

AP Seminar (ELA) Summer Reading Assignment

In AP Seminar, you will develop college-level skills in research, argumentation, and critical thinking. This summer assignment introduces those skills through two foundational texts that explore opportunity, identity, and societal structures. The assignment will help prepare you for AP Seminar by building the core skills you will use all year:

- Analyzing multiple perspectives
- Making evidence-based arguments
- Connecting literature to real-world issues

Read: Read *The Great Gatsby* (Fitzgerald) and *A Raisin in the Sun* (Hansberry) with this essential question in mind: *How do societal structures shape individual opportunity and identity?* Look for ways each text shows the impact of society on people's dreams, choices, and identities.

Reflect: Bookmark at least two quotes from each text that show *how societal structures shape individual opportunity and identity*. How did society affect the characters' dreams, choices, and identities?

Write: Write one well-developed (8–10 sentences) response to the following question:

Does individual effort or societal structure have a greater influence on the American Dream? Include one specific example from each text, and clearly state your claim. Remember, when you use an example or quote from the book or play, put the author's last name and page number in parentheses at the end of the sentence before the period. If you copy exact words, use quotation marks.

Connect: Find one current article, podcast, or video about the topic of how societal structures shape individual opportunity and identity. Write three to four sentences summarizing the example you chose and explaining the connection to our texts. Provide a basic citation for your source (title, author/creator, and where it was published or posted). Some examples of possible topics for your current article, podcast, or video are:

- How class background determines access to success
- Racial wealth gap and generational poverty
- First-generation student challenges: college debt
- Rising cost of living and economic pressure on families
- Job access shaped by class and connections

Discuss: During our first week of class, be prepared to discuss:

- Which text presents a more accurate view of opportunity in America?
- Which character is most responsible for their own outcome?
- How do these texts connect to issues today?

Final Note: This is not about "getting the right answer." It is about thinking critically, asking strong questions, and supporting your ideas with evidence!

Questions? Email Mrs. Davidson at c davidson@springwoodschool.com