
 - **reader response or question** ("Oh no! Gilgamesh fails the test!" or "Why are Gilgamesh's walls so famous?"),
 - **literary device** ("This simile compares Gilgamesh to a bull - he is strong" or "This metaphor shows how sad Gilgamesh is when Enkidu dies")
 - **pattern** ("The poet repeated these same lines on page 82 - I wonder why?"),
 - **a connection with another text or story** ("Gilgamesh and Enkidu's friendship reminds me of Frodo and Sam's friendship in *Lord of the Rings*.").

As a general rule, anytime you make a mark on the page, write a note about why that word or line stood out to you. Be judicious with your annotations: you need not comment on every idea.

Grade scale

- **A:** Clear evidence that you completed the reading, engaged with the text in writing.
- **C:** Some evidence that you completed the reading, but not a lot of engagement with the text or writing.
- **F:** No evidence that you completed the reading.