

Hello! Here's what we're up to this week:

- Checking in - I hope you're feeling like life is settling down a bit!
- Updates (added to [FAQ](#) page)
 - Assessment update: Because we're in a new environment, I've decided to update my policies around marks. Soon I'll be sending an email to students and parents with specific details. The overall conclusion is this: if you participate regularly in class discussions and check ins, and also consistently hand in assignments of good quality, your mark in the course can go up.
 - Here are a few things you need to know:
 - I will be reducing the values of quizzes and in-class writes, since we won't be doing any more of them, and we did a limited amount before the break
 - I will be increasing the value of the "Projects and Assignments" category, since we'll be doing a lot more of them
 - Your "Participation" mark will remain at 20% of the course. At the end of the year, I'll be asking you whether you believe you deserve an *increase* in your participation mark - you'll be asked to provide evidence (this can include check ins, discussions, sending emails, and submitting assignments)
 - These policies may be subject to change, in the event our learning environment shifts
 - [Project 1 details](#) (no need for action on this)
 - For those who haven't done Project 1 (the presentation in front of the class), this is now optional. Your optional task is to summarize, analyse and discuss song lyrics. If you're interested in doing this (it would only count if it brings up your mark), please contact me, and we'll discuss further details.
 - [Independent Novel Project](#) (No action needed right now)
 - Due date is May 25th. The week before, I'll be giving more detailed instructions on how to complete this - however, if you feel like doing it early, you may.
 - Click [here to see instructions](#) and the rubric for the Independent Novel Project
 - I'll be posting a discussion response on the week of May 18th: Did you like this book? Would you recommend it? Why?
 - Students may also write an optional literary analysis essay, if they want to work on their skills for next year. This will not bring down your mark in any way, if you choose to do it. For details on this, please send me an email to let me know you're interested.
- Revisiting last week's poem: "[Strayed](#)". It was great to hear your descriptions of what the poem reminds you of!
- This week's "poem" is a song: "Fast Car" by Tracy Chapman

- Pre reading question: What is an ambition you have?
 - For me, one day, I'd like to write a book.
- Take a look at the song
 - Links to the song: [Spotify](#), [Apple Music](#), [Youtube](#)
 - [Here are the links to the lyrics](#)
- **Assignment discussion question (respond on Teams): Do you like the song, or dislike the song, and why? What is another song you know, about a person struggling in their environment? Explain the connection.**
 - For me, it reminds me of Taylor Swift's "Out of the Woods." Not that they deal with the same topic, but they both have a sense of being "stuck" in a situation.
- **[Assignment 6](#) - Paragraph response (16 points, using the [Academic Writing Rubric](#) - due Monday, May 11). Each of the three poems we've examined ("[The Road Not Taken](#)", "[Strayed](#)," and "[Fast Car](#)") explores how characters make choices in different environments. In a paragraph response (roughly eight sentences, but there's no minimum or maximum), consider this question: Does our environment control our choices? In your answer, try to use at least one quote from one of the poems (more is better!).** As you respond, consider the following resources.
 - Remember to follow [paragraph structure](#).
 - Consider these [writing tips](#) (try your best not to use "I" or "me" in your response!)
 - Remember that the document "[Notes from Class](#)" has examples of paragraphs on it.
- Thanks everyone!