

AP ENGLISH 4
2011-2012
PLANO SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

We, the AP English 4 team, want to be the first to congratulate you as you begin your senior year at PSHS. We know you will find this final year in high school exciting, rewarding and challenging. As AP English Language and American Studies students, you have already proven that you are ready to meet the challenge of AP English Literature.

Although summer reading is not required for AP English 4, you should know that all AP English 4 students will be studying Fyodor Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment beginning in mid-September. **We strongly advise you to begin reading this lengthy work before school starts.** Be sure to read the *Constance Garnett translation*. Also be sure to **highlight and annotate** the novel for key ideas. You may also want to locate and read literary criticism to aid you in understanding the novel. Your in-depth knowledge of this novel will be assessed through graded discussions and essays.

In addition, we have prepared a list of suggested novels for summer reading. Before making your final selection, be sure to read a description of the book (an online site such as amazon.com is useful) to determine if the subject matter is appropriate for you.

The Bonesetter's Daughter —Amy Tan

Going After Cacciato – Tim O'Brien and Slaughterhouse-Five - Kurt Vonnegut (consider reading both)

The Poisonwood Bible—Barbara Kingsolver

1984 – George Orwell and Brave New World- Aldous Huxley (consider reading both)

Native Speaker – Chang-Rae Lee

The God of Small Things – Arundhati Roy

Prayer for Owen Meany – John Irving

You may wish to read more than one selection, as they all frequently appear as choices on the Advanced Placement Literature and Composition Exam.

Also, to prepare for the many mythological and Biblical allusions in the literature studied, we suggest acquiring a book on mythology such as Edith Hamilton's or Bulfinch's Mythology, as well as, becoming familiar with the Book of Genesis from the Bible and/or acquiring a Biblical reference book.

NOTE TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS: Literature of the Advanced Placement 4 level requires considerable maturity. The purpose of literature is not just to please, but to make the reader think. The purpose of literature is not to affirm the reader's beliefs, but rather to challenge them, so that they may be affirmed or rejected. The purpose of literature is not to serve as a vehicle or tool by which objectives, skills, or even predetermined values are taught, but to offer an art form that should be appreciated as an expression of the human condition. Literature demands that we cherish our right to be pleased, enriched, and strengthened, as well as our right to be challenged, offended, and even threatened. Literature demands confrontation between what we believe and what we are asked to consider. From that confrontation comes both struggle and growth, wherein lie the dignity and the nobility of man. Literature as art is an end unto itself whereby appreciation, not approval, is the goal. A certain level of maturity is necessary to understand that light and dark, pleasure and pain, joy and depression are inextricably bound as part of the human condition, each defining and making possible the alternate. It is our hope that students will come to appreciate the textual richness and depth of thought that this literature offers.

See you in August! The PSHS AP English 4 Team