Dear Future AP English Literature and Composition Students,  
  
Congratulations on completing the wild 2020-2021 school year. While I’d love to jump right in to AP Lit, I think we all need the rest and refreshment that summer will bring. For now, we will focus on starting strong with a meaningful summer reading experience. This summer, I'd like you to read the following:  
  
1. A book you've read previously in school and enjoyed. Some great options include *The Great Gatsby*, *Frankenstein*, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *The Odyssey,* *Fahrenheit 451, Taming of the Shrew, & The Importance of Being Ernest*. Come see me if you’d like to borrow a copy of one of these texts.  
  
2. A book of literary merit that was written after 1970. I am attaching a list for your reference, but some of the books listed include content that you or your parents might not be comfortable with. Choose a book that you feel good about reading. You are not limited to books on the list. Just make sure that you choose a book of literary merit. I'm happy to discuss your selections before you begin reading.

3. An example of classic literature from the attached list.

4. You should read a **minimum of 1,000 pages** for this class. If you have not completed the page requirement after you have read a novel from each category, you are free to read an any additional text of your choice. Just a suggestion – *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster would be a great addition to your list.

While you read book one, your goal should be to internalize details that you might have missed the first time you studied the text. Pay attention to the narration (point-of-view), setting, characterization, and plot structure. Ask yourself - "How do the author's choices create the meaning of the text as a whole?" We will be discussing these selections when we return to school, so take notes. Use the attached guided notes sheet to make sure you cover all your bases.  
  
While you read the additional texts, consider and take notes on the same elements, but your perspective will be different since you'll be reading this work for the first time. Try to pay attention to how you feel and what the author does to evoke a particular feeling or reaction from the reader. Pay attention to your attitudes toward characters, the tone of the text as the author establishes setting, and, as always, try to identify the meaning of the work as a whole. Again, notes will be helpful both during our class discussions and also as you review for the AP Exam at the end of the year.

AP English Literature and Composition

Modern Literature Selections

**The following modern texts have been referenced on the AP Literature and Composition Exam in the past. They have not been vetted for content. If you’d like to discuss your choices or read a book that is not on the list, please contact Mrs. Witherow @ lwitherow@pvcama.org**

**1970-1989**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Title** | **Author** | **Genre** | **Date** |
| *Bless Me, Ultima* | Rudolfo Anaya | novel | 1972 |
| *The House on Mango Street* | Sandra Cisneros | novel | 1984 |
| *"Master Harold" . . . and the boys* | Athol Fugard | play | 1982 |
| *M. Butterfly* | David Henry Hwang | play | 1988 |
| *A Prayer for Owen Meany* | John Irving | novel | 1989 |
| *The Woman Warrior* | Maxine Hong Kingston | memoir | 1976 |
| *Obasan* | Joy Kogawa | novel | 1981 |
| *Beloved* | Toni Morrison | novel | 1987 |
| *The Bluest Eye* | Toni Morrison | novel | 1970 |
| *Song of Solomon* | Toni Morrison | novel | 1977 |
| *Sula* | Toni Morrison | novel | 1973 |
| *Jasmine* | Bharati Mukherjee | novel | 1989 |
| *The Women of Brewster Place* | Gloria Naylor | novel | 1982 |
| *Going After Cacciato* | Tim O'Brien | novel | 1978 |
| *Equus* | Peter Shaffer | play | 1973 |
| *Ceremony* | Leslie Marmon Silko | novel | 1977 |
| *Sophie's Choice* | William Styron | novel | 1979 |
| *The Color Purple* | Alice Walker | novel | 1982 |
| *Fences* | August Wilson | play | 1983 |
| *The Piano Lesson* | August Wilson | play | 1987 |

**1990-Present**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Title** | **Author** | **Genre** | **Date** |
| *Reservation Blues* | Sherman Alexie | novel | 1995 |
| *The Blind Assassin* | Margaret Atwood | novel | 2000 |
| *The Memory Keeper's Daughter* | Kim Edwards | novel | 2005 |
| *Cold Mountain* | Charles Frazier | novel | 1997 |
| *Snow Falling on Cedars* | David Guterson | novel | 1994 |
| *The Kite Runner* | Khaled Hosseini | novel | 2003 |
| *A Thousand Splendid Suns* | Khaled Hosseini | novel | 2007 |
| *Never Let Me Go* | Kazuo Ishiguro | novel | 2005 |
| *The Poisonwood Bible* | Barbara Kingsolver | novel | 1998 |
| *The Namesake* | Jumpa Lahiri | novel | 2004 |
| *All the Pretty Horses* | Cormac McCarthy | novel | 1992 |
| *Atonement* | Ian McEwan | novel | 2001 |
| *Native Speaker* | Chang Rae-Lee | novel | 1995 |
| *The God of Small Things* | Arundhati Roy | novel | 1997 |
| *A Thousand Acres* | Jane Smiley | novel | 1991 |
| *The Bonesetter's Daughter* | Amy Tan | novel | 2001 |
| *The Story of Edgar Sawtelle* | David Wroblewski | novel | 2008 |

AP English Literature and Composition

Classic Literature Selections

***Please choose one book from this list to satisfy the summer reading requirements.***

*Tess of the d’Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy

*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte

*Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte

*Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens

*Lord of the Flies* by William Golding

*The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

*The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

*Moby Dick* by Herman Melville

*As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner

*A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemmingway

AP Lit Summer Reading Note-taking Guide

**Narrator:** Who is the narrator? Is there one narrator or multiple narrators? Is the narrator credible? Why or why not? Which point-of-view does the author employ? What effect does the type of p.o.v. have on the meaning of the work as a whole? What role does narration play in establishing the tone of the text?

**Setting:** Consider the time (in history, of year, of day), place, and social location of the text. Why did the author choose this setting? How does it inform tone? How does the setting lead to meaning?

**Character:** Who is the protagonist? Antagonist? Which characters are round, flat, dynamic, static? What are the major characters’ traits? Do any of the characters have a foil? How do the characters’ traits, changes, and/or contrasts contribute to the meaning of the text as a whole?

**Plot:** Consider how the plot is structured. Are the events told in chronological order? Does the narrator use flashback? Are some events told out of sequence? Why would the author choose to structure the novel this way? How does this structure create meaning? Are there any events that seem repetitious? Is there anything that seems to have been omitted? Why would the author choose to emphasize or omit certain textual elements? Does the plot have a clear climax? If so, what is it? What meaning is born out of the climax? How about denouement? What information does the narrator reveal in the denouement? How does it affect the reader’s understanding of the text?

**Theme:** Consider prominent themes in the text. How does the author develop them? What is he or she communicating about the themes? Does the author communicate an idea that is biblical?