Welcome to AP Literature and Composition! In AP Literature you are expected to read not only a breadth of texts, but to read such texts in a deep and meaningful context. You will engage in close reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature to deepen your understanding of the ways writers use language to comment on experiences, institutions, social structures as well as to provide meaning and enjoyment.

The following Big Ideas serve as the foundation of the course, enabling students to create meaningful connections among concepts. Each big idea correlates with an enduring understanding, a long-term takeaway related to the big idea:

**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.

**Literary Argumentation**: Readers establish and communicate their interpretations of literature through arguments supported by textual evidence.

(CollegeBoard.org)
I. Please choose ONE text from the following list to read this summer:

_Prophet Song_, Paul Lynch
On a dark, wet evening in Dublin, scientist and mother-of-four Eilish Stack answers her front door to find the GNSB on her doorstep. Two officers from Ireland’s newly formed secret police want to speak with her husband. Things are falling apart. Ireland is in the grip of a government that is taking a turn towards tyranny. And as the blood-dimmed tide is loosed, Eishl finds herself caught within the nightmare logic of a collapsing society – assailed by unpredictable forces beyond her control and forced to do whatever it takes to keep her family together.

_The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store_, James McBride
In 1972, when workers in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, were digging the foundations for a new development, the last thing they expected to find was a skeleton at the bottom of a well. Who the skeleton was and how it got there were two of the long-held secrets kept by the residents of Chicken Hill, the dilapidated neighborhood where immigrant Jews and African Americans lived side by side and shared ambitions and sorrows. As the characters’ stories overlap and deepen, it becomes clear how much the people who live on the margins of white, Christian America struggle and what they must do to survive.

_Trust_, Hernan Diaz
Even through the roar and effervescence of the 1920s, everyone in New York has heard of Benjamin and Helen Rask. He is a legendary Wall Street tycoon; she is the daughter of eccentric aristocrats. Together, they have risen to the very top of a world of seemingly endless wealth—all as a decade of excess and speculation draws to an end. But at what cost have they acquired their immense fortune? A riveting novel set in a bygone America that explores family, wealth and ambition through linked narratives rendered in different literary styles, a complex examination of love and power in a country where capitalism is king.

_Salt to the Sea_, Ruta Sepetys
Winter 1945. WWII. Four refugees. Four stories.
Each one born of a different homeland; each one hunted, and haunted, by tragedy, lies, war. As thousands desperately flock to the coast in the midst of a Soviet advance, four paths converge, vying for passage aboard the _Wilhelm Gustloff_, a ship that promises safety and freedom. But not all promises can be kept . . .

_North Woods_, Daniel Mason
A sweeping novel about a single house in the woods of New England, told through the lives of those who inhabit it across the centuries. Following the cycles of history, nature, and even language, this novel shows the myriad, magical ways in which we’re connected to our environment, to history, and to one another.

_There There_, Tommy Orange
A novel that follows twelve characters from Native communities: all traveling to the Big Oakland Powwow, all connected to one another in ways they may not yet realize. They converge and collide on one fateful day at the Big Oakland Powwow and together this chorus of voices tells of the plight of the urban Native American—grappling with a complex and painful history, with an inheritance of beauty and spirituality, with communion and sacrifice and heroism.
II. As you read, please keep thorough, thoughtful notes by writing down examples of the first five of the Big Ideas (character, setting, structure, narration, figurative language) and providing commentary about the author’s use of each. This will be submitted at the start of the course. You may use and expand the organizer provided in the link below to write your notes.

Summer Assignment Notes

III. And finally, upon the start of the course in the fall, you will be given an in-class writing assignment in which you will write a response to explore the sixth Big Idea– literary argumentation. You will use your knowledge of your chosen text as well as your notes to write your response.