

AP Literature & Composition: Summer Reading 2018-2019

Welcome to AP Literature and Composition!

Below you will find the summer reading assignment for the course. Read it carefully, and if you have any questions, come and see me before the year ends, or send me an email over the summer. Enjoy!

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Enduring Understandings:

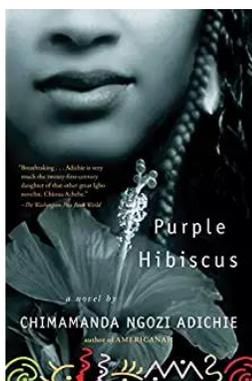
- Effective readers examine the author's use of language (figurative language, detail, syntax, and other devices) in order to arrive at a textually-supported interpretation of the work.
- Effective readers understand that the author's choice of vehicle, structure, and style affects the message of the work and how that message is received by the audience.
- Reading literature allows a person to explore different perspectives on the world and humanity, identifying the viability of these perspectives based on his or her experiences, observations, and studies.

Essential Questions:

- How do authors use language to make meaning?
 - How does the structure of the work influence my understanding of it?
 - What does it mean to read critically?
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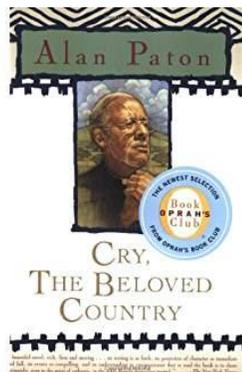
Your first assignment for AP Literature and Composition is to **read 2 novels**, both of which are set in Africa (one in Nigeria and one in South Africa).

Summer Reading Text #1: *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (also on the Senior Honors English reading list)



Purple Hibiscus tells the story of Kambili, a young girl who lives a seemingly idyllic life in Nigeria with her wealthy family; that life, however, is undercut by her father's tyranny and cruelty. Kambili's journey in the novel takes her to a place of freedom which she must then reconcile with the oppressiveness of her home.

Summer Reading Text #2: *Cry, The Beloved Country* by Alan Paton



-----*Cry, The Beloved Country* is set in pre-apartheid South Africa (apartheid was the legal segregation of blacks and whites in South Africa that existed from 1948-1994). The novel recounts the story of Stephen Kumalo, a poor Zulu pastor, and his son Absalom. Kumalo's journey takes him from his simple village home in Natal to Johannesburg, South Africa, a sprawling city rife with racial injustice. There, as he searches for the truth about his son, Kumalo develops the capacity for hope.

Expectations:

1. *Purple Hibiscus* is a great story, one which I think you'll really enjoy. Pay close attention to both the coming-of-age aspect of the novel and the cultural conflict that challenges the characters' sense of identity, and consider the following:
 - a. How does Kambili's understanding of the world shift as the novel progresses? What causes that shift?
 - b. How is Kambili caught between colliding cultures or belief systems? How does that conflict bring her sense of identity into question?
 - c. What roles do fear, faith and family play in Kambili's journey?

 2. *Cry, The Beloved Country* is also a great story, but you might find it a bit more challenging to read. The style of the novel is different from what you're used to – it's poetic at times, using minimal punctuation and no dialogue indications. Give it a chance; the novel is beautifully written and not to be rushed through. Pay close attention to the language of the novel, how it's written, and consider the following:
 - a. What does Stephen Kumalo's physical and spiritual journey of discovery reveal about the problems in South Africa and what's needed to address them?
 - b. How does the use of figurative language, setting, and the style of the novel help us to understand the separate realms of the blacks and whites in South Africa and the racial injustice that permeates the country?
 - c. What roles do fear, faith, and family play in Kumalo's journey?
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Assessments:

1. Not that you need any encouragement to read – after all, you're in AP Lit – but be aware that there will be a passage-based reading quiz for each of the novels. The quizzes will be in the first week of class.
 2. You'll have your first experience with AP Lit-style **in-class timed writings**, using both novels as the basis of your essays.
 3. Class discussions, too, will focus on the novels for the first weeks of the course.
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