Pueblo West High School
IB World School
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 70
661 Capistrano Avenue • Pueblo West, Colorado 81007
Telephone (719) 547-8050
Fax: (719) 547-8041

May 15, 2025

Dear Incoming AP Literature and Composition Students,

We are so pleased you've decided to join us at this point of your academic journey. In our technology-saturated world, filled with all sorts of easy and clickable distractions, the voices and experiences presented in literature can sometimes fall by the wayside. This runs a great risk for us all, as reading deeply and broadly does more than increase one's SAT score. It increases one's empathy. As author Neil Gaiman put it, "Fiction gives us empathy: it puts us inside the minds of other people, gives us gifts of seeing the world through their eyes. Fiction is a lie that tells us true things, over and over." Therefore, while much of the world is busy spinning its own truths and fictions that often leave us divided, it is with renewed enthusiasm that we begin this year of finding meaning in the written word, and ultimately finding meaning in our shared human experience.

AP Literature and Composition is a college-level class that engages students in the in-depth study and analysis of literature. Not only will you study literature from a variety of styles and time periods, you'll also learn to develop your voice and critical thinking skills as you *write* about writing. In addition to the skills you'll acquire, this class provides the opportunity to earn college credit in a variety of ways.

In this packet you'll find the instructions and materials needed to complete your summer assignment. It will require you to read the literary classic *The Great Gatsby*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald, as well as to complete the dialectical journal provided in the packet. Please follow the directions carefully, and plan to have the summer work completed by the beginning of the fall semester. Don't hesitate to reach out to either of us with questions you may have along the way.

We can't wait to meet you all in August!

Sincerely,
Your Teachers

Danielle Holmes, dholmes@district70.org
Alissa Vertovec, avertovec@district70.org

AP Literature and Composition Summer Reading Assignment 2025-2026

*All of the following steps should be completed by the beginning of the school year.

1. Read the novel *The Great Gatsby*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald. This should be widely available at the library, bookstore, or as a pdf online. Click here for a link to it on Amazon.
2. While reading, annotate with a specific focus on the use of setting. You will complete your annotations in the dialectical journal handout included at the end of this packet. You should represent diverse settings from throughout the novel in your selection of quotes.

Once school starts, in class ⇩

1. Novel Discussion
2. Dialectical Journal Submission
3. Test over novel
4. Timed essay over novel

Questions to Ask When Writing About Literature: If you don't know where to start with annotations, here are some common questions to consider when interacting with a text:

Upon Initial Read	**What to look for**	**Opportunity for further analysis**
What stands out to me as being important?	The author might focus on a particular image, symbol, event, or character.	Why is the author focusing on this? How does it work to create meaning in the overall work (theme)?
Are there any patterns?	Patterns might be created by diction, use of detail, figurative language, or structural elements.	What does the author want you to notice? What is being signaled by the pattern?
Where is there conflict or tension?	Juxtaposition, tone, and character relationships may create tension.	How does the conflict work to create or magnify the theme or message of the work?
Where/when is the setting? What are the nuances in the setting?	Setting is most often described through description and imagery. Setting can be symbolic and contrast is important.	How does the setting affect the characters, plot, or theme? Look for the relationships among all aspects.
Who is the narrator?	The speaker of the text can be determined through the use of pronouns as well as the speaker's relationship to other characters and the setting.	Does point of view affect how the story is told? What are the narrator's motivations? What aspects of identity are apparent about the narrator? Why is this important?
How is the text structured?	Where does the author place shifts? How does the author chunk together or separate elements in the text?	How does the form or structure of the work reflect its meaning?

Quick Guide: Questions about Setting

- What is the significance of the location? Are there contrasts in location?
- What is the significance of the time of day or time of year?
- What does the weather add?
- Are there historical or cultural implications of the setting that affect characters, plots, or central meaning?
- How does the setting reinforce what happens to a character?
- What types of language are used to describe the setting?

As you read your summer novel, use the following example of a dialectical journal entry to keep track of your observations about the various settings depicted. You will complete the chart included at the end of this packet for your dialectical journal. It **must** be completed in writing, NOT typed. By the end, you should have EIGHT entries about the setting that span the entire course of the novel; don't take all your notes about the beginning settings–you'll want to represent beginning, middle, and end.

EXAMPLE of ONE entry–you will need EIGHT entries.

Setting(s) of novel

Setting:	Textual Evidence/Quote MLA citation needed	Questions	Inference
Montag and Mildred's home (bedroom)	"The room was cold but nonetheless he felt he could not breathe. He did not wish to open the drapes and open the French windows, for he did not want the moon to come into the room. So, with the feeling of a man who will die in the next hour for lack of air, he felt his way toward his open, separate, and therefore cold bed" (Bradbury 10).	Why would someone feel like they can't breathe? Is this literal, figurative, or both? Cold is repeated twice...why this emphasis? It's nighttime; what is often associated with night?	The fact that the room is cold and lightless is symbolic. Perhaps Montag's relationship with his wife is also frigid and lacking vitality. Husband and wife sleeping in separate beds implies a lack of intimacy and connection. The refusal to open the drapes seems to signify a desire to shut out the world or hide.

Dialectical Journal Directions

Complete all sections, eight different entries in total. Each entry will include the following:

1. In the first box, label the setting.
2. The second space is to include your quoted textual evidence from the text. Include the MLA citation with page number. Include enough of the quote to capture some of the details used to describe the setting.
3. The third space is to brainstorm questions. The can be questions that indicate your confusion about something (EX: What does it mean when they say "the walls talked"?), or they could be to assist thinking critically for deeper understanding of the text (EX: Why do they keep repeating the idea of separation?).
4. In the last space, make an inference about the setting and details used to describe it. You can respond to some of your questions, consider connotations of words, and reference the chart on page two for ideas.

Dialectical Journal Name:_____

Setting:	Quote with Citation	Questions	Inference
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

Supplemental Task:

One of the best ways to empower yourself to be successful in this class is to **read**. It is recommended that you read more than one book over the summer. Below is a list of books that are highly engaging and accessible to an individual reading journey. We have some copies of the books available for checkout if purchasing or borrowing them from the library is not an option. (Anything marked with an * contains mature content.)

True Grit by Charles Portis
The Great Alone by Kritsin Hannah
Ready Player One by Ernest Cline
*The Power** by Naomi Alderman
The Grace Year by Kim Liggett
All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr (Pulitzer Prize)
The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger
*Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow** by Gabrielle Zevin
Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card (Nebula and Hugo Award)
Circe * by Madeline Miller
Where the Crawdads Sing, by Delia Owens

There is no assignment associated with this read. However, you want to read beyond entertainment. Reading is thinking. Think about character complexity and relationships, the manner in which the settings are developed and used, themes that are explored, and any symbols that are established. Ask questions while you read. Annotate in a journal if that helps you to engage with the text. You are not just reading for the story but to analyze the manner in which the literature is developed and conveyed.