



Austin High School Summer Reading Assignment Incoming 12th grade AP Literature and Composition for 2020-2021

Dear Class of 2021,

While reading in general is the expectation of any student, successful Advanced Placement students are those who read *outside* and *beyond* class assignments. We believe that life-long learners are also life-long readers and thinkers. Additionally, there are certain realities we must accept. In registering for AP Literature and Composition, you are committing to a college level course during your high school career. In order for you to compete with your peers across the nation not only on the AP test but in the college classroom, you need constant exposure to works of literary merit. We think you will find your reading both enjoyable and academically worthwhile.

The assignment asks for you to read and demonstrate some of your thoughts about the narrative elements in the novel *prior to the second day of class*. Please keep the following in mind: summer reading assignments help your English teacher gauge your critical reading, writing, and thinking skills. Therefore, all work should be completed independently; do not partner with a friend, or receive too much help from a tutor or parent. Work submitted will be screened through a plagiarism clearinghouse. Do not conduct any research online or seek out sources like gradesaver, sparknotes, cliffsnotes, schmoop, etc. which are websites designed to take advanced texts and simplify them for the reader. Using online sources like these websites is prohibited in the [Austin High ELA Plagiarism Policy](#). Our expectation is that you read the text and work independently with the text assigned, even if you have to grapple with some analysis. If you have any questions, please reach out to an English teacher listed on the assignment. We're here to help!

We look forward to learning with you,

The AP Literature and Composition Teachers

Summer Reading Selection

All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr

If you are unable to purchase the novel, you can find it as a pdf by copying this link into your browser:

http://ahhsummerreading.weebly.com/uploads/1/0/3/7/103700016/all_the_light_we_cannot_see.pdf

About the Novel

From *The New York Times Book Review*—

“I must blame Anthony Doerr for lost sleep, because once I started reading his new novel, *All the Light We Cannot See*, there was no putting it down. Told mostly in the present tense, in short and usually pointed chapters, the story moves briskly and efficiently toward its climactic encounter during the Allied bombing of Saint-Malo, France, a couple of months after D-Day. Although the narrative consists largely of flashbacks, it’s easy to follow because it focuses most sharply on only two characters, the blind child Marie-Laure LeBlanc, who takes part in the French Resistance, and the very Aryan-looking Werner Pfennig, a technocratic private in the service of the Thousand-Year Reich.

From Barnes and Noble—

“... the stunningly beautiful instant New York Times bestseller about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.

Marie-Laure lives in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where her father works. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure’s reclusive great uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum’s most valuable and dangerous jewel.

In a mining town in Germany, Werner Pfennig, an orphan, grows up with his young sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find that brings them news and stories from places they have never seen or imagined. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments and is enlisted to use his talent to track down the resistance. Deftly interweaving the lives of Marie-Laure and Werner, Doerr illuminates the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another.”

From *The Washington Post* Book Review—

“I’m not sure I will read a better novel this year than Anthony Doerr’s *All the Light We Cannot See*. Enthrillingly told, beautifully written and so emotionally plangent that some passages bring tears, it is completely unsentimental—no mean trick when you consider that Doerr’s two protagonists are children who have been engulfed in the horror of World War II...A lesser novelist would be content with this achievement, but Doerr twists the puzzle-box once more and brings his novel into the present. One of his contemporary characters lament[s] that ‘every hour, someone for whom the war was memory falls out of the world.’ In this book—because of this book—those people do not disappear, but only become a part of the light that we cannot see.”

Academic Integrity:

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- Work submitted will be screened through a plagiarism clearinghouse. Do not conduct any research online or seek out sources like gradesaver, sparknotes, cliffsnotes, schmoop, etc. which are websites designed to take advanced texts and simplify them for the reader. Using online sources like these websites is prohibited in the [Austin High ELA Plagiarism Policy](#). Our expectation is that you read the text and work independently with the text assigned, even if you have to grapple with some analysis. If you have any questions, please reach out to an English teacher listed on the assignment. We're here to help!

