Over the summer each AP Literature student is required to read a total of two books, *Macbeth* and one choice book from the list below, as well as to complete the reading guides explained below for both books. The required works will serve as a basis for classroom discussions and activities throughout the year. Students’ knowledge of these works will be assessed through written work and/or small-group activities first quarter. While many of the works on this list have been adapted into films, students should be aware that in no case does the film version exactly mirror the novel; film viewing will not substitute for reading and may skew or alter students’ views of the author’s intended meaning.

*Note: This West Springfield High School list supersedes the Fairfax County reading list.*

All AP Literature students must complete the following summer reading assignments:

1. **Macbeth** by William Shakespeare  
   Shakespeare’s famous tragedy is a dark drama of murder and revenge. The play deals with a Scottish nobleman, his ambitious wife, and the results of their quest for power and position. The play is available at local libraries and online (http://shakespeare.mit.edu/macbeth/full.html).

   Please complete the summer reading guide provided as you read *Macbeth*. Bring it with you on the first day of school, when we will use it in class. The guide is also available in both pdf and Word format on the WSHS homepage.

2. **Choice Book:**

   To prepare for the AP Literature exam, the College Board recommends that students read widely from works considered to be “of literary merit.” The goal of AP Literature summer reading is to immerse students in works of literary merit over the summer. AP Literature students will each choose a second summer reading selection, in addition to *Macbeth*, to help them gain knowledge of works that they will use for in-class assignments during the school year. The list below includes works that appeal to different tastes in literature and that have appeared on the AP exam in the past. Students are encouraged to read online reviews of the books in order to help them make their choice and to have a positive reading experience. All of the titles are available at local libraries.

   Please complete the summer reading guide provided as you read one selection from the list below for your choice book. Bring it with you on the first day of school, when we will use it in class. The guide is also available in both pdf and Word format on the WSHS homepage.

   - **Atonement** by Ian McEwan  
     McEwan’s family saga traces a young girl’s mistake that results in calamitous consequences. The novel was named by *TIME* magazine as one of the *All-TIME 100 Greatest Novels* for its exploration of guilt and forgiveness.

   - **The Chosen** by Chaim Potok  
     *The Chosen* focuses on Reuven Malter and his friend, Daniel Saunders, as they grow up in Brooklyn in the 1940s. Set against historical events of the time period – from the end of World War II to the creation of the
state of Israel – Potok’s novel offers insight into Jewish traditions and heritage, as well as father-son relationships.

- **Jane Eyre** by Charlotte Bronte
  Bronte’s novel traces the emotional growth of orphan Jane Eyre during the Victorian era as she attends boarding school and works as a governess. First published in 1847, this first-person narrative is considered “ahead of its time” for its treatment of Jane’s individualistic character and its complex exploration of relationships and social status. Available free online at [http://literature.org/authors/bronte-charlotte/jane-eyre/](http://literature.org/authors/bronte-charlotte/jane-eyre/).

- **The Life of Pi** by Yann Martel
  Martel’s novel explores the adventures of its protagonist, Piscine Molitor “Pi” Patel, who survives after being stranded on a boat in the Pacific Ocean with a Bengal tiger. Published in 2001, this adventure tale offers an allegorical perspective on faith.

- **The Namesake** by Jhumpa Lahiri
  Originally published as a novella in *The New Yorker, The Namesake* was developed into Lahiri’s full-length first novel in 2003. The setting shifts among Calcutta, Boston, and New York City, as Lahiri examines distinctly conflicting cultures and generational differences.

- **A Separate Peace** by John Knowles
  Knowles’ first published novel (1959) is set during the summers of 1942-43 when Gene Forrester and his best friend Phineas (“Finny”) are students at Devon, a preparatory school. Through the boys’ relationship, Knowles examines envy, rivalry, and forgiveness.

Optional Recommended Reading

To broaden your knowledge base and enable you to better recognize literary allusions, consider reading from these works:

- **The Bible**
  Many writers, both classical and contemporary, allude to biblical stories and draw from this source to enhance meaning.

- **Mythology** by Edith Hamilton
  Like the Bible, this classic by Edith Hamilton will provide background information for understanding and appreciating mythological allusions that abound in classical and modern literature.

Please Note: Summer reading selections have been compiled from both lists of suggested readings for the Advanced Placement Literature and Composition course and past exams. Because selections may contain content that some families might find objectionable, please review the list with your son or daughter and make a choice that pleases you both.

AP Literature Annotation Book Information

This year, the AP Literature classes will study their annotation book, *Crime and Punishment*, during the first quarter. While you are shopping for your summer reading texts, you may want to go ahead and purchase your copy of *Crime and Punishment*. Students will need the Signet Classics edition, translated from Russian by Sidney Monas, by the third week of first quarter. Please look for ISB number 0451530063 and the red and black cover (pictured here). The book will also be available for purchase at Spartan Spree and is available on the AKJ website discussed in the summer reading letter for parents.