Dear Eleventh Grade AP Language and Composition Students,

Welcome to AP Language and Composition! Your summer assignment has not only been designed to give you a glimpse of the types of materials and tasks you will be assigned in preparation for the AP test next May, but also to give you a jump start on the works and rhetorical modes we will encounter. When you return to school in September, you will be asked to compose an in-class essay and participate in a fishbowl Socratic discussion, both of which will focus on your analysis of the summer reading. Studying the AP rubric is recommended prior to writing this essay.

You will be reading John Steinbeck’s *East of Eden*. You may sign this text out from the school, purchase it, or borrow it from a library. Although the text is framed with the biblical story of Adam and Eve, our lessons will focus on Steinbeck’s literary choices in telling this tale, not on the content or validity of the biblical stories. You are not expected to know everything about the text, but we do expect you to be inquisitive about what you do not yet know. You are encouraged to seek information to clarify any religious, historical, or other component of the text with which you are unclear. If you do so, please be prepared to share you new understandings with the class. Finally, review the terms and the critical lenses that are included in this packet. As you read, pay particular attention to the following lenses:

1. **Spiritual Lens** - This text is centered around the biblical story of Adam and Eve. Pay attention to biblical references, such as the stories of Cain and Abel or the Garden of Eden and characters with biblical names. You could also search for the story behind and traits of the following: Adam, Samuel, Caleb, Aaron, The Promised Land, and Doxology.
2. **Historical Lens** - This text contains commentary on many historical events. Pay attention to references to war (ex. The Civil War, World War I, fighting or murder between characters) or to comments on the human experience of “war” (i.e. why humans fight, etc.).
3. **New Critical Lens** - This text is rich with description, allegory, symbolism, and other literary elements. In addition to the literal meaning of the text, pay attention to HOW the text is composed.

The novel is divided into four parts:
- Part One – Chapters 1 - 11
- Part Two – Chapters 12 - 22
- Part Three – Chapters 23 – 33
- Part Four – Chapters 34 – 55
After reading, compose a reading response journal using a double-entry journal format, with the text on the left and connections, questions, and comments on the right. You must write at least two, but no more than three journals for each part of the novel. You MUST address the three lenses listed above at least once; however, you are encouraged to also include journals addressing other lenses on the worksheet. Be sure all of these are in your own words. All journals must be typed. Bring typed journals to school on the first day of class in September. The rubric is included in this packet.

Finally, in September, you be responsible for writing an essay and participating in a fishbowl Socratic discussion in which you will delve deeply into one critical lens. To help you prepare for these assessments, you are encouraged to take notes on the len(s) of your choice using the note-taking method of your choice. Although these notes are not going to be graded, they will prove useful to you on both the essay and the Socratic discussions.

We have created an AP Language and Composition Summer Classroom. Please join it at your earliest convenience. The code is ff9jxc. You are encouraged to set the Classroom settings to alert you to new postings.

Feel free to email us at erin.rileylepo@motsd.org or lori.tatum@motsd.org with any questions or concerns. Have a lovely summer!

Sincerely,
Ms. Riley-Lepo & Ms. Tatum
Eight Critical Lenses through Which Readers Can View Texts

At least eight ways exist to read and interpret texts. Below is a list of eight critical lenses with definitions, questions, and strategies used for each. As you read, consider shifting your perspective or viewpoint, or the LENSES THROUGH WHICH YOU READ. What lenses might offer you more insight into the text?

**Reader Response Lens**
**Definition:** Reading a text for personal meaning
**Questions and Strategies:**
1. In what ways is the text familiar to your life? Think of events in the story, the types of characters, or the setting… Can you relate to it on a personal level?
2. In what ways is the text different than your life?
3. How did the text affect you?
4. How has the text increased your interest in the subject matter?
5. How has the text changed your worldview?

**Socio-Economic Lens**
**Definition:** Reading a text for its socio-economic issues
**Questions and Strategies:**
1. Explore the way different demographics are represented in texts.
2. What world view does the text represent?
3. What does the text say about class structures?
4. Analyze the social effects of the text.

**Historical Lens**
**Definition:** Reading a text for its contextual significance. This would include information about the author, his or her historical moment, or the systems of meaning available at the time of writing.
**Questions and Strategies:**
1. Research the author’s life and relate the information to the text. Why did the author write it? What is the author’s worldview?
2. If the author is writing on a debatable issue does he or she give proper consideration to all sides of the debate? Does he or she seem to have a bias?
3. Research the author’s time (political history, intellectual history, economic history, etc.) and relate this information to the work.
4. Upon reading the text, how has your view on the given historical event changed?
Gender Lens
Definition: Reading a text for its gender related issues or attitudes towards gender. The assumption here is that men and women are different: they write differently, read differently, and write about their reading differently. These differences should be valued.

Questions and Strategies:
1. Consider the gender of the author and the characters: what role does gender play in the text?
2. Observe how gender stereotypes might be reinforced or undermined. Try to see how the text reflects or distorts the place men or women have in society.
3. Imagine reading the text from the point of view of someone from the opposite gender.

Race Lens
Definition: Reading a text for it issues of race, heritage, and ethnicity.

Questions and Strategies:
1. Analyze how the text discusses race, heritage, and ethnicity. Or, consider what images of “others” are presented in the text. How are these “others” portrayed?
2. Are there any unfair stereotypes? Are there any generalities that hold truth?
3. Analyze the text for how it deals with cultural conflicts, particularly between majority and minority groups.

Psychological Lens
Definition: Reading a text for patterns in human behavior. While everyone’s formative history is different in particulars, there are basic recurrent patterns of development for most people.

Questions and Strategies:
1. Is the way the characters act believable?
2. Why do certain characters act the way they do?
3. Think of what is a general viewpoint on life for children, youth, young adult, middle-aged, or elderly people. Do the characters follow the patterns associated with these groups?
4. Think of the range of human emotions. How do they come to play in the text? (happiness, anger, depression, indifference, confusion, etc.)
5. What did you think of any moral/ethical choices that the characters made? What would you have done?
6. Think about the broader social issues the text attempts to address.

New Criticism Lens
Definition: Reading a text for the unity and complexity of its form. The focus should be on the text itself.

Questions and Strategies:
1. What types of symbolism are in the text?
2. What themes recur throughout the text?
3. Were the plot and subplots believable?
4. Where could the story go from here?
5. What did you think of the ending?
6. What is the great strength -- or most noticeable weakness – of the text?
7. Does the story fit an archetype? (i.e. romance, tragedy, comedy, satire, irony).
   How do those “types” manifest themselves?

**Spiritual Lens**

**Definition:** Reading a text for its spiritual and faith related issues

**Questions and Strategies:**
1. Analyze the text for its issues as they relate to one’s faith in a higher being.
2. Compare aspects of the text as they relate to religious writings/scriptures.
3. If one believes in a higher being or creator, how does that creator speak to the reader through the text?
4. What does the text say about various world religions?