

Modern European Literature
Mrs. Shannon

Summer Reading Assignment

Your summer reading assignment is the great French classic *Les Misérables*. Hugo was a brilliant writer and social critic. I'd like you to **annotate in your book for the following things**:

- The development of Jean Valjean's character
- Times when he changes names
- Social critique/commentary
- Grace v. justice

Hugo took seventeen years to write this book, and he went on a few tangents that your kind and benevolent teacher will not make you read this summer.

Please skip the following sections:

- "Waterloo" p. 301-352
- Chapter 1 of "The Old Gorbeau House" (*Cosette*, Book Fourth), p. 428-434
- "Petit-Picpus" (*Cosette*, Book Sixth), p. 478-508
- "A Parenthesis" (*Cosette*, Book Seventh) p. 509-523
- "Argot" (*St. Denis*, Book Seventh) p. 979-1002
- "June 5, 1832" (*St. Denis*, Book Tenth) p. 1047-1068
- "The Intestine of Leviathan" p. 1256-1275

Because the events of this text can be confusing, I would also like you to read an article summarizing the historical context before you begin reading. It can be found at the link below.

<http://bookhaven.stanford.edu/2012/12/enjoy-les-miserables-but-please-get-your-history-straight-first/>

We will have graded discussions and a test on this book in the fall.

Enjoy!