

## AP English Literature & Composition

*Required texts:*

1. ***Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen (part of Upper School Summer Reading Program; AP students will help lead discussions); we will be using the Penguin Classics version. [2026 Upper School Optional Book Club](#)**
2. ***The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri**

*The Namesake* is the first novel by Pulitzer Prize winner Jhumpa Lahiri. The protagonist, nicknamed Gogol after a Russian writer, navigates life in the U.S. as the child of immigrant parents from India. Many of his experiences will be relatable to readers from all backgrounds, but students will also gain insights into the unique experiences of second generation Americans like Gogol and the author. *The Namesake* showcases Lahiri's unique ability to masterfully portray human experiences in a way that brings characters and their relationships to life for the reader.

### AP Lit. Summer Work Instructions

Instructions: Utilize the following bullet pointed suggestions as well as the annotation information (below) to take notes on the text. If you need to take notes in addition to those in your book, you may write them on sticky notes or in a notebook. You will be required to show proof of these notes. Notes may NOT be electronic. When you return to school, you will be responsible for participating in class discussion, answering questions using detailed support from the texts, completing a test, and writing a paper. Plan accordingly in your note taking.

- Characters, their relationships, their motivations
- Plot points
- Narrative voice/point of view
- Settings
- Tone: pay careful attention to how the narrator shapes the reader's perception of characters and events
- Syntax and diction

### Annotation Assignment (for both books)

In addition to reading, you must annotate your text (write directly in your book) and present your books for note-checks at the beginning of the year and for a grade. Every chapter should have a summary (see below) and a minimum of two additional notations per page (see below); however, you may find your reading more enjoyable and coherent if you just get into the habit of making these marks while you read rather than worrying about the assignment.

Why annotate? Annotations should help you engage with the text. They will help you remember important details as you read and later when you prepare for an assessment.

Every reader develops his/her own unique style for annotation and feel free to explore with what works for you, but here are some notes and marks you may make:

1. Write a brief summary at the end of each chapter after you've read it explaining in a few phrases what occurred in the chapter. This will make finding an important scene for your paper much easier.
2. Circle words that are unfamiliar then write their definitions in the margin (after you have looked up their meanings).
3. Underline or bracket [ ] passages that are interesting to you or seem important. Then, in the margin write a brief note on why you think that passage is important.

Writing in the margin is always helpful. Think of it like you are having a conversation with the book you are reading. Here are some helpful things you can write in the margin:

1. Ask questions. If something confuses you or you feel like there is information about an event, character, scene, etc. that you should know more about, write your question in the margin.
2. Make predictions. Do you think you know what might happen? Does something seem like it may be important later? Do you think this scene might foreshadow something later? Write your prediction in the margin.
3. Clarify. If you figure something out or have an epiphany while reading but fear you may forget it later, write down a brief summary of the passage or your ideas in the margin.
4. Remember, it is helpful to underline a passage that relates to your note in the margin and to write your note close to the underlined portion.

**General reminders: Use a pen, NOT a highlighter. Underlining passages is not enough; after underlining something, write a note in the margin explaining why you underlined it. This may be tedious at first, but once you get the hang of it, you will find annotation improves comprehension and memory as well as serving as an excellent study aid for quizzes, tests, and papers. Good luck!**

**A note on reading and cheating: As a general rule, it's okay to look up words, historical background of the setting, and the author's biographical information because those are facts. If you look up a literary work, you will find opinions. All literary analysis is based upon opinion. Your goal is to learn how to form and support your own opinions, not mimic someone else's. If you voice an opinion in a paper, in class discussion, or on a test/quiz that does not appear to be your own, it may be considered an Honor Code violation. This includes "refreshing" your memory using SparkNotes or other study guides. You will be**

**instructed on how to best review for assessments. If you have any questions about this policy, please ask your instructor.**