

AP LITERATURE SUMMER READING
MS. DRAGO, MS. MIRON, AND MR. MUDANO

Course Description and Expectations:

This course is run like a seminar and active class participation is expected.

- **Students should be interested in stories and why we tell them; they should be prepared to consider the purposes of storytelling. This is a theme that will be explored throughout the year.**
- Students are required to read closely and actively, participate regularly in class, write frequently, and reflect thoughtfully on their progress.
- Student writings include literary analysis compositions, quarterly “personal thoughts” that are presented to the class, and informal reflections on the literature on our class blog.
- Please be aware: AP Language prepared you to analyze an author’s rhetoric and style to create meaning. In AP Literature, we will focus on analysis in order to create multiple, disparate meanings (themes) in the literature. Your summer reading assignment is designed to help get you thinking this way.

This course prepares students for the AP Literature Examination in May and provides the equivalent of a freshman college course.

SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT

Choose one of the novels listed below and annotate, paying particular attention to the literary elements used by the author.

- Carefully read the directions on how to annotate a text. These directions draw heavily from the book *How to Read Literature Like a Professor: The Revised Edition*. Consider reading this text for a more complete understanding of the elements we’re asking you to consider. *Beware that there are spoilers for some of our AP Literature texts in other chapters. We will be referencing this book at times during the year.*
- Read one of the following books and ANNOTATE the novel LIKE A PROFESSOR! J In other words, include in your annotations different elements identified in the novel such as quests, acts of communion, archetypes, symbols, allusions, etc. AND how the author uses those elements to develop or emphasize larger ideas.
 - *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid
 - *All The Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr
 - *Station Eleven*, by Emily St. John Mandel
 - *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy
 - *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver

You will be asked to hand in your novel at the start of the school year and we will be evaluating the quality of your annotations in your chosen novel. Be prepared to write an in-class literary analysis essay on your summer novel within the first couple of days of school.

***All of these texts are available in the Simsbury Public Library. In order for you to more effectively annotate your chosen novel, we strongly recommend that you purchase it.*

Enjoy the novels! Have a great summer! We’ll see you in the fall.

Annotating a LITERARY Text

AP English Literature and Composition has a different focus than AP English Language. In Lit, instead of focusing on rhetorical analysis that identifies the rhetorical devices that an author uses to produce an effect on the reader, students focus on literary analysis and the author's use of literary devices to convey a theme.

In your summer reading assignment, you'll be asked to read and annotate a novel, reading beyond the plot for the layers of meaning created by the literary devices used by the author. Once again, if you need more information on HOW to do this than we've provided here, we recommend that you read *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*.

Annotating involves interacting with the text and making meaning of what you are reading rather than simply reading for plot. Every so often, stop and record OBSERVATIONS about different elements that you see in your summer novel such as quests, acts of communion, archetypes, symbols, allusions, and themes of the novel. Don't simply note the existence of these elements; write a few sentences to elaborate on your observations and connect those observations to the points that the author is making about humanity and life, including points about psychological, historical, political, and/or social issues. If you are writing these observations on a separate piece of paper, provide specific examples and quotes (always follow a quote with the page number) to support them.

At this point, you have already had a discussion about the novel (in the margins of the text or on paper) and you are that much closer to understanding the BIGGER ISSUES in the text.

Reminders

1. Underline important information, significant passages, **and** take notes on this information! **Never just underline or highlight something without including a written note** that explains the reason for its significance.
2. **Questions are part of your notes!** Write them down as you read; they may be answered as you continue to read, but if they aren't you can ask them during class discussions.
3. Reread sections that you do not understand and look up unfamiliar words.

Whenever you annotate, you should consider the following elements:

- **Characters/ Characterization:** As you read, make note of characters and analyze the author's characterization (Indirect/ direct characterization; flat vs. round characters; static vs. dynamic characters; archetypes) – protagonist and antagonist and the names of other significant characters and try to analyze how the author creates his/her character
- **Narrative Voice:** Identify the POV (narrative voice) and shifts in POV. Note first person, third person omniscient, third person limited, alternating person, stream of consciousness, epistolary, reliable vs. unreliable
- **Setting:** Identify the setting, note changes in setting, and consider the importance of the setting to plot and development of ideas.
- Identify **juxtapositions:** any noted differences between two subjects, places, persons, things, styles, or ideas
- The author's use of **figurative language:** metaphor, simile, personification, symbol, imagery.
- The author's use of **allusions:** common cultural references, often historical, biblical, or mythological (for example, spring as a season of rebirth or representing youth, a journey as a quest, etc.)
- The author's **diction choices** and **tone** (attitude toward his/her subject).
- **Irony:** a discrepancy between what is said and what is meant (verbal), what should happen and what does happen (situational), or between what the characters understand and what the readers understand (dramatic)
- All of the above should amount to theme and provide an understanding of the meaning of the work as a whole!

Annotating a text is a necessary skill for this course and will help you glean the most meaning from a text!