



## AP Language and Composition Summer Assignment 2018

Students who have chosen to challenge themselves by taking a college-level English class should LOVE to read. The phrase “of literary merit” is one students have probably heard before. To some it may mean: a book which teachers, librarians, and adults enjoy, but in actuality is hard to read, difficult to relate to, and makes no sense. For the AP Language student, a work of literary merit:

1. Has been judged to have artistic quality by the literary community (teachers, writers, librarians, literary critics, the public, etc.)
2. Has stood the test of time
3. Deals with themes which are universal, complex or worthy of discussion and further study.
4. Demonstrates innovation in voice, style, structure, characterization, plot, and/or description.
5. May have a social, political or ideological impact on the society from which they arise.
6. Is universal in its appeal (does not appeal to one culture or time period).
7. Entertains the reader and is interesting to read.

Not every work of literary merit will fit every criteria listed above for every reader. Some titles might meet 5 criteria, others 6, some 4 depending on the reader judging the title. These criteria simply give one an idea of what is meant by the term. This summer, you will do the following, keeping the above criteria in mind. **Choose and read a work of literary merit. It MUST be:**

1. A work by an **American** author.
2. A work that meets **at least 5 of the 7 criteria** listed above.
3. A work of **fiction**.
4. A book you have never read before. (Do not choose a book that is below grade level or taught in middle school.)
5. A book you are genuinely interested in reading.
6. Of reasonable length (no novellas).

This means, for example, that *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway or *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck would be too short for consideration. A play by Shakespeare would not be eligible because he is British, not American. Do not re-read a book you read last year in English class or at any other time.

The following titles are **NOT** eligible for consideration:

- *The Great Gatsby*
- *The Catcher in the Rye*
- *Fahrenheit 451*
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
- *Into the Wild*
- *The Road*
- *The Awakening*

If you have any questions, contact an AP Language and Composition teacher listed below.

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