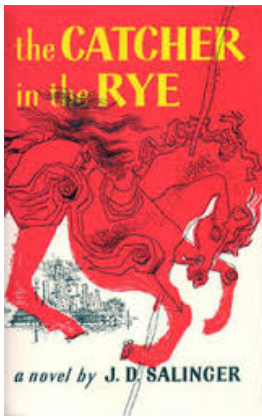
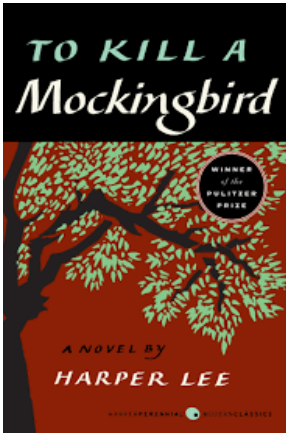


School of the Arts
AP English Literature & Composition
Dr. John Cusatis
2026-2027 Summer Reading Selections

	<i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>, 1951 (novel) Holden Caulfield, the hero of J.D. Salinger's <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>, is the first major twentieth-century literary teenage rebel. He paved the way for the protagonists of counter-culture novels such as Ken Kesey's <i>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</i> and Joseph Heller's <i>Catch 22</i> and for songwriters such as Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, and John Lennon, due to his disgust with hypocrisy, dishonesty, selfishness and what he saw as an increasingly unimaginative mainstream culture in America. Holden laments the fact that children –whose imagination, spontaneity, candor, and keen attentiveness to the world around them- must grow up and live in this culture, where “People always clap for the wrong things.” The novel’s alienated protagonist ponders whether growing up is actually an ascent or could it be considered a “fall”? Holden's voice is unforgettable, as is his weekend journey through the streets of New York City as he tries to come to terms with a world where truth, beauty, and common decency seem to have lost their prominence in the hierarchy of American values. -<i>John Cusatis</i>
	<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>, 1960 (novel) Jean Louise “Scout” Finch recalls her childhood, growing up in rural Maycomb County, Alabama during the Great Depression with her older brother Jeremy “Jem” Finch, their father, the lawyer Atticus Finch, and their housekeeper, Calpurnia. Their friend from Meridian, Mississippi, Charles Baker “Dill” Harris, seems to appear like magic, as soon as summer break begins, and the three kids embark on adventures and misadventures, primarily in their goal to make Arthur “Boo” Radley, a mysterious neighbor who has not been seen in fifteen years, emerge from his frightful house. When Atticus is assigned to defend an African American man accused of a serious crime, the children’s fairytale world begins to descend into a reality of fear, hatred, and anger, as racism threatens the family and the community like a rabid dog. Ms. Lee’s book won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and has remained one of the most engaging, compassionate, and important works of American Literature as it explores the abiding theme that, in the words of Atticus to Scout: “You never really understand a person until you ... climb inside of his skin and walk around in it.” -<i>John Cusatis</i>

Instructions:

Read and annotate both works. Annotations should chronicle your *literary* observations throughout (characterization, theme, imagery, tone, irony, symbolism, etc) so you are able to quickly find passages to discuss.

Evaluation:

- 1) Annotations will be graded for quality and evidence of close reading.
- 2) Students will take an objective test on both works on the first day of class.
- 3) Students will participate in a graded discussion on the works.

Please e-mail questions to John_Cusatis@charleston.k12.sc.us