

Dear Literature Scholars,

Welcome to AP Literature and Composition! I am happy that you have enrolled in the course next Fall and I am looking forward to working with you to engage in the important, challenging, and enjoyable task of studying literature.

To prepare for our year-long study of literature, **please read and study the novel *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison over the Summer break.**

You may pick up a copy from the textbook/chromebook window next to the library before you leave for the break. When you go to check out the book, please let Ms. Duncan know that you are an AP Literature student, and will be checking out the text for Summer.

As you read, please keep a few notes with discussion questions and/or any notes you feel are important for the text. Feel free to comment on the characters/characterization, setting, narrative style, the structure, use of figurative language, social/historical context, and/or literary merit. When we return in the Fall, we will discuss the novel, and you will be asked to complete a writing assignment.

I hope that you find reading this text to be a rewarding experience. *Invisible Man* by Ellison, originally published in 1952, is considered one of the “Great” texts of American Literature, and it is the text cited most-frequently on the AP Literature and Composition exam. Please know that it can be challenging (and controversial) for a number of reasons— but I ask that you stick with it and do your best. If you have comprehension questions that arise, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I may also send a few guides and supplementary readings to support your understanding of the text during the Summer.

To help further guide your study of this novel, please keep in mind the goals of our course, as directed by the College Board:

“The AP English course in Literature and Composition should engage students in the careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature. Through the close reading of selected texts, students deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure for their readers. “As they read, students should consider a work’s structure, style, and themes as well as such smaller-scale elements as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism and tone. Students should read deliberately and thoroughly, taking time to understand a work’s complexity, to absorb its richness of meaning, and to analyze how that meaning is embodied in literary form. In addition to considering a work’s literary artistry, students should consider the social and historical values it reflects and embodies. Careful attention to both textual detail and historical context should provide a foundation for interpretation, whatever critical perspectives are brought to bear on the literary works studied” (The College Board).

Please further note:

“Issues that might, from a specific cultural viewpoint, be considered controversial, including depictions of nationalities, religions, ethnicities, dialects, gender, or class, are often represented artistically in works of literature. AP students are not expected or asked to subscribe to any one specific set of cultural or political values, but are expected to have the maturity to analyze perspectives different from their own and to question the meaning, purpose, or effect of such content within the literary work as a whole” (AP Literature and Composition Course and Exam Description 117)

I hope you all have a great break, and happy reading !

Best,
-Mr Carroll