Welcome to AP Literature!

AP Literature and Composition challenges students to reimagine their understanding of what it means to “read” a text. Rather than viewing reading as a passive activity, students will learn that all texts are interactions between the author and the reader. As such, the individual reader becomes a critical component of our understanding of any text.

Students should be prepared to *read* each of the texts they are assigned, and to read them purposefully. In this course, you will learn to see beyond the surface of the texts and to consider how the author’s craft and our interaction with the text affects our experience. Students should be prepared to write purposefully, with thoughtful consideration of organization and style. Finally, students should be prepared to be rewarded for all of their hard work by gaining new and deeper insights into themselves and the world around them.

You can find the summer assignment for the 2018-2019 school year on the second page. While you are not required to conduct this reading over the summer, completing your reading in advance of the school year will help you avoid having to complete the readings below at the same time you are completing your other assigned work for AP Literature and will help you feel better prepared for the year ahead of you. If you have any questions about your summer reading, you may contact Andrea Yarbough at yarboual@pwcs.edu.

So grab your sunglasses, some sunblock, and a good book. We are looking forward to meeting you this fall!

Sincerely,
Your AP Literature and Composition Teachers

* * *
This summer, you will complete two readings:

- All students will read *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck.
- Students will also select and read one of the texts from the list below:

  Margaret Atwood  
  *The Handmaid’s Tale*  
  Ted Chiang  
  *Stories of Your Life*  
  Earnest Hemingway  
  *For Whom the Bell Tolls*  
  Barbara Kingslover  
  *Poisonwood Bible*  
  Joy Kogawa  
  *Obasan*  
  Gabriel Garcia Marquez  
  *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*  
  Ian McEwan  
  *Atonement*  
  Toni Morrison  
  *The Bluest Eye*  
  Flannery O’Connor  
  *Wise Blood*  
  George Orwell  
  *1984*  
  Jean Rhys  
  *Wide Sargasso Sea*  
  Jonathan Swift  
  *Gulliver’s Travels*  
  Amy Tan  
  *Bonesetter’s Daughter*  
  Alice Walker  
  *The Color Purple*

**Expectations:** Within approximately the third or fourth week of school, you will be asked to complete an AP-style timed writing assessment on your reading of *Grapes of Wrath* and you will be assigned a separate assessment in connection with your choice novel. In order to do well on these assessments, you will need to conduct a close reading of each text, annotating purposefully while you read. A surface-level sprint through the text will not allow you to do well on your assessments. Remember, reading is an interaction. It requires thoughtful involvement from you in order to be meaningful.

As you read *Grapes of Wrath*, please consider the following:

- What is the historical context in which the text was written?
- How did this context affect Steinbeck’s writing style?
- What are the central conflicts in this text and how do the characters face these challenges?
- What elements does the author choose to emphasize? What elements does the author minimize?
- How does the Joad family function symbolically?
- What message does the author convey with this text and how do his stylistic choices support this message?

As you read your choice text, please consider the following:

- What is the historical context in which your text was written? What is the author’s purpose?
- What is the author’s background and how does this background shape the work?
- What genre is your text and where in the text do you see this genre reflected?
- Find passages that are the most vivid and/or memorable to you and consider how the author achieves this effect. What stylistic choices does the author make to draw the reader in?
- What motivates the characters and what is their relationship to each other?
- Where does the author create tension in the text?
- Where do you see evidence of specific figurative devices (e.g., foreshadowing, irony, symbolism, allusions, etc.) and how do those figurative devices serve the author’s purpose?
- Does the story resolve all the conflicts prior to ending or does it leave questions unanswered or conflicts unresolved? How does the ending affect the meaning of the work as a whole?