

AP Literature Summer Reading

Mr. Burke

Overview

Incoming AP Literature students are required to read several books over the summer in preparation for the course and subsequent AP exam. One portion of the AP exam, the Free Response essay, demands that students have a wide range of challenging literary works on which they can draw when writing that essay. The goal of this summer's reading, however, is not to prepare you for the exam but to initiate you into the conversation about ideas through books by both contemporary and classic authors.

AP Literature *is* college; it not a preparation for college. If you are looking for ways around this reading assignment, you should not enroll in this class.

Students who do not complete the summer reading—all of it, as spelled out by these guidelines—will not be eligible to take the course.

If you have any questions, write to me at jburke@englishcompanion.com.

Requirements

Each student must do the following:

- Choose one pair of books from the following list of books.
- Read the chosen books, taking notes or annotating as needed to help you do well on the in-class essay on these books. These notes are for you: I will not collect or evaluate them.
- Purchase, read, and annotate *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster. (Note: There are *many* used copies of this book on Amazon.com for only a couple dollars.)
- Write an in-class essay on the books in which you use the ideas from Foster's book as a guide to analyze the literature you read.

Titles

The following pairs of books comprise a conversation that should take place between you, the authors, and their characters. The books share a common idea that should be clear enough by the time you finish reading them. While there is no required order, you might consider reading Foster's book first as a way of preparing to read the two novels.

1. *Beowulf* (Seamus Heaney translation)
Going After Cacciato, Tim O'Brien
2. *Caramelo*, Sandra Cisneros
The Waves, Virginia Woolf
3. *The Book Thief* (by Marcus Zusak)
Obasan, Joy Kagawa
4. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Mohsin Hamid
The Fall, Albert Camus