

Greetings Rising Seniors!

Students enrolled in AP English and students who might take AP but are not yet sure are asked to read the following books over the summer:

- Tess of the d'Urbervilles (Hardy)
- Midnight's Children (Rushdie)

Both books are required reading for Advanced Placement English. There will be a written test over each book when you return to school in September. Print or electronic resources such as Sparknotes may enhance your reading experience but will not help with the test.

While you are not required to keep a reading journal, it is wise to take extensive notes on each novel. Record observations on plot, characters, theme, and the techniques each author uses to develop theme.

Note page numbers of passages that you consider relevant to theme. If you are reading a library book, notes are especially important.

Some themes to consider are fate, justice, good v. evil, the journey, the place of the individual in society, and the definition of woman.

Tess is available at most libraries and free online through Project Gutenberg. I did a MURAL search* on Midnight's Children and found holdings at Hillside, Clark, Scotch Plains, Elizabeth, Cranford, and Springfield.

Most of these libraries participate in Interlibrary Loan and reciprocal lending arrangements, so you should have no problem getting a copy provided you do not wait until the last minute. New and used copies are also available, of course, through local bookstores and online dealers. Start early. Tess and Midnight's Children are long novels.