

Summer Assignment English 11 and AP Literature 2024-2025

Due Oct. 7 9:00am AP - no extensions

A. English 11 (**non-AP**) - 1 novel on list

Please read **ONE** of the six novels on the list below.

Write the book's title, author, copyright date, and number of pages.

1. After the first 50 pages or so:

- a) make a character list (just the important ones) with a few notes about each character
- b) write a few notes about insiders and outsiders so far in the novel
- c) write a few notes about any meaningful events
- d) write a few notes about setting (where/when events are taking place)
- e) write down two examples of nice writing (can be a few sentences or just a phrase) that caught your attention while reading. Briefly explain why you chose each one.

2. Then, after every 100-125 pages (i.e. two or three more times): repeat "a-d" with updates, and provide new examples for "e."

3. Finally - Describe the circumstances of each character at the end of the novel.

B. AP English Literature - 3 novels on list

Please read at least (see note below) **THREE** of the six novels on the list below.

I. For **AT LEAST ONE** of the novels:

Write the book's title, author, copyright date, and number of pages.

1. After the first 50 pages or so of each of the three you choose for the assignment below:

a) make a character list (just the important ones) with a few notes about each character

b) write a few notes about insiders and outsiders in the novel so far

c) write a few notes about any meaningful events

d) write a few notes about setting (where/when events are taking place)

e) write down two examples of nice writing (can be a few sentences or just a phrase) that caught your attention while reading. Briefly explain why you chose each one.

2. Then, after every 100-125 pages (i.e. two or three more times): repeat "a-d" with updates, and provide new examples for "e."

3. Finally - Describe the circumstances of each character at the end of the novel.

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II. If you do not wish to do the assignment above for all the novels, you may choose among the following assignments for the renaming 1 or 2 novels:

For each choice listed below: write the book's title, author, copyright date, and number of pages.

OPTION 1

A. Pick 2 memorable passages of no more than thirty words or three sentences from the book. Identify the page number, chapter, and copy

word for word a short passage that you feel is worth remembering. Explain why you have selected this passage.

- B. Describe your first impression of one character who you find most interesting. Give at least three items of information that gave you this impression. Be sure to include some background information.

- C. Describe your first impression of one event that you find most interesting. Give at least three items of information that gave you this impression. Be sure to include some background information.

- D. Identify *what causes a significant change* in one character, and *describe the results* of that change. This change may be the consequence of a choice, a conflict of some kind that has to be resolved, the display of some outstanding trait like courage, or even the result of an action or event that occurs during the story

OPTION 2

One Pager (all text by hand; all images by drawn and/or a collage of images)

A One-Pager is a creative response to your reading experience. It allows you to respond imaginatively while being clear and concise in making connections between words and images. This assignment is a way to visually represent key ideas from what you learn and creatively demonstrate your interpretation of the novel you choose. If you are not artistically-inclined, it is ok; give your best effort. Grading will focus more on your ability to show what you have learned from the novel in an interesting way.

The instructions in parentheses are suggestions); you are not required to follow them. You may choose to arrange the symbols, images, and words in an original way on the front of your one-pager, *but you must include all of the following elements:*

- Overall image or quotation representing the novel. (center circle- or any other shape)

- Symbols: An image (upper left-hand part) with a quotation woven into or around it. This image should clearly represent what you consider to be one of the most important symbols in the novel.
- Characters: Images (upper right-hand part) that represent the key character(s) from the novel and how they change or struggle. •
- Style: Quotations (lower left-hand) from the novel that show the author’s style and the power of the language that she uses (consider syntax, diction, imagery, etc.).
- World Connection/Relevance: Images and/or words (bottom right-hand part) that show connections between the themes and ideas in the writing and something that is going on in the world today (consider why this novel is still relevant).
- Quotes: Two or Three important quotations from the text (border)

On a separate page you must provide a brief explanation of each of the above elements. The explanations should individually describe each visual representation you’ve created on the front of your page in order to more clearly illuminate your interpretation.

