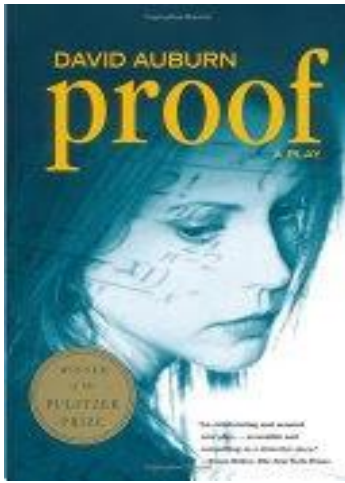


AP Literature and Composition - Summer Assignment 2025

Proof by David Auburn



One of the most acclaimed plays of its time, *Proof* is a work that explores the unknowability of love as much as it does the mysteries of science.

It focuses on Catherine, a young woman who has spent years caring for her father, Robert, a brilliant mathematician in his youth who was later unable to function without her help. His death has brought into her midst both her sister, Claire, who wants to take Catherine back to New York with her, and Hal, a former student of Catherine's father who hopes to find some hint of Robert's genius among his incoherent scribbles. The passion that Hal feels for math both moves and angers Catherine, who, in her exhaustion, is torn between missing her father and resenting the great sacrifices she made for him. For Catherine has inherited at least a part of her father's brilliance—and perhaps some of his instability as well. As she and Hal become attracted to each other, they push at the edges of each other's knowledge, considering not only the unpredictability of genius but also the human instinct toward love and trust. -Amazon

We will focus on the use of **characterization** in literary works during our first course unit. Characters in literature allow readers to study and explore a range of values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, and cultural norms represented by those characters.

There are **four** characters within this Pulitzer Prize-winning play: Catherine, Robert, Claire, and Hal.

Take a minimum of four full pages of **handwritten** notes while you read the play (a full page = one full side of a piece of lined paper); **NO TYPED NOTES WILL BE ACCEPTED.** Dedicate at least one full page of notes on lined paper to EACH CHARACTER. Put the name of a character at the top of each page of notes. In your notes, 1. identify specific textual details from throughout the play, 2. describe what each detail reveals about that character's perspective or interests, and 3. describe what each detail reveals about that character's public and private motives. Be sure to provide page numbers for details drawn from the play.

Please come to Room A202 by Thursday, June 5 to obtain a photocopy of the full play for summer use. As you read the play, you are expected to annotate your copy with questions, comments, and connections. You will receive a test grade for the quality and completeness of your notes and annotations.

Your annotated copy of the play and your handwritten notes are due when we return from summer break. A specific due date will be announced during our first class meeting. You will be allowed to use your notes while you write a timed essay about the play for a test grade.

Questions? Please reach out to Mrs. Keefe (skeefe@lowell.k12.ma.us) or Mr. Berard (dberard@lowell.k12.ma.us) with any questions you may have.