

May 31, 2016

Dear AP English Literature and Composition student:

I am excited about the literary journey we will embark upon next fall. As a student in AP Lit, you will travel through classic and contemporary works of literature from a variety of genres.

Just as any trip requires some advance preparation, so, too, does this one. As many of you probably already know, some summer reading is usually required of AP Literature students. Since the AP Lit curriculum is so tight, reading a book or two during the summer frees us up a bit during the school year and allows us to cover more material.

This year, I am assigning you **just one book** to read before school begins:

**The Odyssey by Homer**

What better book to begin our own literary odyssey? Many have called this classic “the best adventure story ever written.” **Please read the entire novel;** however, you do not have to read the afterword called “Homer’s Words.”

**You may pick up a copy of The Odyssey from me in my classroom anytime this week, or Monday or Tuesday next week, before or after school, or between classes. First come, first served.**

You can also find copies at any bookstore or perhaps even your own bookshelves at home. Our school copy is the version translated by W. H. D. Rouse, which is written in novel form. You are certainly welcome to use another translation or a version that is written in the original epic poem form, if you prefer.

**Please come to our first class next fall, on August 30, 2016, ready to discuss the novel. We will be having two tests on The Odyssey sometime during the first week of school (one objective test and one essay test)!**

As school ends this year, I am sure the last thing you want to be thinking about is what you need to read next year, but I wanted to avail you the convenience of picking up the book before you check out for the summer. Again, I look forward to our literary journeys together next year.

Sincerely,

Mr. Backen  
Room 152