



*Winner of the*  
**NOBEL PRIZE**  
**FOR LITERATURE**

**SARAMAGO**

*Blindness*

the obscenities, the girl with dark glasses said nothing, she only opened her mouth to vomit, her head to one side, her eyes turned towards the other woman, he did not even notice what was happening, the smell of vomit is only noticed when the atmosphere and all the rest does not smell the same, at last the man shuddered from head to foot, gave three violent jolts as if he were riveting three girders, panted like a suffocating pig, he had finished. The girl with dark glasses wept in silence. The blind man with the gun withdrew his penis, still dripping and said in a hesitant voice, as he stretched out his arm to the doctor's wife, Don't get jealous, I'll be dealing with you next, and then raising his voice, I say, boys, you can come and get this one, but treat her nicely for I may need her again. Half a dozen blind men advanced unsteadily along the passageway, grabbed the girl with dark glasses and almost dragged her away. I'm first, I'm first, said all of them. The blind man with the gun had sat down on the bed, his flaccid penis was resting on the edge of the mattress, his trousers rolled down round his ankles. Kneel down here between my legs, he said. The doctor's wife got on to her knees. Suck me, he said, No, she replied, Either you suck me, or I'll give you a good thrashing, and you won't get any food, he told her, Aren't you afraid I might bite off your penis, she asked him, You can try, I have my hands on your neck, I'd strangle you first if you tried to draw blood, he replied menacingly. Then he said, I seem to recognise your voice, And I recognise your face, You're blind and cannot see me, No, I cannot see you, Then why do you say that you recognise my face, Because that voice can have only one face, Suck me, and forget the chitchat, No, Either you suck me, or your ward won't see another crumb of bread, go back there and tell them that if they have nothing to eat it's because you refused to suck me, and then come back to tell me what happened. The doctor's wife leaned forward, with the tips of two fingers on her right hand

she held and raised the  
on the floor, touched his  
with his trousers round  
she thought. She move  
closed it, closed her ey  
Day was breaking  
women to go. The bl  
be carried away in  
scarcely drag themse  
one man to another  
rage to outrage, ex  
woman while leavi  
kind, tell those path  
fetch the grub, the  
they left. And he a  
yourselves for the  
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she held and raised the man's sticky penis, her left hand resting on the floor, touched his trousers, groped, felt the cold metallic hardness of the gun, I can kill him, she thought. She could not reach his trousers round his ankles, it was impossible to reach the pocket where he had put his weapon. I cannot kill him now, she thought. She moved her head forward, opened her mouth, closed her eyes in order not to see and began sucking. Day was breaking when the blind hoodlums allowed the women to go. The blind woman suffering from insomnia had to be carried away in the arms of her companions, who could scarcely drag themselves along. For hours they had passed from one man to another, from humiliation to humiliation, from outrage to outrage, exposed to everything that can be done to a woman while leaving her still alive. As you know, payment is in kind, tell those pathetic men of yours that they have to come and fetch the grub, the blind man with the gun said mockingly as they left. And he added derisively, See you again, girls, so prepare yourselves for the next session. The other blind hoodlums repeated more or less in chorus, See you again, some called them fillies, others whores, but their waning libido was obvious from the lack of conviction in their voices. Deaf, blind, silent, tottering on their feet, with barely enough will-power not to let go of the hand of the woman in front, the hand, not the shoulder, as when they had come, certainly not one of them would have known what to reply if they had been asked, Why are you holding hands as you go, it simply came about, there are gestures for which we cannot always find an easy explanation, sometimes not even a difficult one can be found. As they crossed the hallway, the doctor's wife looked outside, the soldiers were there as well as a truck that was almost certainly being used to distribute the food to those in quarantine. Just at that moment, the blind woman suffering from insomnia lost the power of her legs, literally, as if they had been cut off with a single blow, her heart also gave up,

## THINKING, READING, and WRITING

Reading and writing are secondary to the most important thing I want you to get out of this class: to appreciate literature in a new way and to get outside your south-central Indiana comfort zone. I want to know what you *think* about what you read, not just what you are reading about. It is my goal to help you dig deeper into what you read and be able to share your thoughts and ideas with others both on paper and in small groups.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

