Welcome to AP Literature!

I know choosing this course is always met with excitement and trepidation. Rest assured, this will be an unforgettable experience. As with most things, what you bring to the course is what makes it great!

As you likely know, the AP exam is provided in early May, which makes our timeline tight. With this in mind, it is important that we hit the ground running before school starts. Each of you will select **one** of the five novels below to read deeply (this means beyond plot and comprehension). In addition, you will define and provide examples of several literary devices often seen in works of fiction. Use this link to access the [literary device summer list](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QKsWCVeAfyIcfy_Pt9j1cNZWc0Oz2kWQ3JGRQRSnNyo/copy). You may type directly into the document. You will submit this document to Canvas in the fall.

The goal? Mostly to enjoy reading, but also to prepare you for the deep, challenging conversations that lie ahead. This course is dependent on thoughtful discourse and discussion from all students. Coming prepared with a novel read will aid in that process. Choose from **one** of the options below:

***Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya** - Set in rural New Mexico during World War II, "Bless Me, Ultima" tells the coming-of-age story of a young boy named Antonio. When Ultima, a curandera (healer) comes to live with his family, she teaches Antonio about the spiritual and natural world, challenging his beliefs and shaping his understanding of good and evil. The novel reflects [Hispano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanos_of_New_Mexico) culture of the 1940s in rural [New Mexico](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Mexico). Anaya's use of Spanish, mystical depiction of the New Mexican landscape, use of cultural motifs such as [*La Llorona*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Llorona), and recounting of [*curandera*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curandera) folkways such as the gathering of medicinal herbs, gives readers a sense of the influence of indigenous cultural ways that are both authentic and distinct from the mainstream

***The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald** -The mysterious Jay Gatsby embodies the American notion that it is possible to redefine oneself and persuade the world to accept that definition. Gatsby's youthful neighbor, Nick Carraway, fascinated with the display of enormous wealth in which Gatsby revels, finds himself swept up in the lavish lifestyle of Long Island society during the Jazz Age. Considered Fitzgerald's best work, The Great Gatsby is a mystical, timeless story of integrity and cruelty, vision and despair. The timeless story of Jay Gatsby and his love for Daisy Buchanan is widely acknowledged to be the closest thing to the Great American Novel ever written.

***The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan** – This is an iconic book capturing the Chinese-American experience.  Throughout the novel Tan interweaves the stories of four mothers—all Chinese women who ended up in San Francisco—and their American-born daughters.  It is a story about the complicated nature of mother-daughter relations, compounded by the unshared, unknown, unspoken backgrounds of the immigrant mothers.  The novel takes the reader through all eight women’s perspectives, from late 20th century San Francisco to China many years prior.

***Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen** - a novel of manners and first published in 1813, the story follows the main character, Elizabeth Bennet, as she deals with issues of manners, upbringing, morality, education, and marriage in the society of the landed gentry of the British Regency. Elizabeth is the second of five daughters of a country gentleman living near the fictional town of Meryton in Hertfordshire, near London. The rich and eligible Mr Bingley and his status-conscious friend, Mr Darcy, have moved into their neighbourhood. While Bingley takes an immediate liking to the eldest Bennet daughter, Jane, Darcy has difficulty adapting to local society and repeatedly clashes with the second-eldest Bennet daughter, Elizabeth.

***Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston -** This novel is a first-person account of one woman’s life, told in her own brave words. Janie Starks is “no more’n forty at the outside,” according to her friend, Pheoby, (who plays the role of audience for much of the novel’s story) when she, Janie, walks back into town in men’s overalls, head held high, seemingly single after three marriages. She refuses to demure. She is proud and fierce, but also clearly heart broken. What comes next is her own account of everything she has lived and loved and mourned up to that point. It is an inspiring story of love and trust, and yes, heartbreak too. Janie is character who refuses bitterness and sorrow; instead, she embraces life-affirming love and rejects fear and resentment. She is a beacon of wit and no-nonsense common sense as well as the heroine of a charming American love story.