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 14, 2026

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 one of two books and complete all assigned tasks.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 2026-2027

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

1. Choose **<u>one</u>** of the following novels to read. We do not recommend using an audiobook to read the novel. You will need to engage with the text, so an audiobook will not allow you to complete the assignment effectively.
    - *The Grace Year* by Kim Liggett Amazon link
    - *Ready Player One* by Ernest Cline Amazon link
2. While reading, annotate with a specific focus on how the protagonist is affected by setting(s). You will complete your annotations in the dialectical journal handout included at the end of this packet. You should select four different settings to analyze.

<u>Once school starts, in class ⇩</u>

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

Quick Guide: Questions about Setting

The following questions may help guide your thinking and analysis in your dialectical journal.

- What is the significance of the location, time of day, or time of year? Are there contrasts in location?
- 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?
- What symbolism exists in the setting?
- How is the protagonist responding to the setting, and/or shaped by the setting?
- How does the protagonist change within the setting? or in response to 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 and the manner in which the character is portrayed, acts, and transforms within each setting. 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 FOUR entries about the different settings that span the entire course of the novel; don't take all your notes about the beginning settings or the same setting–you'll want to represent the beginning, middle, and end of the novel.

EXAMPLE of an entry–you will need FOUR entries.

Setting(s) of novel

Setting:	Textual Evidence/Quote MLA citation needed	Analysis: Questions. Inferences, Interpretations
Montag and Mildred's home	"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?/Why is cold repeated twice?/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. Perhaps Montag himself feels cold and isolated from the world, his wife, and cannot truly comprehend the world in which he is living.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. While inside his home, Montag feels confined, restricted, and understands that his life is missing something.

Dialectical Journal Directions

Complete all sections, four 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 record your analysis. The most important aspect of this space is to work through your thinking and ideas. You should write in complete, formal thoughts. You can ask questions, offer interpretations, make insights, notice and interpret patterns, etc. The most important aspect of this space is to **think critically** about the text.
4. Print out the following two pages to record your journal entries. As previously stated, **NO typed journals** will be accepted for credit.
5. None of your thinking should use outside sources, including but not limited to, SparkNotes, LitCharts, and any generative artificial intelligence tool (Chatgpt, etc.). It is critical in this class that you work to generate your own interpretations and ideas to demonstrate the level of thinking and analysis required for this weighted, college-level course. **A use of outside sources will result in no credit for the summer work.**
6. **Not reading** the summer novel and **reading** the summer novel **cannot** have the same result. Make sure to engage with your reading.

7. **Dialectical Journal** Name:_____

Setting:	Textual Evidence/Quote MLA citation needed	Analysis: Questions. Inferences, Interpretations
1.		
2.		

3.		
4.		

You will be responsible for knowing and understanding the following literary terms. You can create study cards, notes, Quizlets that help you to know and understand the terms below. You will have a vocabulary quiz on the following terms.

Literary Terms List:

- allegory
- allusion
- character/characterization
    - antagonist/protagonist/foil
- conflict
    - central/internal/external
- connotation/denoatation
- contrast/juxtaposition
- diction
- duality
- epiphany
- flashback
- foreshadowing
- imagery
- irony
    - verbal irony
    - dramatic irony
    - cosmic irony
    - situational irony
- metaphor
    - symbol
    - analogy
    - extended metaphor
    - hyperbole
    - implied metaphor
    - personification
- mood
- motif
- paradox
- parallelism
- parody/satire
- tone

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
*The Power** by Naomi Alderman
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
The Bell Jar *by Sylvia Plath

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.