

Dear Senior AP Scholars,

Greetings! We are excited to work with you next year. The writing and analytical skills you have developed in previous years in AP Language and Honors English will serve you well in our classes. The senior class emphasizes intensive study of works from various genres and periods along with writing assignments focusing on the critical analysis of literature.

To ensure a successful beginning to next year, you should read one of the following contemporary novels:

- *Circe* by Madeline Miller
- *Sing Unburied Sing* by Jesmyn Ward
- *American War: A novel* by Omar El Akkad

You should not choose a title you have already read, either on your own or for another class. It is best if you purchase or download your own copy; however, if this is not possible, please contact the teachers at your school at the emails listed below about getting a copy.

The work you do this summer is the foundation for the beginning of next year. You should complete your reading by the first day of class on Wednesday, August 14. All students will write an essay over their chosen title shortly after school starts, and we will continue working with these titles for the first 3-6 weeks of school with such activities as small group and whole class discussions, Socratic seminars, passage analysis, and creative projects. Therefore, if you do not read during the summer, you will be behind from the first day of school. You will not complete any written assignments during the summer; however, you may wish to annotate or take notes. Please see the additional information on the back of this page for during-reading suggestions.

You may earn college credit for senior AP Literature in one of two ways. First, you may choose to take the AP exam in May 2025. If you choose this route, college credit awarded depends on your AP exam score and what your chosen college awards. Second, you may enroll in College Now. Our one-year class counts as two classes at JCCC: Composition I and II; you will enroll and pay for each semester separately. If you are considering College Now, we recommend that you read further information about College Now at:

<https://www.jccc.edu/admissions/early-college/high-school-concurrent-enrollment/>.

We are excited to work with you and anticipate a challenging, stimulating, and rewarding year. Please feel free to email us if you have any questions. We will check email periodically throughout the summer.

Sincerely,

Olathe East Senior AP Teachers:

Stacy Goddard (sgoddardoe@olatheschools.org)

Heather Tow (htowoe@olatheschools.org)

Additional Information on the Summer Reading

As you read your novel, you should consider annotating, taking notes, or writing journal entries in order to help you analyze and remember important aspects of the novel. Although such work will not be collected for a grade, such work will be useful when we work with the novel in class as well as helping you process and retain the novel.

You might consider the following elements of the novel as you annotate or take notes:

Structure

- Are events told sequentially? Does the author employ flashbacks or jumps in time?
- What is the central conflict of the novel? What makes the conflict complex and thought-provoking?

Perspective

- Does the author use first or third person perspective?
- Is there one consistent perspective or does it shift?
- How does the perspective chosen affect your understanding of different characters?

Setting

- What is the setting in terms of time, place, and situation?
- How does setting affect the plot and characters?

Characters

- Is there a clear protagonist? If not, why not?
- Is there a clear antagonist? If not, why not?
- How is the reader supposed to feel about the main characters? What is the author's attitude towards them?
- Identify a couple of key dynamic relationships in the novel. What makes those relationships shift?

Style

- How would you characterize the writing style? Consider aspects like formality or informality, complexity of sentence structure and/or vocabulary, use of dialect, reliance on specific techniques like imagery and figurative language.

Symbolism

- What objects, locations, words, or images in your novel convey symbolic meaning? (If you struggle to locate symbols, think first about anything that comes up frequently in the novel and seems to be meaningful to the characters.)

Theme

A theme is a central message of a work. It makes an argument about life, human nature, or the human experience. It is NOT a single word.

NOT a theme: Revenge.

Theme: Revenge can lead to momentary satisfaction but not long-term fulfillment.

- What themes can you identify from your novel? Consider what the author seems to think about what makes life meaningful, what brings characters happiness or redemption, or what people tend to be like.

Get the most out of the upcoming year

It is important to know what kind of credit you will work towards this year. IN the chart below, list your top three college choices. Look at their registrar's page and find what credit they accept so you know if you plan to take the AP exam or if you plan to take the class for College Now (JCCC) credit. Complete the following, **you must fill this out and have it ready on the first day of class:**

School	What AP Lang Score did you earn?	Credit given/class at your school of choice based on your AP Lang Score	AP Lit score needed to earn credit at your school of choice	Credit given/class at your school of choice based on your AP Lit Score	Will your school accept College Now credit & what class does it cover?

Did you take the AP Lang exam:

What score did you earn?

What credit do you want to earn through AP Literature and Composition?

College Application Essay

During your senior year of high school you will be asked to write a college application essay in your English class. As a part of your summer work, you will need to go ahead and write the first draft of this essay. Your essay should be 500 words in length and should respond to a prompt from 1 of your top 3 schools or from the Common App.

Please keep the essay to approximately 500 words regardless of the word count given by the college or scholarship. Your essay must be typed and double-spaced. If you know that you want to apply to a specific college, and the prompt from that college does not match one of the prompts from the common application, feel free to go ahead and respond to that prompt. You must type your prompt at the top of your essay. You will submit this to Google Classroom on your first day of class in August.

Common Application essay prompts for 2025-2026

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design

SOME ADDITIONAL NOTES

1. Johnson County Community College requires that students make a minimum of 19 on the English section of the ACT exam before enrolling in Composition I. If you plan to take the course for JCCC credit and haven't taken the ACT or haven't scored at least a 19 on the English section, you will need to take JCCC's admission exam before enrolling. The enrollment date is very soon after school starts in the fall, so you should check about tests this summer.
2. Colleges and universities have varying policies about accepting Advanced Placement and community college transfer credit. You should check with the schools you are considering to determine which avenue for college credit is best for you.
3. During the year we'll read *Frankenstein*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *The Awakening*, *Ethan Frome*, *All the Light We Cannot See*, and *The Importance of Being Earnest* if you would like to get a start on any of them.
4. The Heart of America Shakespeare Festival traditionally performs a Shakespeare play at its outdoor series in June and July. You might enjoy getting together with a group to see the play and get your ear attuned to Shakespearean language.
5. If you have any questions about the class or the summer reading, please call the school with a message for either of us and we will call you back as soon as possible.

Summer Assignment Checklist:

- Select & read one of the novels listed
- Take notes over selected novel as you read
- Complete the college credit chart and answer the questions below the chart
- Write your College Application essay
 - Don't forget to type your prompt at the top of the essay