

AP English Literature 12 Summer Reading 2020-2021

“Read the best books first, or you may not have a chance to read them at all.”

— Henry David Thoreau, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*

Dear AP Literature Class of 2020/2021,

Beyond this spring of DLD, beyond the sleeping and sun of summer vacation, senior year awaits! This course you are entering, AP English Literature and Composition, substitutes for a first-year course in college composition, which means that for many universities and colleges, qualifying on the exam allows you to either sidestep a 100-level writing course or receive college credit for it. The central purpose of such a class is to enable you to write effectively in all your courses and into your professional life. To this end, the College Board asserts, a typical college course emphasizes analytical and argumentative writing, the kind of writing that “forms the basis for academic and professional communication.” AP English Literature, in particular, asks you to apply your analytical skills to how authors craft the meaning of a work, with attention to the richness of language. Because reading complex literature analytically is an essential component of this class, I would like you to embark on your reading over the summer. I am so excited to start teaching you in the fall!

Tasks:

- 1) Optional: Read Thomas Foster’s *How to Read Literature like a Professor* to begin your foray into literary analysis for the summer.
- 2) Read at least one novel from the following list.
 - ◆ Allow yourself the time to hunt for what you would really like to read and to change your mind if need be. Some of these novels contain violence or other mature subject matter, so bear that in mind.
 - ◆ Take notes (post-its work!) about how the author makes choices regarding perspective, characters, motifs, language, and plot design. As you read, consider how these choices develop and contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole.
 - ◆ What will we be doing with this reading? Discussing the novel with a small group and filling out a Novel Study template, see below. Note: this template is **not** work you have to do over the summer!
- 3) Read at least one *other* novel, either from the list or one of your choosing.
 - ◆ What will you be doing with this reading? Writing a book review for the class when school begins.

Achebe, Chinua	<i>Things Fall Apart</i>
Allende, Isabel	<i>The House of Spirits</i>
Bronte, Emily	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>
Dostoyevsky, Fyodor	<i>Crime and Punishment</i>
Hardy, Thomas	<i>Far from the Madding Crowd</i>
Huxley, Aldous	<i>Brave New World</i>
Morrison, Toni	<i>Sula</i>
Murakami, Haruki	<i>Kafka on the Shore</i>
McEwan, Ian	<i>Atonement</i>
Orwell, George	<i>1984</i>
Roy, Arundhati	<i>The God of Small Things</i>
Tolstoy, Leo	<i>Anna Karenina</i>

Novel Study

Title:

Author's full name:

Era:

Genre:

Century:

Nationality:

Setting(s):

Key characters (note parallels, contrasts, foils):

Key conflicts:

Distinctive structural elements (pacing, point of view, setting or time shifts, etc.)

6 standout scenes. Please connect to literary elements—symbols, images, metaphor, foils, parallels, etc:

6-8 quotable quotes. Keep these brief and memorable:

Motifs (repeated ideas/concepts):

Themes—the author's message(s), expressed in full sentence:

