Welcome to A.P. English Literature and Composition!

Over the summer, I invite you to choose ONE of the following works of literature and simply enjoy reading it. Afterwards, I ask that you write a well-developed multi-paragraph essay in response to the essay topic. I will collect your completed essay on our first day of class.

Instructor: Mr. Tim Strzechowski          Email: tstrzechowski@argohs.net

Book Choices:

Katherine Dunn, *Geek Love*

Here is the unforgettable story of the Binewskis, a circus-geek family whose matriarch and patriarch have bred their own exhibit of human oddities (with the help of amphetamine, arsenic, and radioisotopes). Their offspring include Arturo the Aquaboy, who has flippers for limbs and a megalomaniac ambition worthy of Genghis Khan . . . Iphy and Elly, the lissome Siamese twins . . . albino hunchback Oly, and the outwardly normal Chick, whose mysterious gifts make him the family’s most precious—and dangerous—asset. As the Binewskis take their act across the backwaters of the U.S., inspiring fanatical devotion and murderous revulsion; as its members conduct their own Machiavellian version of sibling rivalry, *Geek Love* throws its sulfurous light on our notions of the freakish and the normal, the beautiful and the ugly, the holy and the obscene. Family values will never be the same.

Khalid Hosseini, *The Kite Runner*

The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father’s servant, caught in the tragic sweep of history, *The Kite Runner* transports readers to Afghanistan at a tense and crucial moment of change and destruction. A powerful story of friendship, it is also about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies. Since its publication in 2003 *Kite Runner* has become a beloved, one-of-a-kind classic of contemporary literature, touching millions of readers, and launching the career of one of America’s most treasured writers.

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, *Frankenstein*

Obsessed with the secret of creation, Swiss scientist Dr. Victor Frankenstein cobbles together a body he’s determined to bring to life. And one fateful night, he does. When the creature opens his eyes, the doctor is repulsed: his vision of perfection is, in fact, a hideous monster. Dr. Frankenstein abandons his creation, but the monster won’t be ignored, setting in motion a chain of violence and terror that shadows Victor to his death. Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, a gripping story about the ethics of creation and the consequences of trauma, is one of the most influential Gothic novels in British literature. It is as relevant today as it is haunting.

Jeffrey Eugenides, *Middlesex*

"I was born twice: first, as a baby girl, on a remarkably smogless Detroit day of January 1960; and then again, as a teenage boy, in an emergency room near Petoskey, Michigan, in August of 1974. . . My birth certificate lists my name as Calliope Helen Stephanides. My most recent driver’s license...records my first name simply as Cal." So begins the breathtaking story of Calliope Stephanides and three generations of the
Greek-American Stephanides family who travel from a tiny village overlooking Mount Olympus in Asia Minor to Prohibition-era Detroit, witnessing its glory days as the Motor City, and the race riots of 1967, before they move out to the tree-lined streets of suburban Grosse Pointe, Michigan. To understand why Calliope is not like other girls, she has to uncover a guilty family secret and the astonishing genetic history that turns Callie into Cal, one of the most audacious and wondrous narrators in contemporary fiction. Lyrical and thrilling, Middlesex is an exhilarating reinvention of the American epic. Middlesex is the winner of the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

ESSAY TOPIC:

Writers often highlight the values of a culture or a society by using characters who are alienated from that culture or society because of gender, race, class, disability, or age. Using your selected novel, choose a character who plays a significant role and examine how that character's alienation reveals the surrounding society's assumptions and moral values.

In your essay, focus on one character and write an essay analyzing how that character’s alienation reveals the surrounding society’s assumptions and moral values. Analyze ... do not merely summarize the plot.

Please email me the components of your developing essay by the listed due dates:

**Friday, July 14**  
**Essay Outline**, including thesis statement, topic sentences, and textual evidence (with page numbers) – **Send as a Word Doc**.

**Friday, August 4**  
**First Draft**, with evidence of at least two proofreaders providing you with editing and correction suggestions, etc. – **Send as a .PDF**.

I will collect a hard copy of the completed **Final Draft** on the first day of class, **Thursday August 17th**. Like ALL essays for our class, you must include a rough draft (with evidence of at least TWO proofreaders, editing, and revision) to be eligible for full credit. (Any essay submitted without a sufficiently vetted rough draft will be automatically dropped to a 70% prior to grading.)

Please sign-up for APE Remind by texting **@achsapes2** to the following number: **81010**. This will enable me to send texts en masse to everyone in class.
A.P. English Literature and Composition
Mr. Tim Strzechowski

A.P. English Essays and Grading Policies

1. All essays must be typewritten in Times New Roman with a font size of either 12 or 14.

2. All formal essays must be completely double-spaced, including the information on the cover page.

3. All formal essays require a cover page with the following information, in this order, centered and double-spaced:

   “The Original and Hopefully Catchy Title of Your Essay”
   Your Full Name
   Full Course Title – Class Period
   Due Date

   “Hamlet and the Metaphors We Live By”
   Mitch R. Seskowitz
   A.P. English Literature and Composition – Period 1
   October 12, 2016

4. All pages of an essay must be numbered and include your last name, with the number appearing either at the top right of each page or at the bottom center of each page.

   If you choose to put the page number at the top right, precede it with your last name and a comma, thus: Strzechowski, 4
If you prefer to put the page number at the bottom center, please put your last name on the top right of each page.

Remember: The cover page is NOT page 1. The first page of your text is page 1.

5. When submitting formal essays, always include your drafts. These may include brainstorming, outlines, handwritten drafts, and printed versions. These “rough drafts” must always include evidence of proofreading, editing, and revising. As your primary reader this year, it is helpful for me to see the development of your thoughts and your writing process.

In general, please be aware of the following problem areas I frequently see in student writing, and devote some attention to avoiding these problems in your writing:

- Titles of novels, plays, and epic poems are always italicized: *Paradise Lost*
- Titles of songs, lyric poems, and short stories are always in quotation marks: “The Lottery” or “O Captain, My Captain!” or “Call Me Maybe”
- Avoid using the phrase “a lot.” It means nothing and conveys a lack of sophistication in formal writing. Use a synonym, like “many,” “much,” “often,” etc.

Finally:

**Under NO circumstances will I ever accept a late essay.** You will always be given the due date with sufficient time to complete the essay, so I expect it to be written, printed, stapled, and ready for submission at the beginning of class on the due date. You, of course, are free to e-mail your essay to me as an attachment, and I will always welcome an early submission if you know you are not going to be in class on the day it is due. But **never** ask me for deadline extensions ... you won’t get them.

Formal essays **must** include a copy of the rough draft (with evidence of proofreading, editing, and revision) to be eligible for full credit. If you submit an essay without its rough draft, your grade will drop to a C- (70%) before I begin assessing it and you forfeit the opportunity to revise the essay for an improved grade.

However, if your submitted essay and its accompanying drafts are submitted on time, and if you receive a grade of C or lower, you are eligible to revise your essay for a one-time improved score of a letter grade higher. You have **one week** from the date I returned your graded essay in which to submit a revised version. You **must** include your originally graded essay with the revised version, so I can best determine how you improved the essay.
### Scoring Guide for 2017 Summer Reading Essay: AP English Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-8</td>
<td>Well-conceived, well-developed, and well-argued, these papers are marked by frequent and accurate references to the text, by an admirable ability to synthesize thought, and by a mature control over the elements of composition. Though not perfect, they clearly indicate a character who is alienated from his/her culture because of gender, race, class, disability, or age. They define clearly an arguable and supportable thesis, and persuasively examine how the character’s alienation reveals the surrounding society’s assumptions and moral values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-6</td>
<td>These essays examine a character who is alienated from his or her culture because of gender, race, class, disability, or age, but are less adept at responding to the question. This may be due to inconsistencies in textual understanding, or to a lesser proficiency in examining how the character’s alienation reveals the surrounding society’s assumptions and moral values. Though these essays demonstrate the writer’s ability to express ideas clearly, they feature less fluency, less development, and less cogency than 8-9 papers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>These essays respond to the question of a character who is alienated from his/her culture because of gender, race, class, disability, or age in superficial, formulaic, inconsistent, or insufficiently supported ways. They may rely primarily on paraphrase, but may still convey an implicit understanding of the text or the task. The papers are generally written in a satisfactory manner, with occasional errors in composition or mechanics that do not impede the reader’s understanding. Nevertheless, these essays often reveal simplistic thinking and lack the organization, persuasiveness, and development of upper-half papers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-3</td>
<td>These lower half essays generally suggest an incomplete or overly simplistic understanding of the task, an inability to identify a character who is alienated from his/her culture, or an inability to illustrate how that character’s alienation reveals the surrounding society’s assumptions and moral values. Their arguments are often characterized by a failure to provide adequate support and/or insufficient control over the elements of composition. In some instances they may consist entirely of paraphrase and/or feature acute problems in organization, clarity, fluency, or development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-1</td>
<td>These essays compound the shortcomings of 3-4 papers. They often contain many serious and distracting errors in grammar or mechanics that preclude any successful response to the prompt. Though these essays may attempts to show a character who is alienated because of gender, race, class, disability, or age, they are severely limited by deficiencies in organization, clarity, fluency, or development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Papers scored a zero make no more than a passing reference to the task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter Grade</td>
<td>Point Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>45 – 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B +</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>40 – 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C +</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>35 – 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D +</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>30 – 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 – 29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sometimes I’ll start a sentence and I don’t even know where it’s going. I just hope I find it along the way.