

**Pikesville High School
Summer Reading
AP Language and AP Literature
2009 - 2010 School Year**

Reading is essential for success in college. Ultimately, the AP courses at Pikesville High are designed to imitate college level courses. You are expected to read a wide variety of literature in both the 11th and 12th grade and carefully analyze and understand what you have read. It is because of this that you are required to complete your summer reading before the first day of classes. You **will be** assessed on these books within the first few weeks of school. The books chosen are approved by the College Board and reflect the types of books you will read all year long. All are available in the public library. If you cannot find a copy, contact the school for assistance.

AP English 11

Walden, Henry David Thoreau

Nonfiction authors like Thoreau have great control of diction, tone, mood, and purpose in order to deliver a message to their readers. In *Walden*, you will take a journey to a quiet place, where the jokes are meant to be taken seriously, where exaggeration and hyperbole emphasize truth, and where civil disobedience and individuality represent the Right of all people. Practicing your reading skills with this challenging book will prime the thinking of all those students who will most likely encounter a passage from *Walden* on the AP Exam.

The Grapes of Wrath, John Steinbeck

Steinbeck tells the story of the Joad family and its struggle through death and tragedy as the family seeks a more “fruitful” life in California. Not only is this a tale of perseverance and hardship, but also one that raises the issue of human kindness and compassion. Even though this book is fiction, we will discuss purpose, rhetorical devices, and audience, and how these concepts and skills are essential to success on the AP Exam.

AP English 12

The Awakening, Kate Chopin

This nineteenth century classic novel was scorned by the people of the Victorian conservative South where women were still the property of their husbands. Chopin writes a realistic novel rich with imagery and a possible ironic narrator who explores independence, desire, self-expression, solitude, and consequences. The “awakenings” that you will have as a reader are just as important as those of the protagonist, Edna Pontellier. Maybe you too will awaken to your “position in the universe as a human being.”

The Road, Cormac McCarthy

Things can't get any worse. Or can they? McCarthy writes a novel that is a bit of a paradox: beautifully written images but of a cold, ash-strewn, uninhabitable world. Armed with a pistol (with only two bullets) and a shopping cart full of random necessities, a father and son travel along a road vacated by all other forms of life. Their journey is a physical one, but your journey as the reader will question your will to survive.

Questions about summer reading should be directed to Mr. Hill, English department chair, at ghill@bcps.org.