

ADVANCED PLACEMENT LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

Dear Students of Advanced Placement Literature and Composition,

The AP program is a unique learning experience that requires diligence, commitment, and a willingness to delve into the many layers and meanings of a piece of literature. Equivalent to a freshman college English course, the class focuses on the careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature to deepen students' understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure for their readers. The goal of an AP Literature and Composition course is to develop the experiential, interpretive, and evaluative elements of reading and to foster students' ability to explain clearly and cogently what they understand about literary works and why they interpret them as they do through expository, analytical, and argumentative essays.

The nature of this course requires students to devote many hours outside of class to the reading of, the writing about, and the analysis of fiction, prose, and poetry. Students can expect to read approximately 20-30 pages per night, to write one critical essay per week, and to engage actively and thoughtfully in class discussion.

Students enrolled in the AP Literature and Composition Program will find assignments to be completed in preparation for the first day of class in August posted on the school website. Students will have **three** novels to read. Students will then be evaluated on all three novels in the opening days of the semester. A good strategy to prepare for the evaluations is to make annotations or to take handwritten notes. As you read, pay particular attention to the biographical, socio-historical, and thematic contexts of each title.

The first two novels by Doctorow and McCarthy are required reading for all students.

- Doctorow, Cory *Little Brother*

This novel is available as a free download. Students need to access the Wakefield 2.1 icon on the school website, complete the registration form, and meet the assigned checkpoints before the first day of school. Completion of the checkpoints will count as minor grades for the quarter.

- McCarthy, Cormac *The Road*

Students will choose the third novel to read from the following list:

- Gaines, Ernest *A Lesson Before Dying*
- Gordimer, Nadine *July's People*
- Hardy, Thomas *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*
- Irving, John *A Prayer for Owen Meany*
- James, Henry *The Turn of the Screw*
- Morrison, Toni *Song of Solomon*
- Oates, Joyce Carol *We Were the Mulvaney's*

You may purchase these at any bookstore; Borders or Barnes and Noble both have good selections, or you may use Powells.com online. If you choose not to purchase the books, you may check them out from the public library.

Enjoy your summer and the reading!