

Welcome to AP Literature!
Summer work 2023

Ms. 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.

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 prior to the school year ending 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>
- ***Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng**
 - My commentary: Yes, this is a show. An excellent show. But it's an even more excellent book. Some of the reviews for *Little Fires Everywhere* note that it's a book about motherhood, but it's about much more than that, and the questions of what family means, where you fit within your family, and what forms your identity overall apply to any reader. Ng's writing just feels true.
 - From the author's website: From the bestselling author of EVERYTHING I NEVER TOLD YOU, a riveting story that traces the intertwined fates of the picture-perfect Richardson family and the enigmatic mother and daughter who upend their lives. *Little Fires Everywhere* explores the weight of secrets, the nature of art and identity, and the ferocious pull of motherhood – and the danger of believing that following the rules can avert disaster. Read more here: <https://www.celesteng.com/little-fires-everywhere>

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 **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.

***Note:** choosing the suggested or highlighted quotes from an online resource (like but not limited to Sparknotes) does not count as thoughtfully choosing your own quotes.