

AP ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION: SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT 2024-25

Welcome to AP English Literature & Composition! This course is a college-level study of advanced literature. To prepare, you must read two novels over summer. Select two of the following three novels to read and enjoy:

The Samurai's Garden by Gail Tsukiyama

The Tortilla Curtain by T.C. Boyle

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini

Each is an engaging look at different cultures coming into contact, featuring unique narrative choices and style. As you read, make annotations (either in the book itself if you own it or in a separate note if you do not) that relate to the Enduring Understandings for AP: **character, setting, structure, narration, figurative language**. We will study and explore how these understandings help readers comprehend the complexity of the **meaning of the works as a whole** throughout the year. Your reading must be complete when you arrive on the first day of class in the fall semester; expect multiple assessments regarding both novels. Below you will find basic descriptions of each novel from Amazon to assist you in your choice. Purchasing your chosen novels is ideal, but there are many copies of each available in the UNI library for your convenience. Enjoy your reading and see you next year!

Novel Descriptions

***The Samurai's Garden* – Gail Tsukiyama**

The daughter of a Chinese mother and a Japanese father, Tsukiyama uses the Japanese invasion of China during the late 1930s as a somber backdrop for her unusual story about a 20-year-old Chinese painter named Stephen who is sent to his family's summer home in a Japanese coastal village to recover from a bout with tuberculosis. Here he is cared for by Matsu, a reticent housekeeper and a master gardener. Over the course of a remarkable year, Stephen learns Matsu's secret and gains not only physical strength, but also profound spiritual insight.

***The Tortilla Curtain* – T.C. Boyle**

Topanga Canyon is home to two couples on a collision course. Los Angeles liberals Delaney and Kyra Mossbacher lead an ordered sushi-and-recycling existence in a newly gated hilltop community: he a sensitive nature writer, she an obsessive realtor. Mexican illegals Candido and America Rincon desperately cling to their vision of the American Dream as they fight off starvation in a makeshift camp deep in the ravine. And from the moment a freak accident brings Candido and Delaney into intimate contact, these four and their opposing worlds gradually intersect in what becomes a tragicomedy of error and misunderstanding.

***The Kite Runner* – Khalid Hosseini**

The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, *The Kite Runner* is a beautifully crafted novel set in a country that is in the process of being destroyed. It is about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies. A sweeping story of family, love, and friendship told against the devastating backdrop of the history of Afghanistan over the last thirty years, *The Kite Runner* is an unusual and powerful novel that has become a beloved, one-of-a-kind classic.

Enduring Understandings

Character – Characters in literature allow readers to study and explore a range of values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, and cultural norms represented by those characters.

Setting – Setting and the details associated with it not only depict a time and place, but also convey values associated with that setting.

Structure – The arrangement of the parts and sections of a text, the relationship of the parts to each other, and the sequence in which the text reveals information are all structural choices made by a writer that contribute to the reader's interpretation of a text.

Narration – A narrator's or speaker's perspective controls the details and emphases that affect how readers experience and interpret a text.

Figurative Language – Comparisons, representations, and associations shift meaning from the literal to the figurative and invite readers to interpret a text.