AP English Literature and Composition
Summer Reading 2026

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Welcome to AP English Literature and Composition! Your summer reading assignment is described below. It may be helpful to purchase your own copy of the book for reading, highlighting, and annotating. Used copies are readily available at used bookshops, barnesandnoble.com, and amazon.com.

Assignment:

Keep a dialectical journal as you read. In the left column, write a quotation from the text with proper citation. On the right side, write questions, observations, or whatever strikes you as interesting. This is where you should analyze the text and make inferences. For example, you may note patterns and write assertions regarding these patterns. You should comment on the content such as character development, setting, conflict, and themes. It is also important to explore the writer's craft such as style, tone, point of view, and structure. It would also be beneficial to discuss examples of literary techniques such as imagery, symbolism, motifs, metaphors, juxtaposition, etc. You may also want to make connections between the text you are reading and another work you have read. Make sure that you pull quotations from the beginning, middle, and end of each text. Please come to the first day of class with your summer reading complete.

It is important to remember that a summary of the reading is not acceptable content for dialectical journal responses. Most importantly, you should write an analysis that demonstrates you have deeply and actively read the text. As always, do not use the internet. Plot summaries found there are shallow, useless, and obvious. It is important to show your own original thinking about the text. As always, the school's plagiarism policy will be enforced.

The journals will be used to guide discussion, analysis, and writing during the first weeks of school and throughout the year. You will be required during Socratic Seminars to go directly to the text as you discuss your observations. These journals should also be kept for the school year as they will allow you to refresh your memory on these texts before taking the AP exam.

Please contact me via email if you have questions. Be sure to share this letter with your parents/guardians so that they are aware of summer reading requirements for the AP Literature class. Good luck and enjoy your summer reading!

Summer Reading Texts:

1. *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë. You should record and analyze 10-15 quotations.
2. Poetry of your choice--one poem from five different contemporary poets (5 poems total). You should record and analyze 2-3 quotations per poem. They should be published between 1950 and the present. You will find the Poetry Foundation (www.poetryfoundation.org) to be an outstanding resource for finding poems. You will be required to share at least one of these poems and your analysis of it with the class.

3. Finally, complete the all school summer reading assignment. You may choose any book, but I strongly suggest you choose one of the books listed on the top of the next page as they are challenging and may be useful when you take your AP exam.

Suggested Titles for All School Summer Reading

Heart of Darkness	A Separate Peace	Lord of the Flies
The Nickel Boys	A Streetcar Named Desire	The Goldfinch
All the Light We Cannot See	The Great Gatsby	The Dutch House
The Night Watchman	Brave New World	The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
The Roundhouse	The Road	The Sweetness of Water
The Awakening	The Sun Also Rises	The Shipping News
Where the Crawdads Sing	Sense and Sensibility	The Sympathizer
Wuthering Heights	Native Son	The Things They Carried
The Scarlet Letter	A Raisin in the Sun	Hamnet
The Underground Railroad	A Prayer for Owen Meany	Trust Exercise
Great Expectations	The Sympathizer	The Catcher in the Rye

Sample Dialectical Journal entry for *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley:

"I am by birth a Genevese, and my family is one of the most distinguished of that republic" (Shelley 33).	Here, as well as the other descriptions of Frankenstein's childhood, it is clear that he is quite wealthy. He has had an easy childhood, and likely has never had to wish for anything, emotionally wise nor for material goods. This, while preventing him from gaining trauma early on, also has likely caused him to become accustomed to being number one. He won the lottery of life, and could be arrogant due to it. His high social class has shaped his world view, and therefore, has shaped who he is as a person. This will affect his interactions with other characters, and most likely, his relationship with the monster.