

In a Strange Land:  
2022-2023 AP Literature and Composition  
Summer Homework

Hello! Welcome to the start of your AP Literature and Composition experience. My goal for this summer homework is to prepare you for the rigor, complexity, occasional bafflement, chortle, thrill, furrowed brow, and sense of accomplishment that develop from the texts, discussions, and assignments of the course. It is my hope that this begins a journey to new (or rekindled) passions for the appreciation of consuming, discussing, and writing about quality literature, and I suppose a four or five on the AP exam isn't too bad either!

**Part One – In a Strange Land**

Too often we are so fixated on the end - getting to where we are going - that we forget to take in the world around us. And what a strange world that can often be! You and the protagonist(s) of the novel selections must learn to navigate uncomfortable, new worlds, learning about yourselves in the process. Choose one of the following options:

*The Nickel Boys* by Colson Whitehead  
*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte  
*Sister Carrie* by Theodore Dreiser  
*Cat's Cradle* by Kurt Vonnegut  
*The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue* by V.E. Schwab

Purchasing the book is recommended (Amazon is great for used books at low prices), but you may obtain the text from a library if you commit to checking it out again during the first 3 weeks of school for assignments, or find an online version. You will be expected to annotate or take notes in some way during the course of your reading.

Possible annotations:

- Ask questions. Sometimes a simple “?” in the margin will do. At other times, it's best to write out the question in full. What doubt, concern, or confusion do you encounter as you read?
- Make connections. Draw arrows or symbols to link ideas, or make notes like “see page 36” to link related passages.
- Add personal asides. Record what you think and feel while reading.
- Define terms. Define any difficult words that you want to understand and remember.
- Create a marginal index. Use keywords, symbols, even tabs, track key themes, motifs, subplots, &c.
- Underlining or highlighting key words or phrases can also be helpful, but don't overdo it. If you're not careful, highlighting and underlining can translate into “I'll learn/think about this later.”
- Your future assignment with this novel will involve writing a brief essay discussing a complex theme, so please be on the lookout for thematic ideas that connect with you!

I advise carefully selecting a novel of interest to you. It is helpful to have a friend on-call if you get stuck, but it is more important to choose a text that you are excited to begin. Read some reviews or “blurbs” on each of these before deciding.

For your selected text, you will also be asked to complete an attached Major Works Data Sheet. This graphic organizer will help you prepare for the AP exam. Please complete this electronically; you do not even need to

print a copy because you will submit to Schoology at the start of the year. Do your best to fill in as much as possible, but if questions arise we can address them when school starts. [Available on the Summer HW Website](#)

### **Part Two - Reflect on Where You've Been**

Fully aware that you are about to enter an extremely strange land (college) after this school year, I want to help you get started on that process. During the first couple of weeks of the term, we will be working on a couple drafts of a college or scholarship essay. Find a school or scholarship prompt that you intend to apply, and compose an initial draft. This will serve as an initial sample of your writing. Have both the prompt and essay available in electronic form. \*\*Special Note: Most college essays are only about 500-700 words, so please do not get nervous if it seems short.

If you are struggling to find a prompt, please consider one of the Common App Prompts:

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

### **Final Recommendations:**

Budget your time on this summer homework wisely. You will need to start on this well before the week or so leading up to the school year. You will be expected to work concurrently on tasks like reading, writing, and presentations during this course; consider the summer homework practice!

Contact us if you have questions or troubles. We are available over the summer to answer any questions or concerns. We may take a day or so to respond, but you can ensure we won't leave you hanging. Emails [jbretz@brownsburg.k12.in.us](mailto:jbretz@brownsburg.k12.in.us) or [ksciacca@brownsburg.k12.in.us](mailto:ksciacca@brownsburg.k12.in.us)