

Boston Latin Academy
AP Literature Summer Reading 2017-2018

Welcome to AP Literature!

There are two required summer texts for this course – a highly engaging contemporary text, and a literary classic that appears frequently in the *AP Literature* curriculum. It is expected that you will have read both and will be ready to work with these titles during the opening weeks of school.

I. Contemporary: ***Americanah***, by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2014; 588 pages).

From Amazon.com:

The bestselling novel—a love story of race and identity—from the award-winning author of We Should All Be Feminists and Dear Ijeawele.

Ifemelu and Obinze are young and in love when they depart military-ruled Nigeria for the West. Beautiful, self-assured Ifemelu heads for America, where despite her academic success, she is forced to grapple with what it means to be black for the first time. Quiet, thoughtful Obinze had hoped to join her, but with post-9/11 America closed to him, he instead plunges into a dangerous, undocumented life in London. Fifteen years later, they reunite in a newly democratic Nigeria, and reignite their passion—for each other and for their homeland.

II. Classic: ***Gulliver's Travels***, by Jonathan Swift (1726; various lengths – free digital versions available – use an unabridged version).

From Amazon.com:

Regarded as the preeminent prose satirist in the English language, Jonathan Swift (1667–1745) intended this masterpiece, as he once wrote Alexander Pope, to "vex the world rather than divert it."

Savagely ironic, it portrays man as foolish at best, and at worst, not much more than an ape.

The direct and unadorned narrative describes four remarkable journeys of ship's surgeon Lemuel Gulliver, among them, one to the land of Lilliput, where six-inch-high inhabitants bicker over trivialities; and another to Brobdingnag, a land where giants reduce man to insignificance.

Written with disarming simplicity and careful attention to detail, this classic is diverse in its appeal: for children, it remains an enchanting fantasy. For adults, it is a witty parody of political life in Swift's time and a scathing send-up of manners and morals in 18th-century England.