

Dear A. P. Lit Student 2009-2010

We are about to embark on the challenging adventure of senior year Advanced Placement Literature and Composition. This is a college-level course with high expectations and standards. Think seriously about the commitment of time and effort required to be successful in this demanding class. If you are willing to read, work hard, and persevere, we're sure you will meet the high expectations of the class and find success.

Over the summer, you are required to read **Mary Shelley's gothic novel *Frankenstein*** and a **self-selected novel** from the list. You are also responsible for completing the attached assignment for both books. Both assignments are due on the first day of school, so make the most of your summer-time reading. Failure to complete the assignments could result in having to drop the class.

Furthermore also encourage you to think about and preview some novels you might like to study over the course of the coming academic year. Also, *How to Read Literature Like a College Professor* by Tom Foster is a requirement for the course and is used extensively throughout the year. It will give you a good idea of the topics we will pursue. More importantly, if you do not like reading an extensive amount of short stories, poetry, Shakespearian dramas, and classic novels, this may not be the class for you. However, if this excites you-Welcome!

If you have any questions or concerns about the class or the summer assignments, please feel free to contact us via email over the summer. It is expected that in taking this class, you will also be taking the national AP exam in May.

You are expected to have a copy of each novel and textbook.

Purchasing the Texts:

It is accepted practice in AP classes for students to purchase their own copies of each novel and text book so they may annotate and interact with each one. In years past, the school has collected money and purchased the books, passing them out to each student when they arrive. This was, in part, due to the relatively small numbers of students and the fact that book stores were often far away and were very expensive compared to the educational prices at which the school could purchase books. However, due to the large numbers we are now dealing with in the AP Literature and Composition course (upwards of 130 students), and the accessibility of numerous book stores and Internet book sellers, we no longer purchase novels for students. We will give a list of all our texts and a rough number of the total students we expect to be needing those books to Barnes and Noble and Borders at Park Meadows, and the Borders at Arapahoe Crossing.

Finally, let us welcome you to Advanced Placement Literature and Composition and reassure you that we're all in this together. We are excited about having the opportunity to work with you in your pursuit of knowledge.

Sincerely,

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AP Lit Summer Reading

1. *Frankenstein*—Required

Read and annotate *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

Write 5 one-page reader's responses on 5 of the following themes: good and evil; life and death; rejection and acceptance; man's relationship to nature; love and hate; ambition and responsibility; parenting and children; rich and poor; or generosity and selfishness.

A note about reading *Frankenstein*: The story is written in three voices, all in first person-- Captain Robert Walton serves as a witness/ narrator, Dr Victor Frankenstein, and the monster (who is never given a name). Do not start with the letters addressed to Mrs. Saville from Walton. The letters describe how Walton wants to be the first man to sail to the North Pole, and while in the arctic rescues Victor Frankenstein from an iceberg. Victor boards Walton's ship, faints, and when he wakes up, he begins to tell his story. Start with Chapter 1, in which Victor Frankenstein begins, "I am by birth a Genovese." After you have read Victor's and the Monster's stories, read Walton's letters at the end—"Walton in Continuation", to find out Victor's and the Monster's fates.

2. Self-Selected novel—Required

Read one of the following novels listed below. **You will be required to present a 10 minute book talk** on the novel of your choice. Your book talk will need to include biographical information about the author, a visual aide, a critique of the novel, and an overview of the plot, characters, and main themes present in the novel. We suggest that in choosing your novel, you mill around a bookstore or library, read a few pages of several books, and then select a book you'll enjoy. Annotate as you read, make note of questions you want to ask, and identify themes. Be an active reader. We will set up a schedule for book talks in August.

Pride and Prejudice—Jane Austen

The Iliad or Odyssey—Homer

The Kite Runner— Khaled Hosseini

Slaughterhouse Five—Kurt Vonnegut

Bel Canto-Ann Patchett

Life of Pi —Yann Martell

All the Pretty Horses-Cormac McCarthy

Poisonwood Bible—Barbara Kingsolver

Fahrenheit 451-Ray Bradbury

Ishmael — Daniel Quinn

A Prayer for Owen Meany— John Irving

A Clockwork Orange—Anthony Burgess

Water for Elephants-Sara Guen

The Unbearable Lightness of Being-Milan Kundera