Gibbs High School
Advanced Placement Literature & Composition
Summer Reading 2026-2027

Instructor & Contact Information: Jennifer Williams
Email: jennifer.williams@knoxschools.org
You are strongly encouraged to contact Mrs. Williams with any questions!!

Overview
You will be reading **three (3) novels** for AP Lit & Comp: *Lord of the Flies, Wuthering Heights,* and your choice of an AP-level novel from a provided list.

You are expected to
1) read and annotate all three (3) titles,
2) create a Reading Journal for *Lord of the Flies*,
3) write one (1) essay on *Lord of the Flies*,
4) draft a short characterization on a character from *Wuthering Heights*.

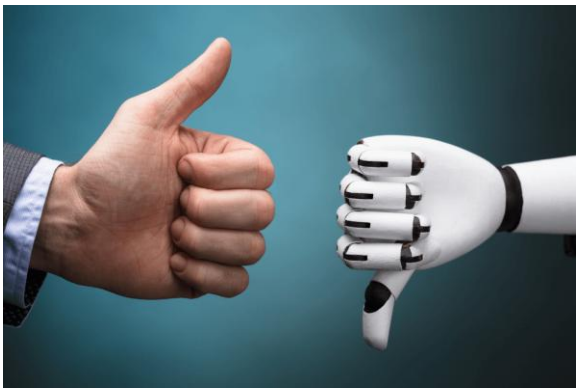
Due Date for Summer Reading Assignments: FRIDAY, AUGUST 14, 2026

Course Expectations
Because this is an AP course, you need to be aware of the rigorous, college-level curriculum and the expectations of effort. **The Summer Assignments are the foundations of the course, and the text selections will be the focus of our first few weeks and throughout the year.** Therefore, I ask that you take it seriously.

Advanced Literature & Composition (AP Lit & Comp) surveys a wide range of challenging works of literary merit in various genres. You will develop the skills necessary to comprehend and analyze these texts through discussion and composition. Students are expected to write constantly and deliberately. **By the end of the course, you should be well-prepared to tackle the complexity and intensity of the AP Lit & Comp Exam in May 2027.**

As an AP Lit & Comp student, you are expected to complete these Summer Reading assignments before the start of our class in August.

No late summer assignments will be accepted. There is no reason for an AP student to begin this course without the work. Remember, this is a college-level course. You are responsible for completing your work.



PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Most importantly, I expect you to complete your assignments independently and without assistance. You are expected to submit original work.

Do **NOT** use any type of AI or ChatBot, Cliff's Notes, Spark Notes, internet sites, movie versions, etc. because I want to know your thoughts and interactions regarding these novels rather than another scholar's criticism.

Plagiarism and AI-generated submissions will not be tolerated. You will be asked to sign a "Reading Pledge upon entering the classroom in the fall. If found in violation, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss the consequences.

For Clarification:

According to *Harbrace Handbook, 15th edition*:

Plagiarism is defined as "presenting someone else's ideas, research, or opinion as your own

without proper documentation, even if it has been rephrased**."** It includes, but is not limited to the following:

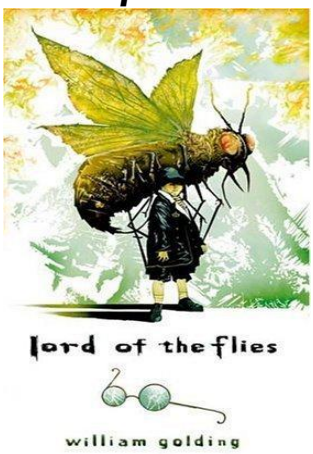
1. Copying verbatim all or part of another's written work;
2. Using phrases, figures, or illustrations without citing the source;
3. Paraphrasing ideas, conclusions, or research without citing the source;
4. Using all or part of a literary plot, poem, or film without attributing the work to its creator."

As chatbots and AI increase in availability and sophistication, students must also consider how academic dishonesty, labeled as cheating in KCS BOE policy J-191, includes copying written work from the internet without appropriately citing the source of the content.

Both MLA and APA now provide methods of citing AI-generated content, and AP and IB have issued statements addressing use of generative AI. However, classroom teachers and building-level administrators have the discretion to determine whether this content will be accepted, just as any other online source may be limited for academic purposes. At this point in time, any use of AI is prohibited in my classroom.

Required Novels: You will read and annotate <u>both</u> of these novels.

