



Upper School Humanities  
DLI - Literature of the Outsider  
Summer Assignment, 2018-19

**LEARNING INTENTION**

Students will better understand the elements of a traditional literary hero and the arc of the quest narrative. They will consider how “the desire for truth” works as a catalyst for literary conflict in both modern and classical texts.

**DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT**

Students should read and annotate *Oedipus Rex* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* paying special attention to the protagonist’s character traits/development and the different stages of their journey. There are multiple similarities between these texts despite the fact that they were published more than 2,000 years apart and exist in different literary genres (play, novel). For instance, both texts revolve around family conflict and feature protagonists who go on a quest for truth.

*Option 1:* In a 4-5 page analytical essay, choose one literary theme that exists in both texts and describe how each author addresses that theme in their work using specific evidence to support your opinion. Possible themes include but are not limited to truth, family, self-knowledge, fate, betrayal, and the hero’s journey.

*Option 2:* Using either *Oedipus Rex* **OR** *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* **AND** any other texts you have read choose one theme that exists in both texts and describe how each author addresses that theme in their work using specific evidence to support your opinion in a 4-5 page analytical essay.

Regardless of which option you choose, you must read both texts. Please follow the conventions of standard English grammar and formal essay writing. Remember, your goal is to **ANALYZE** (i.e. your opinion based on evidence, not a summary and not an unsubstantiated hypothesis) the texts by making a specific, focused argument. Your essay should incorporate an introduction, conclusion, clear topic sentences, transitions between paragraphs, and several direct quotations. If you are unsure of whether your thesis statement is viable, feel free to reach out to the instructor for a second opinion!

[Sample Essays](#) can be found at this link.

Essays will be submitted digitally before the first day of class. Please don’t hesitate to contact me at [rachel.gleicher@woosterschool.org](mailto:rachel.gleicher@woosterschool.org) with any questions or concerns.