OPTION 3

Read and annotate the novel. Use the guidelines below to annotate this book. This will help you to organize your thoughts, connect with the text and ultimately to remember it.

“Every Text is a lazy machine asking the reader to do some of its work.”

- Umberto Eco

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• ***If you do not wish to write in your text***, sticky notes work just as well!!! Use different color stickies to denote different ideas or literary devices and write your information on the stickies – instead of the book.

• Mark passages that seem to jump out at you because they suggest an important idea or theme- or for any other reason (an arresting figure of speech or image an intriguing sentence pattern, a striking example of foreshadowing, a key moment in the plot, a bit of dialogue that reveals character, clues about the setting etc.).

- Mark phrases, sentences, or passages that puzzle, intrigue please or displease you. For each, ask a question or make a comment.
 - At the ends of chapters or sections write a bulleted list of key plot events. This not only forces you think about what happened, see the novel as whole, and identify patterns, but you create a convenient record of the whole plot.
 - Circle words you want to learn or words that jump out at you for some reason. If you don't want to stop reading, guess then look the word up and jot down the relevant meaning later. You need not write out a full dictionary definition; it is often helpful to put the relevant meaning in your own words.
- The Harvard College Library has posted an excellent guide to annotation, "Interrogating Texts: Six reading habits to Develop in your First Year at Harvard." <http://guides.library.harvard.edu/sixreadinghabits>
 - If you still need help, please visit this supportive essay on how to annotate a text, <http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/adler.html>.

Helpful Hints Theme vs. Thematic Concepts

A thematic concept is the generalized idea from which we can derive a theme. For many years you may have thought that these concepts were actually themes, but in reality they are not. We have all seen them. We search Sparknotes for important themes and are given items such as love or chaos vs. order. These are in fact thematic concepts and need to be referred as such.

Themes are derived from thematic concepts. If one sees ideas of death or corruption, he or she may say the thematic concept is death or corruption. Now, we must go one step further to understand the actual theme. What is the piece saying about death? What is it saying about corruption?

Theme examples: 1. Death is inevitable. 2. It is human nature to fear death. A theme must: 1. Be a complete sentence 4. Never be a moral 2. Be universal 5. Never be a cliché 3. Be about life or human nature

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- Note on “read at least (see note below)” – I LOVE ALL SIX OF THESE NOVELS. I encourage you to read them all IF YOU HAVE TIME. Plus, note well that during the school year we are going to focus more on classic works (e.g. Shakespeare, 19th/20th century novels) so this summer is an excellent opportunity to read these contemporary works of high literary merit. Read on!

- Don't hesitate to let me know if purchasing these novels is a financial burden.

- Questions? paul.weiss@apsva.us

NOVELS: **AP - read 3** Non-AP - **read 1**

Americanah, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Ifemelu and Obinze are young and in love when they depart military-ruled Nigeria for the West. Beautiful, self-assured Ifemelu heads for America, where despite her academic success, she is forced to grapple with what it means to be black for the first time. Quiet, thoughtful Obinze had hoped to join her, but with post-9/11 America closed to him, he instead plunges into a dangerous, undocumented life in London. Fifteen years later, they reunite in a newly democratic Nigeria, and reignite their passion—for each other and for their homeland. (From <https://www.chimamanda.com/>

Native Speaker, Chang-Rae Lee

In *Native Speaker*, author Chang-rae Lee introduces readers to Henry Park. Park has spent his entire life trying to become a true American—a native speaker. But even as the essence of his adopted country continues to elude him, his Korean heritage seems to drift further and further away.

Park's harsh Korean upbringing has taught him to hide his emotions, to remember everything he learns, and most of all to feel an overwhelming sense of alienation. In other words, it has shaped him as a natural spy.

But the very attributes that help him to excel in his profession put a strain on his marriage to his American wife and stand in the way of his coming to terms with his young son's death. When he is assigned to spy on a rising Korean-American politician, his very identity is tested, and he must figure out who he is amid not only the conflicts within himself but also within the ethnic and political tensions of the New York City streets. *Native Speaker* is a story of cultural alienation. It is about fathers and sons,

about the desire to connect with the world rather than stand apart from it, about loyalty and betrayal, about the alien in all of us and who we finally are.

