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June 1, 2014

Dear 2014 – 2015 Advanced Placement Literature Students:

Welcome to AP Literature. Following is the list of summer assignments. These assignments are designed to prepare you for the kind of work we will be doing in AP Literature throughout the school year. We will use these works to discuss the relationship between a text, its author, and its audience. We will also apply various critical approaches to these works in order to explore the ways such lenses affect our interpretation and understanding of literature.

As importantly, these works illuminate the first thematic unit of study for the course: *The Metaphysically Present Past*. This unit of study looks at the ways in which authors distort time and use supernatural events and characters to represent the ever-present but enigmatic nature of the past. As you work through the assigned texts, consider the ways in which characters struggle to remember, forget, recreate, or break free from their pasts – and the ways that the texts employ time and/or supernatural elements to portray these struggles.

Under no circumstances should you use SparkNotes or other similar aids in developing your interpretations of the assigned reading. These assignments are prerequisites for the course, and failure to do or have them will result in exclusion from the course. We encourage you to discuss these readings with one another and to share ideas throughout the summer.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Please start to gather applications for the colleges that interest you. **We highly recommend that you write your college essays before the year begins. For this reason, we are not assigning any formal summer writing.** You will have a lot of writing to do once the year begins, so please work on your college applications over the summer.

PART ONE:
AP Literature and Composition Summer Reading

***Wuthering Heights*, by Emily Brontë (fiction)**

What happens when any certain meaning crumbles under examination and analysis? This mysterious and inscrutable text presents us with an unreliable narrator and a story that transcends definition, just as its ghosts transcend the physical world. *Wuthering Heights* is one of the most intense, disturbing, and famous love stories in all of English literature. It is Emily Brontë's only novel – and a work of incomparable genius.

We will use *Wuthering Heights* to consider how both the texts and readers are situated socially, culturally, and politically – and how these “situations” affect interpretation and, ultimately, meaning.

***One Hundred Years of Solitude*, by Gabriel García Márquez (fiction)**

This novel is like no other. At once, it tells the history of its author, of Columbia, and of the universe itself – and it does so by fusing epic, myth, and magical realism. As William Kennedy noted in his review for the *New York Times*, “*One Hundred Years of Solitude* is the first piece of literature since the Book of Genesis that should be required reading for the entire human race. It takes up not long after Genesis left off and carries through to the air age, reporting on everything that happened in between with more lucidity, wit, wisdom, and poetry than is expected from 100 years of novelists, let alone one man...”

We will use this work as the basis of our understanding of the critical approaches to literature that will provide lenses for our study of texts throughout the year.

***A Visit from the Goon Squad*, by Jennifer Egan (fiction)**

This most recent Pulitzer Prize winner for fiction is already on its way to becoming a post-modern classic. In her review for *The Observer*, Sarah Churchwell explains:

[*A Visit from the Goon Squad*] is a book about memory and kinship, time and narrative, continuity and disconnection, in which relationships shift and recombine kaleidoscopically...The "goon squad"...is one character's name for time: "Time's a goon, right? You gonna let that goon push you around?" Everyone in the book is pushed around by time, circumstance and, occasionally, the ones they love... Characters who are marginal in one chapter become the focus of the next; the narrative alternates not only between first-person and third-person accounts, but – perhaps just because she can – Egan throws in a virtuosic second-person story as well...

PART TWO:
AP Literature and Composition Summer Note-taking

The summer reading for AP Lit is an integral part of the course. We will be spending a good deal of time with these books in class, so it really is essential that you read them carefully and bring them with you to class. You may choose to purchase the summer reading books. Owning the books will enable you to highlight passages and take notes in the margins as you read. However, you can get copies of the books from the FLHS library. (Some books are also available electronically.) We will expect you to demonstrate familiarity with the texts and to be able to turn to direct passages with facility.

In addition to your own observations, please take notes on the topics below as you read and view the summer work. We ask that you print copies of the material on the links listed below so that you can annotate the information and refer to it during class. (Please put copies in your notebooks.) We recommend that you read the information provided on these links before you read and view the summer texts.

1. Narration and Point(s)-of-view

Who are the narrators of each work? To what extent is each reliable or unreliable? When do any switches in point-of-view occur? What do they signify?

2. Use of Time

Note the way that each of the author employs time in his or her work. How much time is covered in each of the works? (Be specific.) When does the action begin and/or end? How are flashbacks and/or flash-forwards employed? What thematic purposes do they serve? How does time move –chronologically, cyclically, and/or chaotically?

3. The Supernatural and Unrealistic/Supernatural Events

Examine the function of unrealistic and supernatural characters and events in *Wuthering Heights* and *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. What purpose(s) do they serve? It will be helpful to do a bit of background research to understand how ghosts and other gothic elements function in the Romantic tradition that clearly influenced *Wuthering Heights*. Also, it will be helpful to understand what magical realism is and how it functions in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

The following links should provide you with all the information you need, but you are welcome to do additional research:

The Gothic Tradition:

http://www.wvnorton.com/college/english/nael/romantic/topic_2/welcome.htm

Magical Realism:

<http://english.emory.edu/Bahri/MagicalRealism.html>

PART THREE:
AP Literature and Composition Essay Preparation

On the actual AP Literature exam, there are three kinds of essay prompts. Beginning on the second day of school, we will assess your familiarity with the summer work by having you write two of these essays. One will present you with a passage from one of the summer reading novels and ask you to provide an insightful analysis of the literary devices and techniques it employs (This is question #2 on the AP Lit Exam). The second will be an open-ended essay prompt that asks you to write about a theme or stylistic element in one of the summer reading novels. (This is the 3rd essay question on the AP Lit Exam). We will also use these essays to evaluate your skills in writing and literary analysis.

Please review the essay questions from the 2010 AP Lit exam. We will be doing questions similar to #2 and #3, as described above. For now you can ignore #1, the poetry prompt. Then, visit the other links to familiarize yourself with the Scoring Guidelines and the model responses (For questions 2 and 3):

- **2010 AP Lit Exam Essay Questions:**
http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/repository/ap10_frq_eng_lit.pdf
- **Scoring Guidelines:**
http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/repository/ap10_english_literature_scoring_guidelines.pdf
- **Sample Responses**
 - Question 2 (Passage Analysis):
http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/repository/ap10_english_literature_q2.pdf
 - Question 3 (Open-Ended Prompt):
http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/repository/ap10_english_literature_q3.pdf