

Advanced Placement Literature & Composition (12<sup>th</sup> Grade)  
Summer Reading Assignments  
Mrs. Courtney Blake

Welcome to AP Lit! School begins on Wednesday, August 11. You are expected to have your assignments ready for submission by our first class meeting. I encourage you to begin the reading early so that you can fully digest the texts. The significant meaning and ideas are often missed when you read hurriedly rather than having time to contemplate the larger meaning of the work.

- Read the two assigned novels this summer.
- Read to recognize characterization, symbolism, conflict, complexity, and themes in the works.
- Complete assignments for each reading. (See assignments below.)
- Prepare for an assessment on each novel.

**Novel & Assignment #1: *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe**

In a series of interviews with Jerome Brooks, Chinua Achebe says the following about *Things Fall Apart*: “[It] is a kind of fundamental story of my condition that demanded to be heard....I believe in the complexity of the human story and that there’s no way you can tell that story in one way and say, this is it. Always there will be someone who can tell it differently depending on where they are standing....This is the way I think the world’s stories should be told—from many different perspectives.”

**Topics:** Culture, globalization, and language

**Thematic Ideas:** Change versus tradition; Conflicts and results of cultural collisions

**Literary Elements & Techniques:** meaning and purpose in the work

**Critical Approaches:** Moral Criticism, Psychoanalytic Criticism, Post-Colonial Criticism, Critical Race Theory, Feminist Criticism, and Ecocriticism

1. Read the novel.
2. Locate and read the academic article AFTER reading the novel.
  - Citation to use for locating the article: Gogoi, Gitanjali. An Ecocritical Approach to Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*. IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 19, Issue 11, Ver. V (Nov. 2014), PP 01-04.
3. As you read, make a list of characters or character pairs. If the pair serves as a *foil* in the novel be sure to briefly note how the pair functions. For individual characters, note character traits. Your list should be typed and organized. You will submit online in class.
4. In an interview with *The Atlantic Online*, Achebe says, “There may be cultures that may sadly have to go, because no one is rooting for them, but we should make the effort to prevent this. We have to hold this conversation, which is a conversation of stories, a conversation of languages, and see what happens.” Think about the sustainability of different cultures. Conduct an independent search for credible sources that evaluate the role language plays in sustaining a culture. Through your research, evaluate the role language plays in creating and sustaining cultural identity. What are some “dead” languages? Can a cultural preservation continue once a language is dead? Included are ideas and resources to guide your research. You will use the information you gather upon your return to school.
  - Smithsonian Museum of Natural History’s Department of Anthropology
  - The Endangered Languages Project’s Endangered Languages Map and Resources
5. In a brief essay (typed, 500-700 words), respond to the following prompt. Please note, there are multiple questions to be answered when responding to the prompt.
  - In the novel, *Things Fall Apart*, how are character conflicts and perspectives used to develop a theme of the work? In your essay be sure to compare and contrast the different interpretations of culture by including evidence of different points of view in the novel.
  - Your essay should be typed and printed. You will also upload a digital copy. Please follow formatting guidelines:

Assignment continues on back.

- Follow basic MLA formatting
- Times Roman or Calibri, 12 point font, double-space
- Heading should include last name and page number

## Novel & Assignment #2

### **Choose one additional novel from this list:**

*1984*—George Orwell

*Brave New World*—Aldous Huxley

*Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison

*Pride and Prejudice*—Jane Austen

*Wuthering Heights*—Emily Bronte

*Beloved*—Toni Morrison

*Their Eyes Were Watching God*- Zora Neale Hurston

1. Read the novel.
2. Annotate as you read remembering to identify examples of characterization, symbolism, conflict, complexity, and themes in the work as you read.
3. You will have an assignment and essay the second week of class.

Should you have any questions about these assignments, you may contact me at [cblake@gsboe.org](mailto:cblake@gsboe.org). I look forward to meeting you in August!

Assignment continues on back.