The Assignment

1. Read and enjoy the book!
2. Complete the following **FIVE** responses in preparation of our discussion of the novel. For each of the following prompts, you will :
 - Identify an answer to the prompt.
 - Select a quotation that fits the requested narrative technique.
 - Write a thoughtful, thorough response regarding the significance of the quotation as an example of the narrative technique.

Your responses must be typed, and **they will be due within the first week of school**. Please type your response in the format of the sample below. Also be thoughtful about your choices as they should not overlap each other as there are many choices to add an overall variety of subject/character/event to your quotation choices.

- A. Select a quotation that is particularly indicative of **setting**. Discuss the significance of time & place and how the sensory details of the physical and/or social environment are important to the events that happen in that place.
- B. Select a quotation that highlights a **secondary character**. Discuss the significance of how and/or why this character is important to Marie-Laure’s or Werner’s journey.
- C. Select a quotation that highlights an **external conflict** between Marie-Laure or Werner and another character. Discuss the significance of this conflict and how it is important to Marie-Laure’s or Werner’s journey.

- D. Select a quotation that highlights an **internal conflict** experienced by Marie-Laure or Werner. Discuss the significance of the conflict and how it helps us understand Marie-Laure's or Werner's journey.
- E. Select a quotation that highlights a **symbol** found in the text. Discuss the significance of the symbol and how it helps us understand character, plot or setting in the novel. (**Symbols** can be people, places, or things in a narrative that suggest meanings beyond the literal. In *Lord of the Flies*, for example, the conch can represent order or attempts to establish civilization and order on the island. The destruction of the conch symbolizes the final end to civilization and the further descent of the boys into savagery.)

The following is a response to prompt "B" about external secondary character—

Marie-Laure's relationship with her great-uncle Etienne

"Other evenings they play Flying Couch. They climb onto the davenport and sit side by side, and Etienne says, 'Where to tonight, mademoiselle?' 'The jungle!' Or: 'Tahiti!' Or: 'Mozambique!' 'Oh, it's a long journey this time,' Etienne will say in an entirely new voice, smooth, velvety, a conductor's drawl. 'That's the Atlantic Ocean far below, it's shining under the moonlight, can you smell it? Feel how cold it is up here? Feel the wind in your hair?...We're in Borneo now, can't you tell? We're skimming the treetops now'. . . They visit Scotland, New York City, Santiago. More than once they put on winter coats and visit the moon. 'Can't you feel how light we are, Marie? You can move by hardly twitching a muscle!' He sets her in his wheeled desk chair and pants as he whirls her in circles until she cannot laugh anymore for the pain of it." (151)

Discussion of how this secondary character and this moment is important to Marie-Laure's journey:

This interaction between Marie-Laure and her great-uncle, Etienne, highlights several aspects about Marie-Laure including her active imagination as well as her youth at only twelve years old. The playfulness of their relationship in this moment serves as a counterbalance to her present interactions with her own father who, while always loving toward her, is obsessively focused on constructing a model of Saint-Malo that he deems necessary for her survival in their new home. Reading books together and concocting games such as Flying Couch help bond Marie-Laure and Etienne quickly and allows her to break down some of his reclusive, anxious nature as they become closer. The bond they share is what leads him to reveal the hidden radio transmitter which they have not turned over to German forces as well as what likely inspires some of his courage to later participate in the French Resistance. The devotion he feels to her becomes increasingly evident when he risks leaving his home to try to find her, and it's clear Etienne is an important adult male figure in Marie-Laure's life who gains a sense of himself and his renewed purpose because of his relationship with her.

Questions

If you have questions or need more information about the assignment, please feel free to contact Mrs. Ault at kerri.ault@austinsd.org, Mr. Bronikowski at aaron.bronikowski@austinsd.org or Renae Jackson at renae.jackson@austinsd.org.