

Dear brave, motivated, interested AP Students,

Advanced Placement courses are college level courses. When you successfully complete an AP course, you may receive college credit for the course, and you can improve your GPA because AP carries a weighted grade. I am delighted that you have chosen this course; together we will discover new worlds, a new vocabulary, and a new way of belonging. Please buy your own copies of the following books so you can mark them, highlight, dog-ear, and otherwise make them your own. Highlight anything that is a revelation or that touches you. Write in the margins when questions occur to you; highlight great quotes; use stickies to mark important places. You can buy these books online and in several stores.

1. Read *Half a Life* by Darin Strauss. This is a true account about a no-fault accident and the fallout of grief and guilt in its wake. You should take/make notes as you read.
2. Read *Half-Broke Horses* by Jeannette Walls. This is the nonfiction novel of a woman's grandmother who tackles both land and life in the Wild West. Again, take/make notes in your book or a journal. I will give you a heads-up: there are a few harsh expletives in these books along with a handful of coarse words. They are not pervasive, but you should be prepared for them.

■ WRITE: For the Strauss book, choose **one** of the two writing options:

- i. "In the United States, some two thousand drivers a year survive 'dart-outs.' And these drivers are more likely to get laid out by post-traumatic stress syndrome than are those who are *irrefutably to blame* in fatal accidents. No one knows why" (Strauss 115). Write a one page response to give your thoughts on the cause behind this statistic.
- ii. Strauss struggles with acceptance of the accident and forgiveness of himself. Write a 1-2 page letter addressed to Strauss that explains from a biblical viewpoint why tragedy happens to "good people." Use at least 2 Bible verses to back your explanation.

■ WRITE: Choose **three** of the following options for the Walls book:

- i. In Parts I and II, Lily's dad offers a number of sayings. Choose any three and explain why you like them or why they are true/false. Copy the quote with an internal citation and then explain. Then give 2-3 sayings common to your family and explain them.
 - ii. In Part II, Lily encounters difficulty getting an education because she is a girl. Using 2-3 pieces of evidence from the book, explain in 1-2 pages why this was an injustice.
 - iii. Make a map of Lily's 500 mile journey to her first teaching job. List all the stops along the way. Your map should be ¼ to ½ of a poster board in size and decorative. Include a map key.
 - iv. Read the last paragraph that begins on page 148 "The water you kids ... Always beware of it" and connect this concept of water to biblical passages when Christ claims to be living water. Compare and contrast the use of water in each work in 1-2 pages. Use evidence from the book and the Bible.
 - v. In Part IX, Rosemary chooses a mate. List and explain 2-3 red flags from either Rosemary's behavior/decisions or from that of her spouse. Why do you think Rosemary overlooks these warning signs? This entry should be 1-2 pages.
- Each entry should be typed, double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12 font with 1 inch margins. Use a heading at the top of each new entry with your name, my name, the entry label, and the date (see example below). Wow me with the way you put all these elements together!

Sarah Smith
Mrs. Retter
Strauss entry ii
20 July 2017

For your first **full** day of class, bring the books, your entries, and class supplies. For questions before class begins, please email me: traciretter@ccslions.org.