

English IV IB Literature / Language & Literature Summer Reading Assignment

Below are the details of your summer reading assignment for English IB DP Year 2. If you have questions or concerns about any of the information below, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at pdennis@uplifteducation.org.

Over the summer, each of you will read two texts: the Anchor Text (outlined below) AND one of the four Secondary Texts (also outlined below).

1. Anchor TEXT:

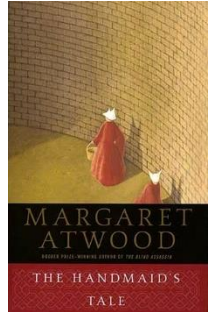
Everyone will read the following text before school next year. The book can be purchased on Amazon, as well as through Barnes and Noble and other bookstores.

- **Ahmed Saadawi, *Frankenstein in Baghdad* (2013)**
 - “From the rubble-strewn streets of U.S.-occupied Baghdad, Hadi – a scavenger and an oddball fixture at a local café – collects human body parts and stitches them together to create a corpse. His goal, he claims, is for the government to recognize the parts as people and to give them proper burial. But when the corpse goes missing, a wave of eerie murders sweeps the city. Hadi soon realizes he’s created a monster, one that needs human flesh to survive – first from the guilty, and then from anyone in its path” (Back Cover of the Novel).
- **Reading Annotations:**
 - ***At the start of next year there will be a major discussion (TEST GRADE) paralleling and analyzing major themes and elements in both the anchor text AND your chosen author for the secondary text:***
 - Read and annotate, because we will be discussing the text all of semester 1. ***You will be able to use your annotated texts for a graded discussion first quarter.***
 - Marking and annotating a text is like having a conversation with a book—it allows the reader to ask questions, comment on meaning, and mark passages to revisit.
 - **How to Annotate:**
 - Make brief notes on the page or on a sticky note marking important plot events, narrative shifts, or themes, images, and details that form a pattern throughout the text (motif).
 - Circle words that are unfamiliar or unusual—try to figure out the word’s meaning through contextual clues and supplement with a dictionary.

2. Secondary TEXT (CHOOSE @ Least ONE of the texts below to read):

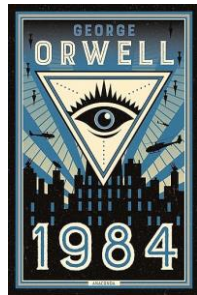
Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985)

- “Set in the near future, the novel describes life in what was once the United States and is now called the Republic of Gilead, a monotheocracy that has reacted to social unrest and a sharply declining birthrate by reverting to, and going beyond, the repressive intolerance of the original Puritans. The regime takes the Book of Genesis absolutely at its word, with bizarre consequences for the women and men in its population. The story is told through the eyes of Offred, one of the unfortunate Handmaids under the new social order. ... *The Handmaid's Tale* is funny, unexpected, horrifying, and altogether convincing. It is at once scathing satire, dire warning, and a tour de force.” – Amazon



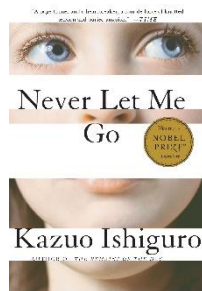
Orwell, *1984* (1949)

- “Set in a dystopian world overseen by "Big Brother," this story essentially invented the dystopian genre and introduced the elements that are now common in dystopian fiction - overbearing government control marked by the careful use (and production) of information, extensive censorship, and heavily monitored social interaction. Winston Smith toes the Party line, rewriting history to satisfy the demands of the Ministry of Truth. With each lie he writes, Winston grows to hate the Party that seeks power for its own sake and persecutes those who dare to commit thoughtcrimes. But as he starts to think for himself, Winston can't escape the fact that Big Brother is always watching...” - Amazon



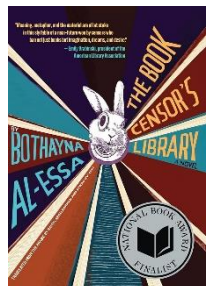
Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (2005)

- “Hailsham seems like a pleasant English boarding school, far from the influences of the city. Its students are well tended and supported, trained in art and literature, and become just the sort of people the world wants them to be. Curiously, they are taught nothing of the outside world and are allowed little contact with it. Within the grounds of Hailsham, Kathy grows from schoolgirl to young woman, but it's only when she and her friends Ruth and Tommy leave the safe grounds of the school that they realize the full truth of what Hailsham is. *Never Let Me Go* ... is a gripping mystery, a beautiful love story, and a scathing critique of human arrogance, an examination of how we treat the vulnerable and different in our society.” – Good Reads



Al-Essa, *The Book Censor's Library* (2019)

- “A perilous and fantastical satire of banned books, secret libraries, and the looming eye of an all-powerful government. The new book censor hasn't slept soundly in weeks. By day he combs through manuscripts at a government office, looking for anything that would make a book unfit to publish—allusions to queerness, unapproved religions, any mention of life before the Revolution. By night the characters of literary classics crowd his dreams, and pilfered novels pile up in the house he shares with his wife and daughter. As the siren song of forbidden reading continues to beckon, he descends into a netherworld of resistance fighters, undercover booksellers, and outlaw librarians trying to save their history and culture.” – Good Reads



3. **College Application Essay WRITING ASSIGNMENT:**

Write a college application essay based of the ‘common application’ essay prompts for 2025-26.

- The word limit for the essay is 650 words (so be concise, yet eloquent!).
 - Choose ONE of the following seven ‘common application’ essay prompts to write about:
1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
 2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
 3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
 4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
 5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
 6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
 7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design

****Supplementary support materials such as advice on how to write a college essay as well as exemplar essays will be available on our Schoology CLASS OF 2026 page under ‘Summer Reading’. ****

Name: _____

Personal Statement Evaluation Rubric

Criteria	Poor 1	Below Average 2	Average 3	Above Average 4	Exceptional 5
Writing Structure					
1. The essay is grammatically accurate.					
2. The sentence structure is varied.					
3. Syntax is neither too wordy nor too concise.					
4. The essay demonstrates clear paragraphs.					
5. The essay shows distinct style and voice.					
Content Structure					
6. Addresses the prompt question clearly.					
7. Creative and original topic choice.					
8. A clear flow of ideas from beginning to end.					
9. Focuses on a clear central theme throughout.					
10. Captures the reader's attention from the start.					
11. Get in and out of the essay with finesse.					
12. Provides detail, anecdotes, and imagery.					
13. Stays within the word count limit (650 words).					
Personal Characteristics					
14. Shows what you bring to the community.					
15. Demonstrates positivity toward the future.					
16. Shows what sets you apart from others.					
17. Conveys that you are humble.					
18. Conveys that you are mature.					
19. Conveys that you are compassionate.					
20. Avoids repeating information.					

Total Points: _____ / 100