



# Naperville North High School

## AP Literature & Composition Summer Reading Assignment

Welcome to AP Literature & Composition, future students! We are very excited to meet you and begin our exploration of reading critically and studying some great classic texts. This course is about becoming even more effective readers and writers through close analysis. To that end, we would like you to complete the following readings over the summer so we can be prepared to discuss in August 2021.

- Read closely and annotate the novel *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri. You should have received a copy of this text in your most recent Communication Arts class at North. Otherwise, you will need to obtain your own print copy of the book through an online or local bookseller so you can annotate as you read. If you are facing difficulty with obtaining or accessing this text for any reason, please contact Ms. Helena Hitzeman, Communication Arts department chair ([hhitzeman@naperville203.org](mailto:hhitzeman@naperville203.org)).
- Select a novel of *literary merit* that you are interested in reading--it might be a novel you have heard about but haven't read yet, one that is recommended to you, or simply a novel you believe is worthy of being considered one of "literary merit." **Please be sure that you select a work of FICTION for this novel.** The definition of "literary merit" is one that we will discuss at great length throughout the course, so consider what you believe this definition to embody as you make your selection. Be prepared to write about and discuss your ideas about why this particular work is an example of literary merit and why you chose to read it.

Questions to consider while reading: Take notes and/or make annotations as you read each novel.		
What interesting or enlightening aspects were you particularly drawn to as you were reading this novel?	How does the author's background or time period in which the author was writing have significance in this novel?	What patterns, contrasts, oppositions, repetitions emerged as you were reading this novel?
How do characters and/or narrators function within the text?	How does the plot structure and/or setting function within the text?	How does word choice and imagery function within the text?

**Annotation** is simply noting words on the page that strike you, phrases that confuse or thrill you, or places where you want to talk back to the speaker or [author]. Your goal is to record ideas and impressions for future analysis. Why bother to do this? Here's what well-known scholar and avid reader Mortimer Adler says in *How to Read a Book*:

Why is marking up a [text] indispensable to reading? First, it keeps you awake. (And I don't mean merely conscious; I mean awake.) In the second place, reading, if it is active, is thinking, and thinking tends to express itself in words, spoken or written. The marked [text] is usually the thought-through book. Finally, writing helps you remember the thought you had, or the thoughts the author expressed.

So whether you use sticky notes, highlight passages, or write comments directly in the margins, annotation helps you become a better reader. There are no hard-and-fast rules for annotating properly, but the following approach is a good way to get started. As an alternative, you may take notes in a notebook. If you choose to take notes in a notebook, we recommend that you include page numbers and direct quotations so that you may better recall and understand why you took them.)

**We are looking forward to a great 2021-2022 AP Lit school year! Have a fantastic summer!**

Contact us with any questions: Mrs. Trowbridge ([ktrowbridge@naperville203.org](mailto:ktrowbridge@naperville203.org)) / Ms. Hitzeman ([hhitzeman@naperville203.org](mailto:hhitzeman@naperville203.org))