

AP Lit Summer Work

Here are my thoughts on summer work: I want it to be meaningful, enjoyable, and reasonable. Overloading you with tedious assignments to “set the tone” for the class isn’t my style and doesn’t really benefit you. The only tone I want to set is one of actively reading texts you find interesting and opportunities to experiment with your writing voice.

Part I: Building Your Reading and Analysis Muscles

We will read several books over the course of the coming year, but in order to get the most out of those books, there’s one text that is going to be a huge help to you: [How to Read Literature Like a Professor by Thomas C. Foster](#). This is going to give you a basic understanding of terms and ideas that we’ll be using all year long. We’ll pair this with a fiction text so that you can practice the skills that you’re learning on a work that is also going to be useful to you on your exam. **Please purchase a copy of this and we’ll use it throughout the school year.**

Over the summer, you also have the choice between several fiction texts. Please choose ONE of the following to read and annotate.

Important to note: AP Literature and Composition is a college-level English course. Because of this, texts may contain mature content and themes. It is expected that we are able to discuss those themes, as well as how they contribute to the meaning of the novel as a whole, with maturity. Remember, literature is meant to be a reflection of life! I encourage you to research each novel below before choosing what to read for the summer.

- *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* – Gabrielle Zevin [please note – this book contains mature themes and content]
- *The Kite Runner* – Khaled Hosseini [please note – this book contains mature themes and content]

- *Wuthering Heights* - Emily Bronte [Be aware that the movie does NOT match the book - read the book!]
- *East of Eden* - John Steinbeck [this is coming to television later this year - this is a great chance to read this one before the show is out!]

As you read your chosen novel, identify key scenes from the novel and consider why each is significant to the novel as a whole. **You may want to mark these scenes in your book or write them down - we're going to do a project with these when we return to school.**

These scenes should point readers to the larger meaning of the work as a whole (aka: what this novel is teaching us about life). Look out for scenes that include a character resolving a crisis, having an epiphany, engaging in some sort of conflict, or a scene where tensions come to head - these could all mark key moments.

A note on annotating: Students ask all the time "why do we have to annotate?" Annotation is not meant to spoil the act of reading or to bog you down with trying to pick out things that you think I want you to find. Annotating is a way to keep a journal as you read, to be an active participant with a book. It's a way for you to find your way back to favorite quotes, a way for you to have conversations with the characters - a way for you to actively participate as a reader. Believe it or not, annotating has become kind of cool, especially since the rise of BookTok on TikTok (I swear I'm not making this up...)

If you're not sure what to annotate, consider the following as you read:

- Highlight some favorite quotes
- Note characterization or other literary techniques you find successful or unsuccessful
- Highlight or mark aspects of the book that make you feel something
- Mark and briefly note parts, moments, or characters that you like or don't like
- Consider sensory details that catch your attention
- Ask yourself - did part of the story give you an idea or remind you of something else? Write it directly into the pages or on a post-it.
- Record random thoughts that pop into your head while reading
- Consider -did a conflict or twist shock you? Note it!
- Note any motifs so you can look back at them later
- Is the author using a trope you love/hate? Note that!