

Welcome to AP Literature!
Summer work 2022

Mrs. Winters: katie.winters@bsd.k12.de.us or Schoology message, or see me in Room 235

If you have summer work questions, please get in touch before the end of the school year. Saying you didn't know about AP summer work will not excuse you from it.

For your summer assignment, you will select **one book** from the following three options to read before the school year begins. There is a high likelihood that you will revisit this book during the school year and during exam preparation, so choose the book that you like the best, or that you could see yourself really digging into over a span of multiple months.

Used copies of these books are available to purchase online for ~\$5. You may also try the local library. **If you're having a real problem getting one of these books, come talk to me before the school year ends.**

All of the following novel options have some mature content. You're reading for a college-level literature class. Please let me know if you feel this will be a problem, or if you have a particular concern with a particular type of content.

Book options:

- ***Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**
 - My commentary: This book is my favorite of the three options. Please do not let its length scare you off. It is a love story, a social commentary, and an exploration of identity across continents and years. I adore Adichie's style and attention to the human condition. You will become invested in the characters' happiness while learning about Nigeria, England, and the USA.
 - From the author's website: A powerful, tender story of race and identity. Ifemelu and Obinze are young and in love when they depart military-ruled Nigeria for the West. Beautiful, self-assured Ifemelu heads for America, where despite her academic success, she is forced to grapple with what it means to be black for the first time. Quiet, thoughtful Obinze had hoped to join her, but with post-9/11 America closed to him, he instead plunges into a dangerous, undocumented life in London. Fifteen years later, they reunite in a newly democratic Nigeria, and reignite their passion—for each other and for their homeland. Read more here: <https://www.chimamanda.com/book/americanah/>

- ***The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver**
 - My commentary: Kingsolver's prose is a joy to work your way through. It is a complex, compelling story of faith, family, love, and identity that you'll think about long after you finish it. Written from multiple perspectives, you have the opportunity to empathize with characters you might not have guessed you'd connect with. This is the most "traditional" of the three book options this year, in that it is the oldest (published in 1998) and has been featured on the exam multiple times.

- From the author's website: *The Poisonwood Bible* is a story told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it—from garden seeds to Scripture—is calamitously transformed on African soil. What follows is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in postcolonial Africa. Read more here: <http://www.kingsolver.com/books/the-poisonwood-bible.html>
- ***Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens**
 - My commentary: When trying to describe this novel, I usually say it is nature writing mixed with a mystery novel, which is quite the unusual combination. My favorite part of the book is the nature writing. This is the most contemporary option with the least complexity (and will therefore likely read the fastest), but it is also the book that comes with the most content warnings, including various types of abuse.
 - From Barnes & Noble: For years, rumors of the "Marsh Girl" have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. Then the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life—until the unthinkable happens. *Where the Crawdads Sing* is at once an exquisite ode to the natural world, a heartbreaking coming-of-age story, and a surprising tale of possible murder. Owens reminds us that we are forever shaped by the children we once were, and that we are all subject to the beautiful and violent secrets that nature keeps. More about the author here: <https://www.deliaowens.com/>

What do you do during and after reading? (What, when, & how to submit)

During reading, I encourage you to mark or sticky note the book any time you read something that you believe to be significant, beautiful, or otherwise noteworthy. I often find myself marking quotes that resonate with my own personal experience, even if the connection is complicated, or sentences that are mind-bogglingly well-written. You don't have to write anything at this stage--simply underlining or starring is sufficient.

After reading, choose **2-3 of those quotes** to comment on. In a GoogleDoc, write the whole quote, the page on which you found it, and a reflection on what was significant about that quote to you (then repeat for a total of ~3 quotes). I am purposefully not giving you a length requirement for these reflections--I'm just asking that you be thoughtful. **You will submit this document by the end of the first week of school.** I will publish the assignment/submission space once the course goes live on Schoology next year.