Lord of the Flies by William Golding

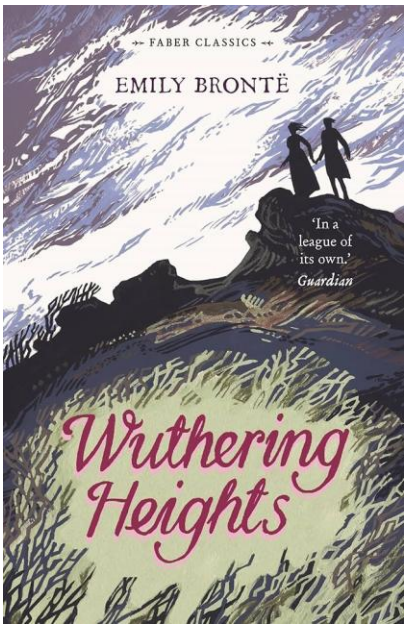


William Golding's classic tale about a group of English schoolboys who are plane-wrecked on a deserted island is just as chilling and relevant today as when it was first published in 1954. By day they inhabit a land of bright fantastic birds and dark blue seas, but at night their dreams are haunted by the image of a terrifying beast. As the boys' delicate sense of order fades, their childish dreams are transformed into something more primitive, and their behavior starts to take on a murderous, savage significance. First published in 1954, *Lord of the Flies* is one of the most celebrated and widely read of modern classics. Golding's gripping novel explores the boundary between human reason and animal instinct, all on the brutal playing field of adolescent competition. [Amazon.com.]

Parental Advisory: This novel is presented as a microcosm of society and illustrates the potential pitfalls of mankind. The novel contains some violence and mild language.

Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte

Emily Brontë's only novel, a work of tremendous and far-reaching influence, the Penguin Classics edition of Wuthering Heights is the definitive edition of the text, edited with an introduction by Pauline Nestor. Lockwood, the new tenant of Thrushcross Grange, situated on the bleak Yorkshire moors, is forced to seek shelter one night at Wuthering Heights, the home of his landlord. There he discovers the history of the tempestuous events that took place years before; of the intense relationship between the gypsy foundling Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw; and how Catherine, forced to choose between passionate, tortured Heathcliff and gentle, well-bred Edgar Linton, surrendered to the expectations of her class. As Heathcliff's bitterness and vengeance at his betrayal is visited upon the next generation, their innocent heirs must struggle to escape the legacy of the past. [Goodreads.com]



NOTE: Please see the attachments of the Family Tree and a translation of Joseph's dialogue.

NOTE: Should either of these novels cause concern, you must contact Mrs. Williams by email no later than July 17, 2026 for alternate titles.

3rd Required Novel - AP Choice Title List

As you consider which **one (1) novel** you want to read, I strongly encourage you to conduct a GoodReads or Amazon search for a summary of each title as well as utilizing commonsensemedia.org in order to make an informed choice based on your findings. Maybe you prefer something short or something easy. Maybe your selection will be based on what you find interesting or intriguing. It does not matter in the least to me which novel you choose. **There is no written assignment with the third novel.** However, you will be expected to present your selection during the first week of class and you will be required to write an in-class essay in response to an AP Exam Question 3 prompt. You would do well to thoroughly understand your AP Choice Title in whatever manner works best for you: annotating the text, taking notes, etc. NOTE: You may not read a title that you have already chosen for English I Honors or English II Honors.

Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy

One of the great masterpieces of **Leo Tolstoy**, this novel is a timeless classic of love, family, and tragedy. Set in Imperial Russia, the novel tells the story of Anna Karenina, a passionate and independent woman who defies the conventions of her time by leaving her loveless marriage and engaging in an illicit affair with the dashing Count Vronsky. Along with this captivating love story, Tolstoy paints a vivid picture of the lives of 19th century Russian nobility, exploring themes of morality, redemption, and the power of fate. Through its unforgettable characters and gripping plot, Anna Karenina offers an absorbing and unique look into the Russian society of the time. With its timeless appeal and immortal characters, Anna Karenina is a must-read for all fans of classic literature. This edition is based on the Constance Garnett translation originally published in 1901 and in print ever since.

Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) was a Russian author who wrote novels and plays and is widely considered one of the greatest authors of all time. In addition to his literary career, Tolstoy was a public figure who actively promoted social reform. He sought to improve the conditions of peasants and the working class and proposed a system of education and land reform. Tolstoy's works have been translated into more than 50 languages and remain popular today. His influence in literature, politics, and philosophy continues to be felt around the world. [Amazon.com]

As *I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner
As I Lay Dying is Faulkner's harrowing account of the Bundren family's odyssey across the Mississippi countryside to bury Addie, their wife and mother. Narrated in turn by each of the family members—including Addie herself—as well as others the novel ranges in mood, from dark comedy to the deepest pathos. Considered one of the most influential novels in American fiction in structure, style, and drama, *As I Lay Dying* is a true 20th-century classic.

As I Lay Dying is one of the most influential novels in American fiction in structure, style, and drama. Narrated in turn by each of the family members, including Addie herself as well as others, the novel ranges in mood from dark comedy to the deepest pathos.

"I set out deliberately to write a tour-de-force. Before I ever put pen to paper and set down the first word I knew what the last word would be and almost where the last period would fall." —William Faulkner on *As I Lay Dying* [Amazon.com]

***An American Tragedy* by Theodore Dreiser**
Theodore Dreiser was inspired by a true story to write this novel about an ambitious, socially insecure young man who finds himself caught between two very different women--and two very different visions of what his life could be. Clyde Griffiths was born poor and is poorly educated, but his prospects begin to improve when he is offered a job by a wealthy uncle who owns a shirt factory. Soon he achieves a managerial position, and despite being warned to stay away from the women he manages, he becomes involved with Roberta, a poor factory worker who falls in love with him. At the same time, he catches the eye of Sondra, the glamorous socialite daughter of another factory owner, and begins neglecting his lover to court her. When Roberta confronts Clyde with her pregnancy, Clyde's hopes of marrying Sondra are threatened, and he conceives a desperate plan to preserve his dream. [Amazon.com]

***Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky**
Crime and Punishment is the story of a brutal double murder and its aftermath. Raskolnikov, a poor student, kills a pawnbroker and her sister, and then has to face up to the moral consequences of his actions. It was first published in the literary journal, *The Russian Messenger*, in twelve monthly installments during 1866. It was later published in a single volume. The novel focuses on the mental anguish and moral dilemmas of its main character. It is compelling and rewarding, full of meaning and symbolism, and raises profound questions about the individual and society, and the nature of free will. [Amazon.com, et al.]

***Dracula* by Bram Stoker**
Dracula is an 1897 Gothic horror novel by Irish author Bram Stoker. Famous for introducing the character of the vampire Count Dracula, the novel tells the story of Dracula's attempt to move from Transylvania to England so he may find new blood and spread undead curse, and the battle between Dracula and a small group of men and women led by Professor Abraham Van Helsing. *Dracula* has been assigned to many literary genres including vampire literature, horror fiction, the gothic novel and invasion literature. The novel touches on themes such as the role of women in Victorian culture, sexual conventions, immigration, colonialism, and post-colonialism. Although Stoker did not invent the vampire, he defined its modern form, and the novel has spawned numerous theatrical, film and television interpretations. [Amazon.com]

***The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck**
The Pulitzer Prize-winning epic of the Great Depression is a book that galvanized millions of readers and was nominated as one of America's best-loved novels by PBS's *The Great American Read*. First published in 1939, Steinbeck's Pulitzer Prize-winning epic of the Great Depression chronicles the Dust Bowl migration of the 1930s and tells the story of one Oklahoma farm family, the Joads—driven from their homestead and forced to travel west to the promised land of California. Out of their trials and their repeated collisions against the hard realities of an America divided into Haves and Have-Nots evolves a drama that is intensely human yet majestic in its scale and moral vision, elemental yet plainspoken, tragic but ultimately stirring in its human dignity. A portrait of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless, of one man's fierce reaction to injustice, and of one woman's stoical strength, the novel captures the horrors of the Great Depression and probes into the very nature of equality and justice in America. At once a naturalistic epic, captivity narrative, road novel, and transcendental gospel, Steinbeck's powerful landmark novel is perhaps the most American of American Classics. [Amazon.com]

***Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens**
Great Expectations is Charles Dickens's thirteenth novel and his penultimate (completed) novel; a bildungsroman which depicts the personal growth and personal development of an orphan nicknamed Pip. The novel was first published as a serial in Dickens's weekly periodical *All the Year Round*, from 1 December 1860 to August 1861. It is set among marshes in Kent, and in London, in the early to mid-1800s, and contains some of Dickens' most memorable scenes, including the opening, in a graveyard, where the young Pip is accosted by the escaped convict, Abel Magwitch. *Great Expectations* is full of extreme imagery – poverty; prison ships and chains, and fights to the death – and has a colourful cast of characters who have entered popular culture. These include the eccentric Miss Havisham, the cold and beautiful Estella, and Joe, the kind and generous blacksmith. *Great Expectations* is popular both with readers and literary critics. George Bernard Shaw praised the novel, as "All of one piece and consistently truthful." Dickens felt *Great Expectations* was his best work, calling it "a very fine, new and grotesque idea". [Amazon.com]

***Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison**
Invisible Man was selected by the Modern Library as one of the 100 best novels of all time and nominated as one of America's best-loved novels by PBS's *The Great American Read*. It is a milestone in American literature that has continued to engage readers since its appearance in 1952. A first novel by an unknown writer, it remained on the bestseller list for sixteen weeks, won the National Book Award for fiction, and established Ralph Ellison as one of the key writers of the century. The nameless narrator of the novel describes growing up in a black community in the South, attending a Negro college from which he is expelled, moving to New York and becoming the chief spokesman of the Harlem branch of "the Brotherhood," and retreating amid violence and confusion to the basement lair of the Invisible Man he imagines himself to be. The book is a passionate and witty tour de force of style. [Amazon.com]

***Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte**
Jane Eyre follows the emotions and experiences of its title character, including her growth to adulthood, and her love for Mr. Rochester, the Byronic master of fictitious Thornfield Hall. The novel contains elements of social criticism, with a strong sense of morality at its core, but is nonetheless a novel many consider ahead of its time given the individualistic character of Jane and the novel's exploration of classism, sexuality, religion, and feminism. [Amazon.com]

***The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde**

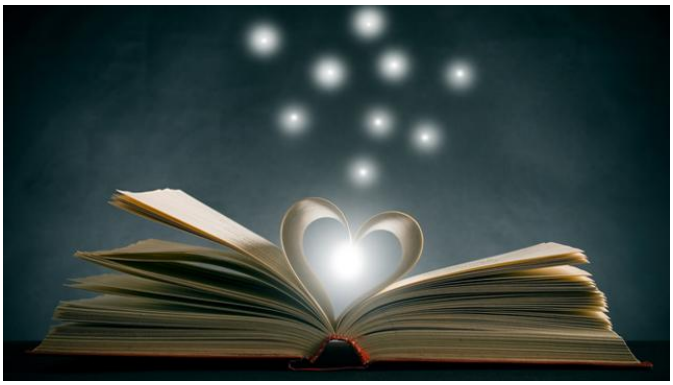
Oscar Wilde's only full-length novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, was first published in 1890 and is the classic tale of the moral decline of its title character, Dorian Gray. While Dorian has his portrait painted by Basil Hallward, he is lectured to by Lord Henry Wotton, who espouses a hedonistic world view. Dorian is drawn to Wotton's belief that beauty and sensuality are the only things in life worth pursuing and wishes that he would stay young while his portrait changes instead. In the years that follow Dorian pursues a life of vice and debauchery, committing unspeakable acts along the way. With the passage of time, Dorian's wish comes true, as his age and withering moral character are reflected in his portrait instead of himself. This novel is arguably one of Wilde's most popular works, which caused quite a scandal in Victorian England when it was first published, for its glorification of decadency. A chilling tale, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is at once both an intricate character study and a sharp criticism of the improprieties of the Victorian age. [Amazon.com]

***The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway**

The Sun Also Rises is a classic example of Hemingway's spare but powerful writing style. A poignant look at the disillusionment and angst of the post-World War I generation, the novel introduces two of Hemingway's most unforgettable characters: Jake Barnes and Lady Brett Ashley. The story follows the flamboyant Brett and the hapless Jake as they journey from the wild nightlife of 1920s Paris to the brutal bullfighting rings of Spain with a motley group of expatriates. It is an age of moral bankruptcy, spiritual dissolution, unrealized love, and vanishing illusions. First published in 1926, *The Sun Also Rises* is "an absorbing, beautifully and tenderly absurd, heartbreaking narrative…a truly gripping story, told in lean, hard, athletic prose" -- *The New York Times*. [Amazon.com]

***Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson**

"For sheer storytelling delight and pure adventure, *Treasure Island* has never been surpassed. From the moment young Jim Hawkins first encounters the sinister Blind Pew at the Admiral Benbow Inn until the climactic battle for treasure on a tropic isle, the novel creates scenes and characters that have fired the imaginations of generations of readers. Written by a superb prose stylist, a master of both action and atmosphere, the story centers upon the conflict between good and evil - but in this case a particularly engaging form of evil. It is the villainy of that most ambiguous rogue Long John Silver that sets the tempo of this tale of treachery, greed, and daring. Designed to forever kindle a dream of high romance and distant horizons, *Treasure Island* is, in the words of G. K. Chesterton, 'the realization of an ideal, that which is promised in its provocative and beckoning map; a vision not only of white skeletons but also green palm trees and sapphire seas.' G. S. Fraser terms it 'an utterly original book' and goes on to write: 'There will always be a place for stories like *Treasure Island* that can keep boys and old men happy.' [Goodreads.com]



Summer Reading Written Assignment #1

Due Date: 8:30 a.m. on Friday, August 14, 2026

<u>Assignment #1</u> – Reading Journal

Read *Lord of the Flies* and keep a detailed Reading Journal of the novel as described below:

Keeping a journal as you read is one of the best ways to explore a piece of writing. With this process, you integrate reading and writing and find that you can interact with the work more fully. As you read, take in every detail, every description. Try to avoid hasty analysis because it can prevent you from understanding the meaning of the novel as a whole. Remember, to analyze anything fully you must have a complete understanding of it.

You will have **two (2) sections** in your Reading Journal. Your entries should be written on notebook paper **OR** in a spiral notebook **OR** you may type the entries. I would suggest that your entries be written after the reading of each chapter. All sections and sub-sections should be clearly labeled. The purpose of this journal is to assist you when we begin our discussion in the classroom.

- The first section will focus on the individual chapters of the novel. Be sure to label each chapter entry with its title and include the following: **1)** a two-sentence summary of the chapter and **2)** at least one significant quote (with the speaker and page number(s)), and **3)** any questions you might have. FYI: Do <u>not</u> use the internet for your summaries; these must be original. Place no more than three (3) chapters per page.

- The second section is a list of both minor and major characters (including descriptions and how they change throughout the novel). Save room for notes from class discussions.

All AP Lit students must submit the Reading Journal to Mrs. Williams by 8:30 am on Friday, August 14, 2026. This can take the form of a hard copy <u>OR</u> an electronic copy.

NOTE: This can count as your annotations, but you are still encouraged to take additional notes in your book.

Summer Reading Written Assignment #2
Due Date: 8:30 a.m. on Friday, August 14, 2026

<u>Assignment #2</u> – Composition

Choose one (1) of the prompts below and draft a well-constructed essay on *Lord of the Flies*. Be sure to submit an essay that meets the expectations of an AP class. You must include textual evidence (which should be cited correctly) as well as a Works Cited page. Your essay must be typed, double-spaced, and follow all MLA Guidelines for essay format and incorporating quotes.

All AP Lit students must submit this essay (both hard copy and on Canvas) to Mrs. Williams by 8:30 am on Friday, August 14, 2026.

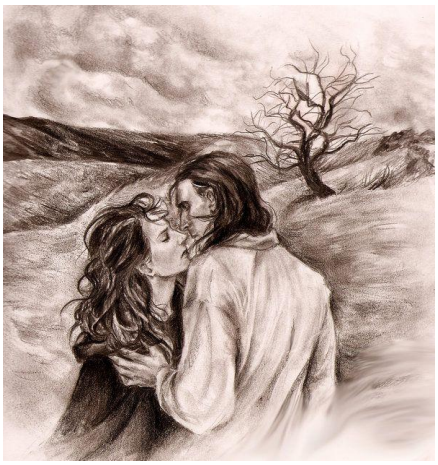
<u>*Lord of the Flies* – Essay Prompt</u>
Golding decided to write this masterpiece because he wanted to portray how evil human nature is. After serving in the British Navy during World War II, Golding was terrified by what he had seen in humans who had the capacity to harm their fellow species. He became convinced that, at the core, man's human nature was menacing and full of savagery. In this novel, he scrutinizes man's true struggle between good and evil.

