

AP Literature and Composition
Summer Assignment
Mr. Jason Zencka

Hello 11th grade AP-ers! (AP-ites? Apes?)

I'm thrilled to be your teacher this year! My goal with our class is to read a slew of interesting texts while examining a single theme. For the time being, I'll call this theme "Re: Human/Nature"—in brief, we'll spend the year using stories, plays, and poems to ask questions about how people use power, especially when they're interacting with the natural world. For now, focus your energies on reading Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* and Jeff VanderMeer's *Annihilation* and completing the writing assignment I've included here.

I look forward to meeting you all!

JGZ

"And, after all, our surroundings influence our lives and characters as much as fate, destiny or any supernatural agency."

Pauline Hopkins, *Contending Forces*

Choose a novel or play in which cultural, physical, or geographical surroundings shape psychological or moral traits in a character. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how surroundings affect this character and illuminate the meaning of the work as a whole. You may choose a work from the list below or one of comparable literary merit. Do not merely summarize the plot.

The above is an AP Literature and Composition essay prompt from a previous exam. For your summer AP assignment, write an essay applying the above prompt to **both** of your summer texts. Analyze how the "cultural, physical, or geographical surroundings" (or, if you prefer, the "settings") of these novels affect the development one or more characters within them. Fashion your analysis into a thoughtful, well-written typed essay between 1000 and 1250 words. Use MLA guidelines to cite your sources.