Happy Summer! We realize that “vacation homework” can be a pretty brutal oxymoron, but, as senior AP students, you’re probably used to it by now -- so “once more into the breach, dear friends, once more” --two points if you get the reference! Your summer assignment is in two parts.

**Part I – Research**

In order to understand the works of literature we will be reading this year, it is necessary to have a basic comprehension of the historical, religious, and cultural ideas that influence and shape them. You will be researching **ALL** of the topics listed below and creating a MLA formatted **Works Consulted Page** listing all of your research sources.

After your research, you will choose **TWO** subtopics (one biblical and one mythological) on which to write an academic summary of your findings (two summaries total). Summaries should contain proper in-text and parenthetical citations. Please see the last page of this packet for tips on citations and academic writing. Just to be clear, we are not looking for ten-page, fully detailed summaries. Read your source material (the Bible, articles, mythology book, etc.) and then briefly summarize each required story in your own words using academic language and complex syntax. **NOTE: plagiarism is a major offense in the academic world and absolutely unacceptable in an Advanced Placement class.**

**Topic 1: The Bible as literature** – We realize this is a vast topic. You don’t need to list every detail of every story. Understand the basic premise of each and the characters/people involved. If you don’t know basic biblical knowledge, you will miss many literary references including the allusion to Cain and Abel in *Beowulf* and the significance of the many religious allusions in *The Handmaid’s Tale*. Read ALL subtopics and choose **ONE** on which to write an academic summary.

- The story of creation
- Adam and Eve’s exile from paradise
- The story of Cain and Abel
- The story of Abraham and Isaac
- The story of Moses – the burning bush, the Ten Commandments, the plagues of Egypt, and the parting of the Red Sea
- The basic story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection
- The story of Mary Magdalene
Biblical Research Specific to *The Handmaid’s Tale*:

- Gilead
- The Beatitudes
- The Lord’s Prayer
- The Sermon on the Mount
- The story of Jezebel
- The Story of Rachel, Leah, and Jacob
- The Story of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus

**Topic 2: Greek mythology.** This is another important bank of knowledge necessary to understand western literature. Again this topic is vast, so hone your research. Research ALL subtopics and choose ONE on which to write an academic summary.

- The Trojan War – Helen, Aeneas, Paris, Hector, Odysseus, Agamemnon, Achilles, Menelaus,
- The story of Odysseus
- The story of Prometheus
- The story of Orpheus and Eurydice
- Basic Greek Gods – Zeus, Athena, Poseidon, Hades, Apollo, Hermes

**Part II – Literature**

Read:  

*The Handmaid’s Tale* by Margaret Atwood

You will need to check this book out of the library or purchase a copy. Don’t wait until the last minute or it may be checked-out already. This book is an excellent choice to use on the AP test and is incredibly relevant to today’s world; however, it does contain mature themes. If you have an issue, please contact us at mdunlap@njuhsd.com or kstroeve@gmail.com. You will need to be prepared to write an in-class AP essay on the book.

On the first day of class make sure you are prepared with:

- Two typed, MLA formatted academic summaries (one biblical, one mythological) with a short Works Cited page for each
- A complete, varied, and MLA formatted Works Consulted Page listing all of the sources you read (remember you read about ALL the topics and write about TWO)
The ability to write an AP in-class essay on *The Handmaid’s Tale*

If you have any questions about anything, feel free to email me at mdunlap@njuhsd.com or kstroeve@gmail.com. Happy reading and researching!

**Summer Assignment**

**Refresher on Research Skills and Summary Requirements**

**I: Citations/ Sources**
- You should have more than one source for an academic summary
- The information from your sources needs to be synthesized
- You MUST introduce a source before you cite it. The first time you reference any source, your tag must read something like, “As John Jones points out in his article “Moses Rocks!” …
- After the initial authorial tag, you will still need to tag occasionally so your readers don’t get lost -- i.e. “Jones goes on to point out …”
- You must use parenthetical citations
- Your parenthetical citations will contain the author and the page number. If you don’t have a page number, cite just the author. If you don’t have an author, cite the title of the article or book. This is standard citation.
- There should be a citation at the end of every paragraph unless the information from that paragraph did not come from sources
- The Works Cited and Works Consulted pages MUST be correctly formatted. MLA is always changing. Check the OWL at Purdue and DON’T solely rely on EasyBib. You will need to find information for EasyBib.
- Reverse indentation, alphabetized sources, no highlighted cut and pastes, no underlined web addresses -- colleges take research and citations very seriously. Make sure you learn the right way. If you have a question, use the OWL.
- There is a difference between a Works Cited Page and Works Consulted Page. You are supposed to do both.

**II: Style**
- Summaries should not be one, giant paragraph -- especially when you are synthesizing numerous sources
- There is a difference between academic writing and informal, conversational writing
- Use academic diction and syntax -- i.e. bump up your vocabulary and use complex and compound sentences. Do not write the way you would speak to a friend. Do not use personal voice
Avoid strings of S-V-O sentences
Make sure that your writing is clear -- i.e. don’t use convoluted sentences or obscure the point or argument with academic-speak. Your goal is clarity.
Read your writing out loud to find confusing passages and to make sure the writing flows easily from point to point.
Do not use passive voice:
  - With passive voice, no one takes action in the subject -- you could easily add “by whom” and make the sentence work. Examples of passive voice
    - In the novel *The Handmaid’s Tale* by Margaret Atwood, many literary devices are used to highlight the meaning of the work as a whole.
    - With passive voice the “to be” verb is often used -- i.e. am, is, was, were, being, etc. and the past participle such as seen, made, brought, wrecked, is used
      - The use of symbolism is seen frequently in the novel.
      - Offred has a storyline that is used to reveal one of the major themes of the novel.
      - In the novel *The Handmaid’s Tale* there are many times when the literary device of symbolism is shown and illustrated.
You will need to write well to pass the AP test. Start fine tuning your writing now.

Requirements for the Academic Summaries:

Summary Format:
- Typed -- double spaced
- Proper MLA heading and title
- Correct in-text/parenthetical citations
- Works Consulted/ Works Cited Page

Summary Quality/Conventions:
- Accurate summary of article/story – main points and characters are highlighted (around 1 ½ pages in length)
- Formal tone – no personal voice, stylistic maturity
- Direct quotations are used sparingly and are cited correctly using in-text/parenthetical citation
- Summary is in your own words – DO NOT PLAGIARIZE
- Correct conventions – spelling, grammar, punctuation