

Dear Students of AP Literature and Composition,

Welcome to your final year of the AP English program, the culmination of your high school endeavors in language and literature. I am looking forward to working with you and helping prepare you for the AP Literature test in May. To that end, I expect that you'll be interested in building your familiarity with AP-style literature; your assignment for this summer is intended to assist you in that goal as well as to prepare you for the activities we'll be doing as soon as the school year starts.

The two required titles for the summer assignment are:

***All The Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr**

***The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien**

To consider: the first title we'll be starting with in August, once we complete our discussion of the two books listed above, is *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, so if you want to get a jump start, go for it!

Most AP students prefer to have their own copies of the novels for annotating, and though that's recommended, it's not required, so feel free to use a borrowed or library copy. Any student who wishes will be issued a school copy of *The Kite Runner* in August.

You must complete the accompanying work on your own (do not work in pairs or groups). While I appreciate that talking about books with friends is one of the great pleasures of reading, I urge students to remember the innate nature of academic "competition" and keep their ideas unique. The AP course will not schedule time for reading these selections or completing the summer assignments during the fall semester; you should be finished with the work and ready to turn it in on the first day of school. You will take quizzes on these novels during the first three days of class, and complete in-class writing activities as well.

A question posted on the College Board website--"Are students expected to do summer reading?"--has historically been answered by the College Board in the following way: "Many reasons exist for summer reading. Strong students read during the summer, keeping the brain active in academic pursuits. Many schools require summer reading for all students, not just those in an accelerated or honors program. Some schools, in addition to reading selected materials, require one or more written assignments as well."

Teachers nationwide of Pre-AP and AP courses also give further reasons in support of summer reading on the College Board website:

- *Summer reading provides continuity between May and August, helping students continue to grow and develop critical thinking skills.*
- *Summer reading also provides an immediate springboard for discussion in August. The chosen reading selections are usually listed on the AP English College Board's reading list as works of literary merit that could be tested on the AP English exams.*

- *Students in honors/AP should be avid, active readers. Summer reading supports this expectation while directing the activity toward pieces specifically chosen in relation to the honors/AP English courses.*

The cadre of Horizon Pre-AP/AP English teachers are working hard to prepare their students--starting with incoming freshmen--for success on the AP tests they will take as juniors and seniors. To ensure Horizon students' ability to maintain a competitive edge on these high-stakes, norm-referenced exams, they have extensively studied the summer reading requirements of not only the other PVUSD AP programs but neighboring private and charter schools as well. We strongly believe that the rigor of Horizon's summer expectations are commensurate with those of these schools; our students will be well prepared to meet the challenges of the AP tests.

Reminder to all students: you must have a hard copy of your assignments ready to turn in on the first day of class. You must also retain a digital copy of your assignment in GoogleDocs in your pvlerners account. Upon request, all students must be prepared to upload their assignments into turnitin.com as a means of verifying originality.

Pacing yourself with the two novels, setting aside quality reading time over the course of several weeks, is the recommended schedule. I will hold you accountable for having understood and remembered both titles that first week of school. I will also ask you to write on the selections several times as the first semester progresses.

Your creative assignment, as described on the accompanying document, is due on the first day of school in August. We have many analytical, test-prep works to handle during the school year, so this is your chance to do a creative piece. It is imperative to remember, however, that though I am interested in your creative writing talents, you complete this assignment to the best of your academic abilities.

Remember that your creative assignment should be based on one of the two required novels (not the one we'll be starting in August).

Enjoy your summer and your reading; I am eager to get started with you in August.

Ms. Prince