



Hingham Public Schools Summer Reading
Grade 12 AP Literature
 Summer 2018

Assignment:

1. Seniors enrolled in AP Literature are required to read *A Prayer for Owen Meany* by John Irving and one other selection from the AP Literature list.
2. Students are encouraged take notes on their reading in a style that suits their learning process; however, those notes may not be used on any formal, in-class assessments (e.g. test, in-class essay). Notes may be useful for any take-home essay/assessment students will complete after the start of the school year.
3. Students are encouraged to read additional books off the list for personal enrichment; all texts on the list mirror themes and literary styles that will be covered through the school year, and they provide excellent reading practice for AP-level material.

Required Text for Grade 12 AP Literature		
Title	Author	Synopsis
<i>A Prayer for Owen Meany</i> (Required)	Irving	A compelling plot line traces the friendship of two boys from childhood through college, grapples with the effect of the Vietnam conflict on the characters and the town, and begs the reader to believe in a miracle.
Grade 12 AP Lit Choices (Select 1)		
<i>Ragtime</i>	Doctorow	Ragtime captures the spirit of America in the era between the turn of the century and the First World War. The story opens in 1906 in New Rochelle, New York, at the home of an affluent American family. One lazy Sunday afternoon, the famous escape artist Harry Houdini swerves his car into a telephone pole outside their house. And almost magically, the line between fantasy and historical fact, between real and imaginary characters, disappears.
<i>Invisible Man</i>	Ellison	A classic from the moment it first appeared in 1952, <i>Invisible Man</i> chronicles the travels of its narrator, a young, nameless black man, as he moves through the levels of intolerance and cultural blindness. Searching for a context in which to know himself, he discovers how elusive and unknowable truth really is.
<i>Middlesex</i>	Eugenides	<i>"I was born twice: first, as a baby girl...and then again, as a teenage boy, in August of 1974. . . My birth certificate lists my name as Calliope Helen Stephanides. My most recent driver's license...records my first name simply as Cal."</i> So begins the breathtaking story of Calliope Stephanides and three generations of the Greek-American Stephanides family. To understand why Calliope is not like other girls, she has to uncover a guilty family secret and the astonishing genetic history that turns Callie into Cal, one of the most audacious and wondrous narrators in contemporary fiction. Lyrical and thrilling, <i>Middlesex</i> is an exhilarating reinvention of the American epic and winner of the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

Title	Author	Synopsis
<i>The Poisonwood Bible</i>	Kingsolver	A fierce, evangelical Baptist takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1957. This novel is an epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in postcolonial Africa.
<i>One Hundred Years of Solitude</i>	Marquez	The story follows 100 years in the life of Macondo, a village founded by José Arcadio Buendía and occupied by descendants all sporting variations on their progenitor's name. Then there are the women who struggle to remain grounded even as their men folk build castles in the air. Civil war rages throughout, hearts break, dreams shatter, and lives are lost in this work of, magical realism. Translated into more than two dozen languages, Marquez's brilliant novel of love and loss in Macondo stands at the apex of 20th-century literature.
<i>Beloved</i>	Morrison	This Pulitzer Prize winning-novel (1988) by Nobel Prize-winning author Toni Morrison (1993) stares into the abyss of slavery and transforms history into a story as powerful as Exodus and as intimate as a lullaby. Sethe, its protagonist, was born a slave and escaped to Ohio, but eighteen years later she is still not free. She has too many memories of Sweet Home, the beautiful farm where so many hideous things happened. And Sethe's new home is haunted by the ghost of her baby, who died namelessly and whose tombstone is engraved with a single word: Beloved.
<i>State of Wonder</i>	Patchet	Dr. Marina Singh, a research scientist with a Minnesota pharmaceutical company, is sent to Brazil to track down her former mentor, Dr. Annick Swenson, who seems to have all but disappeared in the Amazon while working on what is destined to be an extremely valuable new drug, the development of which has already cost the company a fortune. Nothing about Marina's assignment is easy: not only does no one know where Dr. Swenson is, but the last person who was sent to find her, Marina's research partner Anders Eckman, died before he could complete his mission. Plagued by trepidation, Marina embarks on an odyssey into the insect-infested jungle in hopes of finding her former mentor as well as answers to several troubling questions about her friend's death, the state of her company's future, and her own past.
<i>White Teeth</i>	Smith	In <i>White Teeth</i> , first novelist Zadie Smith takes on race, sex, class, history, and the minefield of gender politics, and such is her wit and inventiveness that these weighty subjects seem effortlessly light. She also has an impressive geographical range, guiding the reader from Jamaica to Turkey to Bangladesh and back again. The book's home base is a scrubby North London borough, where we encounter Smith's unlikely heroes: prevaricating Archie Jones and intemperate Samad Iqbal, who served together in the so-called Buggered Battalion during World War II. In the ensuing decades, both have gone forth and multiplied. The mixed blessings of assimilation are an ongoing torture for Samad as he watches his sons grow up. These classic immigrant fears--of dilution and disappearance--are no laughing matter. But in the end, they're exactly what gives <i>White Teeth</i> its lasting power and undeniable bite. Big questions demand boldly drawn characters. Zadie Smith's aren't heroic, just real: warm, funny, misguided, and entirely familiar.
<i>The Confederacy of Dunces</i>	Toole	The hero of this tragicomic classic that won the Pulitzer Prize in 1981 is Ignatius J. Reilly, an absurdly self-absorbed "Don Quixote" of the French Quarter whose romp through New Orleans and oddball encounters make for one of the funniest spot-on satires in American Literature.