<https://www.politics-prose.com/book/9781573225311>

The Namesake, Jhumpa Lahiri

Jhumpa Lahiri is known publicly by her nickname because her kindergarten teacher deemed it easier to pronounce than her proper name, Nilanjana Sudeshna. Born to Bengali émigré parents and newly arrived in the United States from London, she had to grapple early with questions of identity, and the impact of this is palpable in *The Namesake*. In this 2003 bestseller, two generations of a Bengali-American family in Massachusetts struggle between new and old, assimilation and cultural preservation, striving toward the future and longing for the past. (from

<https://www.arts.gov/national-initiatives/nea-big-read/>

The Beautiful Things that Heaven Bears, Dinaw Mengestu

Set in Washington DC. Like the protagonist of this 2007 debut novel, MacArthur Foundation Fellow Dinaw Mengestu came to the United States from Ethiopia, fleeing with his family after the Communist Revolution in 1974, which took the life of his uncle. Called “a great African novel, a great Washington novel and a great American novel” (The New York Times Book Review), *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears* alternates between the present and the past to tell the story of a lonely Ethiopian shopkeeper in a D.C. neighborhood undergoing gentrification. “Almost every page reminds us that ‘departure’ and ‘arrival’ are deceptively decisive words” (The New York Times). Mengestu “belongs to that special group of American voices produced by global upheavals and international, if sometimes forced, migrations,” writes the Los Angeles Times. His “assured prose and haunting set pieces ... are heartrending and indelible” (Publishers Weekly). (from

<https://www.arts.gov/national-initiatives/nea-big-read/>

The Poet X, Elizabeth Acevedo

A young girl in Harlem discovers slam poetry as a way to understand her mother’s religion and her own relationship to the world. Debut novel of renowned slam poet Elizabeth Acevedo. Xiomara Batista feels unheard and unable to hide in her Harlem neighborhood. Ever since her body grew into curves, she has learned to let her fists and her fierceness do the talking. But Xiomara has plenty she wants to say, and she pours all her frustration and passion onto the pages of a leather notebook, reciting the words

to herself like prayers—especially after she catches feelings for a boy in her bio class named Aman, who her family can never know about. With Mami’s determination to force her daughter to obey the laws of the church, Xiomara understands that her thoughts are best kept to herself. So when she is invited to join her school’s slam poetry club, she doesn’t know how she could ever attend without her mami finding out, much less speak her words out loud. But still, she can’t stop thinking about performing her poems. Because in the face of a world that may not want to hear her, Xiomara refuses to be silent.

<http://www.acevedowrites.com/about>

The Yellow Birds, Kevin Powers

Partially set near Richmond, VA.

"The war tried to kill us in the spring." So begins this powerful account of friendship and loss. In Al Tifar, Iraq, twenty-one-year old Private Bartle and eighteen-year-old Private Murphy cling to life as their platoon launches a bloody battle for the city. Bound together since basic training when Bartle makes a promise to bring Murphy safely home, the two have been dropped into a war neither is prepared for.

In the endless days that follow, the two young soldiers do everything to protect each other from the forces that press in on every side: the insurgents, physical fatigue, and the mental stress that comes from constant danger. As reality begins to blur into a hazy nightmare, Murphy becomes increasingly unmoored from the world around him and Bartle takes actions he could never have imagined.

With profound emotional insight, especially into the effects of a hidden war on mothers and families at home, *The Yellow Birds* is a groundbreaking novel that is destined to become a classic. (from <https://www.onemorepagebooks.com/>)

Per Virginia's new law from Senate Bill 656, APS has adopted a policy to inform parents of any texts students may read that may contain "sexually explicit material", as defined by the Virginia Code. The books and texts on the list of texts could be considered "sexually explicit" in that they acknowledge the existence of sex and/or include scenes that are explicit in nature.

If you prefer to opt your student out of a specific title, please let me know and I will make appropriate accommodations and help them make a different choice.

