

Marcus High School Summer Reading 2019-2020

Reading in an A.P. course should be both wide and deep. These courses should include the in-depth reading of texts drawn from multiple genres, periods, and cultures. While students should read works from several genres and periods—from the sixteenth to the twentieth century—more importantly, they should get to know a few works well. They should read deliberately and thoroughly, taking time to understand a work’s complexity, to absorb its richness of meaning, and to analyze how that meaning is embodied in literary form. In addition to considering a work’s literary artistry, students should consider the social and historical values it reflects and embodies. Careful attention to both textual detail and historical context should provide a foundation for interpretation, whatever critical perspectives are brought to bear on the literary works studied.

(College Board, English Literature Course Description)

Marcus High School requires high school students who are enrolled in P/AP, or AP English courses to read during the summer to

- prepare every student to enter his English course ready to focus upon extended critical reading
- complement and support our English curriculum
- allow teachers to begin literary discussions at the level of depth and complexity required in an Advanced Academics course during the first few weeks of the semester
- build a base of literature from which students will draw during the course of the semester

The summer reading selections have been chosen based upon the following criteria:

- appropriate reading level for independent summer reading
- literary merit (texts which facilitate rich discussion and literary analysis)
- recognized works for inclusion on the AP exams

Students should read the selection for the course in which they will be enrolled. Reading should be completed prior to the beginning of the school year, and students should be prepared to take an objective test over the reading during the first week of the semester in which they are enrolled in English to demonstrate their comprehension of the fundamental elements of the text. An analytical essay over the reading will also be assigned during the first three weeks of the semester after students have received instruction in writing that type of essay.

While we strongly encourage you to purchase your own copies of the required texts so that you may annotate them, copies of each text are also available at our local libraries and some are available in full text online. We can also loan you a copy of any of these books. Please contact Mrs. Forthun at the address (forthunjk@lisd.net), and she will arrange to leave a copy for you in the front office of Marcus.

Your preparation should involve reading “with a pen.” Summation, connections, explanations, stylistic and structural realizations, thematic conceptions all make for essential marginal notations. Annotate your books so that your re-readings will be more insightful and your contributions to our discussions more meaningful. An online search related to your assigned text will also direct you to many helpful resources such as literary criticism and analysis of the selection.

If you have any questions or need to check out a campus copy, please contact one of the teachers listed below the assignment for your grade level.

English II P/AP Summer Reading

***To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee**

To Kill a Mockingbird is the unforgettable novel of a childhood in a sleepy Southern town and the crisis of conscience that rocked it, *To Kill A Mockingbird* became both an instant bestseller and a critical success when it was first published in 1960. It went on to win the Pulitzer Prize in 1961 and was later made into an Academy Award-winning film, also a classic. Compassionate, dramatic, and deeply moving, *To Kill A Mockingbird* takes readers to the roots of human behavior - to innocence and experience, kindness and cruelty, love and hatred, humor and pathos. Now with over 18 million copies in print and translated into forty languages, this regional story by a young Alabama woman claims universal appeal. Harper Lee always considered her book to be a simple love story. Today it is regarded as a masterpiece of American literature.

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English III AP and AP U.S. Studies Summer Reading (AP Language and Composition)

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck

The Grapes of Wrath is a landmark of American literature. A portrait of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless, of one man's fierce reaction to injustice, and of one woman's stoical strength, the novel captures the horrors of the Great Depression and probes into the very nature of equality and justice in America. Although it follows the movement of thousands of men and women and the transformation of an entire nation, *The Grapes of Wrath* is also the story of one Oklahoma family, the Joads, who are driven off their homestead and forced to travel west to the promised land of California. Out of their trials and their repeated collisions against the hard realities of an America divided into Haves and Have-Nots evolves a drama that is intensely human yet majestic in its scale and moral vision, elemental yet plainspoken, tragic but ultimately stirring in its human dignity.

First published in 1939, *The Grapes of Wrath* summed up its era in the way that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* summed up the years of slavery before the Civil War. Sensitive to fascist and communist criticism, Steinbeck insisted that "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" be printed in its entirety in the first edition of the book—which takes its title from the first verse: "He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored." At once a naturalistic epic, captivity narrative, road novel, and transcendental gospel, Steinbeck's fictional chronicle of the Dust Bowl migration of the 1930s is perhaps the most American of American Classics. (from the publisher)

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English IV AP Summer Reading (AP Literature and Composition)

The **2019-2020** AP Literature and Composition summer reading assignment consists of two novels, which are pillars of 20th Century fiction because of their social and political content. They both are moving novels that present an account of human perseverance in the face of suffering and injustice as well as a realistic portrayal of rural poverty in Africa and India and the destructive forces of colonialism and industrialization.

Cry, the Beloved Country by Alan Paton (1948)

This novel is a social protest against the structures of the society that would later give rise to apartheid. Mr. Paton captures perfectly the difficulty of non-violence resistance as the novel provides a haunting image of a truly divided society. Paton cries for the lack of strong voices against an unjust system. He cries for the government and the tribal choices that keep the people and the land broken. And above all, he cries for his beloved country, Africa.

Nectar in A Sieve by Kamala Markandaya (1954)

Less than a decade after India won its independence from Britain Markandaya's novel was published. The novel is clearly influenced by this event, portraying some of the problems encountered by the Indian people as they dealt with the changing times. Rukmani, the main character, faces numerous struggles (poverty, death, loss of tradition) that are experienced by many people for many reasons. Far beyond its political context, the novel is appealing to modern readers for its sensitive and moving portrayal of the strength of a woman struggling with forces beyond her control. It is a story about the resilience of the human spirit and the importance of values.

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