



## 2025/26 AP Lit Summer Assignment!!

**Mrs. Biggs (she/her): Room 503**

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Hello and welcome to AP Lit! This class is a *college level* exploration into the world of literary analysis. You will be *reading, writing and thinking* at a level that will both challenge and excite an advanced reader. I am very excited to go on this journey with you this year. I have my Masters degree in Literature and experience teaching ENG/Writing courses at the college level, so this should be a fun year. Contact me with any questions and PLEASE read the following instructions carefully. Congrats on making it here and excited to meet you all!

A Note on the Course: Any and all students taking this course should know that it is designed to be a college level literature course, meaning that we will be *discussing and reading about mature topics*. If you are not comfortable or able to be respectful of others and diverse viewpoints, this will not be the class for you. *I have a zero-tolerance policy for forms of discrimination, joking or otherwise.*

### Step 1:

You will be reading Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* this summer. Step 1 is getting a copy of the book. I suggest getting a cheap used copy at a thrift store or a used book store (like Mr. K's in Asheville, among many others!). You might want to call first and check if they have one in stock before you make the drive. You can also purchase at Barnes and Noble, or on Amazon (used copies start at \$4 ish a piece). ThriftBooks is also an awesome website if you have never used it. You will need your own hard copy of the book in order to complete this assignment. If you cannot get a copy of this book for any reason, PLEASE COME SEE ME ASAP!! I can get one for you! 😊

### Step 2:

To see a digital copy of the Summer assignment, go to this website (you might want to bookmark this incase you lose this paper):

<https://sites.google.com/bcsemail.org/nbhseenglish/advanced-placement/ap-literature>

You can find this by visiting the North Buncombe High School Website → Academics → English Department → AP Course Information → AP Literature

### Step 3:

Now, you get to complete the Summer Assignment! For this task, you will need to:

1. **Read the novel.** It is not a particularly long or complicated novel. Check out the Info Sheet at the end of this assignment to learn more. It's a fun read and it's got some teeth to it.
2. **Annotate the novel.** You will be completing physical annotations while you read. These should be completed on the provided sticky notes that will be attached to the corresponding page. Multiple stickies per page/annotation are always allowed. On these annotations you should be: analyzing actions, making notes of characterization, asking questions, making predictions, noting style, etc. *See my example below and be sure to match the formatting to receive all the points. You will turn in your book with your annotations on the first day of school next year. You should have 30 annotations at minimum.*
3. **Complete a Close Reading Analysis.** For this assignment, you will pick a range of pages from the novel. At minimum, it should be 3 pages, at most 5 pages. Then, you will create a close reading analysis by intricately dissecting this section of text. You should be talking about structure, plot, characterization, figurative language, etc. This analysis should be 3-5 pages in length and be laden with descriptive, analytical writing. This should be written after reading the novel so the entire plot and its structure can be taken into account. See my example below to help you. *This is due on the first day of school and should be handwritten.*
4. **Prepare for a test on the book** during the first week of school. This will be a surprise, so be ready on day one to take this exam.

#### Step 4:

You have the whole Summer to get some rest (last summer of childhood!) and to complete this work. These assignments will be due to Mrs. Biggs in a physical copy on day one of Fall semester. That means you should have the book read, assignments done and be ready to discuss on the first day of school. This will be a test grade. Be prepared to also take an exam on the book within the first week of school.

Enjoy your summer! Please get some rest, have fun and safely enjoy your time. I am always reachable by email with a steady response rate over the summer (allow some flexibility in July especially). I am always happy to clarify and answer questions!

Happy Reading!!

#### Annotation Example:

*Sample Sticky Note from page one of 1984. Note: This is on the long side. If handwritten, this might stretch between 2 sticky notes stuck together on page one. I have numbered the bottom of the sticky note so I can keep track of how many I have\*(please number yours as well).*

*Remember, you need at least 30 annotations.*

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| -Introduction to the protagonist, Winston Smith, who is just coming home to "Victory Mansions" |
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-The “colored Poster” depicts a man with “ruggedly handsome” features. What is his importance in this hallway? Why is this rugged appearance considered attractive?  
“Hate Week”, what is the purpose? Is this ritualistic?  
-Noticing a lot of imagery here with sounds and sights. Things are “gritty” and rough around the edges. What does this say about the society the author is trying to introduce?

#1

### **Close Reading Example:**

*This is a sample close reading from page 1 of 1984 (this is obviously shorter than what you will create). Use this to help you determine the focus and tone of your work. You do not need to copy the style 100%. This should be written in an academic, formal tone. Remember, you need a passage of 3-5 pages, and you need to write a Close Reading Analysis of 3-5 pages. This must be handwritten.*

Page one of *1984* is designed to provide exposition and development of the protagonist. The first sentence gives the reader a time stamp of “thirteen”, which immediately shows that this society is structured differently from our own. The number thirteen often signifies something ominous or sinister. It is also a “bright cold day in April”, showing that this place must be geographically located somewhere that not only gets cold, but is still cold in April. The wind and “gritty dust” are working actively against the protagonist, Winston Smith. Winston seems to be in poor health and living in a rather old, dilapidated building. The word “lift” cues the reader into remembering that Orwell is a British author, possibly insinuating that this is a speculative English society. Maybe this place is in the distant future? The poster described on page one is deliberate. It is described in detail but the exact words or purpose of this poster remain hidden. The note about the man on the poster having “ruggedly handsome features” insinuates that this poster may be advertising something and is trying to appeal to its audience. The connotation and style on page one is stark and lifeless. This space smells of “boiled cabbage and old rag mats”. The building itself is slowly falling apart. To use this space as the introduction to Winston Smith’s life, Orwell is ensuring that the dark, maybe dank, tone weighs heavily down on the reader. This space is oppressive, and the frequent use of imagery noted above supports this.

### **Never Let Me Go - Info Sheet**

- Written by Kazuo Ishiguro
- Published in 2005
- Science-Fiction Novel
- Split into 3 parts, though not entirely linear. The narrative form at times is fluid and jumps between time periods.
- Set in 1990's England, this novel begins by following the lives of students attending the elite boarding school, Hailsham. The students' lives progress from school into the 'real world' and the students learn about their future careers and society's expectations. This leads them down a complicated and dark path that is nothing like what they imagined.
- Note from Biggs- This novel is not what it appears to be at first. If you want to really enjoy it, don't look up anything or spoil it for yourself. I promise, the fun of figuring it out is well worth that wait!
- Major Characters:
  - Kathy- Protagonist, student at Hailsham
  - Ruth- Kathy's classmate and friend at Hailsham
  - Tommy- Kathy's classmate and friend at Hailsham
  - Miss Lucy- Adult working at Hailsham, conflicted by the events taking place at the school
  - Madame- Older adult working at the school in a supervisory role
- A Few Major Themes to Identify:
  - Time; The inability to stop time or control it
  - Memory
  - Humanity; What it means to be 'human'
  - Ethics and/or Morality
  - Coming of Age; Maturity
  - Love
- About Kazuo Ishiguro: Born in Nagasaki, Japan in 1954, Ishiguro moved to England at age five. He did not return to Japan until 1989, when he was granted a short term visiting permit. His multi-cultural upbringing has enhanced all of his works, with his first two novels taking place in Japan. Ishiguro holds a masters degree in creative writing and has published 8 novels, 5 short stories, 5 screenplays and many other creative projects (including working as a lyricist). Ishiguro won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2017 for his body of work and is considered one of the best living writers in fantasy and science fiction.

