

# AP® English Literature and Composition

Summer 2023

Instructor:

Ms. Sarah Stephenson ([sestephenson@smcps.org](mailto:sestephenson@smcps.org))



AP Literature is a fast-paced course designed to provide a college-level literary experience. We will be reading many texts that prepare you to take the AP English Literature Exam. In class, we will be analyzing texts for purpose, meaning, structure, and literary devices. Texts will be provided; however, students are encouraged to have their own copies to practice text annotation, read and re-read the texts outside of class, and reference them when writing. Our study will include longer works of fiction, combined with selected short stories, poetry, and essays. **A syllabus will be provided at the beginning of the year that will state the required texts for the course.**

## Summer activities that will prepare you for your AP Literature experience:

**The first extended text for the school year will be a contemporary literature study.** Students will choose a work of significant literary merit, drawn from a list of College Board recommended authors and titles previously referenced on the AP exam. Whether they purchase or borrow the book from the library, students are expected to have copies of their selected book with them at the start of the school year. Students will select and read **ONE** title from the list below for our first unit in AP English Literature:

*All the Pretty Horses* by Cormac McCarthy<sup>1</sup>  
*Beloved* by Toni Morrison<sup>1</sup>  
*Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya<sup>1</sup>  
*The Color Purple* by Alice Walker<sup>1</sup>  
*Go Tell It on the Mountain* by James Baldwin<sup>1</sup>  
*Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens<sup>1</sup>  
*Memoirs of a Geisha* by Arthur Golden<sup>2</sup>  
*Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides<sup>1, 2</sup>  
*Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro<sup>1</sup>  
*Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson<sup>1</sup>  
*Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston<sup>1</sup>

As these are college-level texts, be aware that some books may contain language or situations that make you uncomfortable. **Please review your choices carefully.** If you become uncomfortable while reading a work, please select another title. **The deadline for completing this reading task is September 8, 2023**, so students are strongly recommended to begin the process of active reading during the summer (i.e. annotate the text: take notes, underline, ask questions, etc.).

## Other activities to consider:

- Check out the [College Board's list of 101 books for college-bound readers](#), which can be found at This list contains works that have appeared on past AP English Literature Exams and on various lists of recommended reading for college-bound students.
- Explore reading lists suggested by contemporary scholars, such as those found in this [New York Times article](#).
- View a theater production live or online, begin your college essays, or write a short story or a poem a day.
- Enrich your vocabulary. Membean accounts stay active all summer.

<sup>1</sup> Cited on the AP Literature Exam

<sup>2</sup> Not on the SMCPS Approved List

If you have any questions over the summer, please email your instructor.