WHITE PLAINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
WHITE PLAINS HIGH SCHOOL
550 NORTH STREET
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Mr. Emerly Martinez, Principal
Phone: 914-422-2182

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Dear AP English Students:

We are so excited to welcome you to AP English Literature and Composition. We know you have worked hard to get here, and we are happy that you will be with us! As you probably already know, AP Literature is reading-intensive and will place many demands on you. Those demands will begin with your work this summer. Please read the following very carefully, so that you come to school prepared and ready for the challenge.

So that we may begin with some momentum in September, we are requiring that you read the novels ***All the Light We Cannot* See by Anthony Doerr** and ***The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien**, works that in very different ways examine the effect of war on individuals. We recommend that, if possible, you acquire your own copies of these books so that you may mark them up (highlight, underline, and write thoughts in the margins). You may find a used copy on Amazon or Thrift Books websites. To deepen your appreciation for the texts, allow yourself time to reread passages and chapters, as needed. This practice will prepare you for both the rigor of the texts we will read next year and the style of close reading you must do on the AP Literature Examination. Please click the links below to the History Channel pages that provide some context for each novel. Doerr's novel is set in Europe during World War 2, and O'Brien's novel is set both in Vietnam and in America during the Vietnam War. **An outline of the annotation assignment, which is due on the first day of school in September, follows this letter.**

AP Literature and Composition is designed for students **who love to read and write**, and who apply themselves to every text they are asked to read. Students who are **passionate about a wide range of**

literature are the ideal students for this class. Please be serious about setting up a practical reading plan for the summer months. The AP exam is very challenging, and to be successful, you will need to be able to draw on a wealth of literature—not movies, not *Spark Notes*—and an understanding of literary techniques. **Close, careful, sustained reading is the only way you'll be able to adequately prepare yourself for the AP test.** Moreover, reading challenging texts closely will prepare you for the rigor you will meet in your college classes.

We will be reading across genres and time, and many of the works planned for the course are challenging either because of their content or style. Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century prose, for example, employs long, complicated sentences; classical drama uses dramatic forms different from the ones commonly used today. After summer reading is completed, you may want to refer to the website mentioned below to find a list of other texts that have often appeared on the AP exam. You simply cannot read too many books!

Among the literary works planned for the year are *King Lear, Pride and Prejudice, Jane Eyre, Death of a Salesman, and Dubliners*. Poetry is a focus of the course, and students taking AP English should be interested in learning more about poetic devices, forms, and strategies for inquiry.

We expect that you all will be reading more books this summer, so consider choosing a few from the list! For a list of texts that have appeared on the AP exam in the past, check out this link:

AP English Titles from the Open Question

So, enjoy your summer (hey, reading is fun!), and we'll see you in September.

Sincerely,
AP Literature Teachers:

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Assignment

Please read carefully and follow each of the steps below.

Due: First day of school in September.

1) Context

Directions: Before reading, learn what you can about the historical context of each assigned book. Click the links below and read carefully. **DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP!**

Link to historical context for ***The Things They Carried*** https://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/vietnam-war-history	**Link to historical context for** ***All the Light We Cannot See*** https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/world-war-ii-history
QR Code to historical context on Vietnam War	QR Code to historical context on WWII

2) Written Annotations

Directions: To prepare for the summer reading essay, which you will write in class when you return to school in September, please complete the following annotation assignment over the summer. Your note packet will be graded as your first assignment for the course. These notes will also serve as your study guide for the in-class essay; however, you **will not** be allowed to use the notes on the day of the essay.

TASK: Create handwritten annotations for each chapter of each of the two books. Submit the entire packet of your annotations when you return to school in September.

- Notes for each chapter **must be handwritten.** (If your handwriting is especially hard to read, please write it by hand first, then type and submit both versions.)
- Clearly label each chapter. (Use a highlighter or different colored pen to label each chapter).
- We expect these notes to be created thoughtfully and methodically. We also expect them to be completely authentic.

Include:

1) Words/allusions you look up (developing your vocabulary is very important; take this opportunity to learn new words)

2) Key characters and characterization
3) Key concepts of the chapter
4) Interesting writing strategies you notice and that are important to your understanding of the text (POV, voice, description, symbols, imagery, metaphors, etc.)
5) Favorite lines from this section of the novel
6) Thematic subjects and questions the writer is exploring
7) Any other thoughts or responses that come to mind while or after reading a chapter

★ Important: Using AI is cheating. If you use AI to write any part of your annotations, the assignment will receive a 0/100. Similarly, using any ideas or language from an internet source without giving credit to the source and putting the language in quotation marks is cheating. If you do so, your annotations will receive a 0/100.

Note on the use of AI from the English Coordinator, Mr. Cronk:
"For your summer reading assignment, it is important to submit only original work to maintain academic integrity and foster genuine learning. This allows you to truly showcase your unique ideas and creativity and gives your new teacher an opportunity to get to know you and your voice. Embracing your own voice not only strengthens your skills but also makes your learning experience more rewarding and enjoyable."

- Questions can be addressed to Ms. LoScalzo at gialoscalzo@wpcsd.k12.ny.us or Ms. Cykiert at olympiacykiert@wpcsd.k12.ny.us