Option A: The novel's setting is often important in terms of helping to develop the themes of a novel. As you read, make note of 5-6 adjectives which describe the setting, choosing at least one quote to substantiate the significance of each descriptor (i.e. text evidence to support the adjective). Then, using some or all of your adjectives, write an essay analyzing how the setting plays a significant role in promoting the theme of the novel. Be sure to incorporate the text evidence you selected and follow MLA guidelines for citing quotes!

Option B: It has often been said that what we value can be determined only by what we sacrifice. Consider how this statement applies to the characters in *Lord of the Flies*. Then, select a character who has deliberately sacrificed, surrendered, or forfeited something in a way that highlights that character's values. Analyze how the particular sacrifice illuminates the character's values and provides a deeper understanding of the meaning of the work as a whole. Again, use quotes from the text to support your choice and follow all MLA guidelines for citing quotes!

Summer Reading Written Assignment #3

Due Date: 8:30 a.m. on Friday, August 14, 2026



<u>Assignment #3</u> – Character Analysis Paragraphs for *Wuthering Heights*

Reflecting on one of literature's most famous couples, draft a brief character analysis on either Heathcliff or Catherine. Your character analysis should focus on the development and significance of the character; it should not include a summary of the novel. Consider Bronte's intent in creating this character.

You should have no more than three (3) paragraphs; therefore, you do not need an introduction or conclusion – just get to the heart of the analysis. You should **<u>not</u>** use first person! Your essay must be typed, double-spaced, and follow all MLA Guidelines for essay format and incorporating quotes.

All AP Lit students must submit a hard copy of this writing assignment to Mrs. Williams by 8:30 am on Friday, August 16, 2026.

<u>Last Notes</u>

I have attached an Annotation Guide from AP Central that will help you with your annotations. Please know that I sincerely want you to be successful in the AP Lit classroom. Do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions, need clarification, or simply want to talk out expectations.

I am super excited to see you in the AP Lit classroom!!

NOTES ABOUT ANNOTATION (from the AP Central Website)

Why Annotate?

- Annotate any text that you must know well, in detail, and from which you might need to produce evidence that supports your knowledge or reading, such as a book on which you will be tested.
- Don't assume that you must annotate when you read for pleasure; if you're relaxing with a book, well, relax. Still, some people - let's call them "not-abnormal" - actually annotate for pleasure.

Don't annotate other people's property, which is almost always selfish, often destructive, rude, and possibly illegal. For a book that doesn't belong to you, use adhesive notes for your comments, removing them before you return the text.

Don't annotate your own book if it has intrinsic value as an art object or a rarity. Consider doing what teachers do: *buy an inexpensive copy of the text for class*.

Tools: Highlighter, Pencil, and Your Own Text

1. **Yellow Highlighter:** A yellow highlighter allows you to mark exactly what you feel is necessary. Equally important, the yellow line emphasizes without interfering. Highlights in blue and pink and fluorescent colors are even more distracting. The idea is to see the important text more clearly, not give your eyes a psychedelic exercise.

   While you read, highlight whatever seems to be key information. At first, you will probably highlight too little or too much; with experience, you will choose more effectively which material to highlight.

2. **Pencil:** A pencil is better that a pen because you can make changes. Even geniuses make mistakes, temporary comments, and incomplete notes.

   While you read, use marginalia - marginal notes - to make key material. Marginalia can include check marks, question marks, stars, arrows, brackets, and written words and phrases. Create your own system for marking what is important, interesting, quotable, questionable, and so forth.

3. **Your Text:** Inside the front cover of your book, keep an orderly, legible list of "key information" with page references. Key information in a novel might include themes; passages that relate to the book's title; characters' names' salient quotes; important scenes, passages, and chapters; and maybe key definitions or vocabulary. Remember that key information will vary according to genre and the reader's purpose, so make your own good plan.

As you read, section by section, paragraph by paragraph, **consider doing the following, if useful or necessary:**

- At the end of each chapter or section, **briefly** summarize the material.
- Title each chapter or section as soon as you finish it, especially if the text does not provide headings for chapters or sections.
- Make a list of vocabulary words on a back page or the inside back cover. Possible ideas for lists include the author's special jargon and new, unknown, or otherwise interesting words.
- Note important plot happenings.
- Note supporting details or textual evidence to support a conclusion you are drawing.
- Note the writer's craft to create effect, such as figurative language, imagery, characterization, etc.

Regardless of your method, annotating your text will allow you the greatest success in the AP Lit classroom!!