Summer Reading and Supplemental Senior Stuff

Welcome to senior year and welcome to your senior English class! I am so excited for next year, looking forward to meeting those of you I don’t know and to working closely with those of you I’ve known for years!

For your summer reading, you will be responsible for three books:

- *The Stranger* (1942) by Albert Camus, a short existentialist novel about a man who commits an absurd crime
- *Brave New World* (1932) by Aldous Huxley, a dystopian, satirical novel about a futuristic world in which contentment is valued above all else
- *Flush: A Biography* (1925) by Virginia Woolf, a modernist spoof-biography told from the perspective of the poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s cocker spaniel, Flush.

Please read and annotate these novels, but, most importantly, ENJOY them. We will begin working with them right away when school starts.

In place of a fourth novel (and to force you out of pre-senior year denial!), I am also asking you to draft the first version of your college essay, to be **due via Turnitin on the second day of school, Wednesday, August 14th**. This draft does NOT need to be fully polished, but it does need to be thoughtful and complete. Many colleges set November 1 as their deadline, so we will want to get started on the essay process as soon as possible. If you have already selected a school as your first choice, and that institution does not use Common App, feel free to write to one of their particular essay questions; just make sure to include the verbatim prompt and word limit on the draft you submit. If your first choice school uses Common App, or if you have not yet decided on a first choice school, please respond to one of the following prompts:

**2018-2019 Common Application Essay Prompts** (650 words maximum)

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Describe a problem you’ve solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?

Happy reading and writing! Have a great summer, and I’ll see you in August! 😊