*"The AP English Literature and Composition course focuses on reading, analyzing, and writing about imaginative literature (fiction, poetry, drama) from various periods. Students engage in close reading and critical analysis of literature to deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure. As they read, students will focus on Character, Setting, Structure, Narration, Figurative Language, and Literary Argumentation. Writing assignments include expository, analytical, and argumentative paragraphs and essays, on paper and digitally, that require students to analyze and interpret literary works."*

## TEXTS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

For most units, the whole class will read through a novel or play selected by the teacher (See below.). In addition to the **whole-class texts**, students will select their own novels or plays from a choice of seven to ten options for **lit circle** discussions, group work, and assessments. Students will analyze **short fiction** passages from the primary texts, short stories, or past AP English Lit short fiction prompts. Students will analyze **poetry** from a range of literary periods, including poems taken from past AP English Lit poetry prompts. Also, students are encouraged to independently expose themselves to a range of classical and contemporary poetry through "Poem-A-Day" through the Academy of American Poets ([www.poets.org](http://www.poets.org)).

According to College Board, *"issues that might, from a specific cultural viewpoint, be considered controversial, including depictions of nationalities, religions, ethnicities, dialects, gender, or class, are often represented artistically in works of literature. AP students are not expected or asked to subscribe to any one specific set of cultural or political values, but are expected to have the maturity to analyze perspectives different from their own and to question the meaning, purpose, or effect of such content within the literary work as a whole"* (Course Exam Description 117). Readings or discussions in class concerning controversial topics are sensitively handled and restricted to appropriate academic discussions. Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher with any concerns.

## PRIMARY TEXTS

Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. Penguin Classics, 2006.

Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451*. Simon & Schuster; Reissue edition, 2012.

Shakespeare, William. *Macbeth (No Fear Shakespeare)*. SparkNotes; Study Guide ed. Edition. 2003.

For lit circles, students will select from novels or plays that align with specific themes, skill development, and/or stylistic characteristics of a literary period. Because these texts are meant to be read and discussed in small groups, options are limited to seven to ten. Book Pass activities will help students choose which lit circle novel they will be reading. For example, in our dystopian unit, students may select from novels like *Brave New World*, *The Handmaid's Tale* or *Ready Player One*, among others. Options will change for each circle.

**SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS**

Barber, Susan G., and Smith, Melissa Alter, *The Norton Guide to AP Literature: Writing & Skills, First Edition Update*. W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2024

Cohen, Ariane, and Colleen Kinder. *Confessions of a High School Word Nerd Laugh Your Gluteus\* Off and Increase Your SAT Verbal Score*. Penguin Books. 2007.

Foster, Thomas C. *How to Read Literature Like a Professor Revised: a Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines*. Harper Perennial, 2014.

**FILM**

*Fahrenheit 451*. Written by Ray Bradbury, Ramin Bahrani, Amir Naderi, directed by Ramin Bahrani, performances by Michael B. Jordan, Michael Shannon, et. al. Amazon Prime Video, 2018.

*Fahrenheit 451*. Written by Ray Bradbury, François Truffaut, Jean-Louis Richard, Helen Scott, David Rudkin, directed by Francois Truffaut, performances by Oskar Werner, Julie Christie, Cyril Cusack, et. al. DVD, 1966.

*Macbeth*. Written by William Shakespeare, directed by Joel Coen, performances by Denzel Washington, Frances Mcdormand, et al. AppleTV, 2021.

*Macbeth*. Written by William Shakespreare, directed by Rupert Goold, performances by Patrick Stewart, Kate Fleadwood, et. al. Amazon Prime Video, 2010.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

My family and I moved here from North Carolina in 2014, but we are originally from Minnesota. My husband works at Eli Lilly in Indianapolis. We have two kids, Sierra & Chase, and two pets, Zoey & TJ. I enjoy running, reading, writing letters, and watching movies. I am obsessed with dragons, especially Toothless from "How to Train Your Dragon". Dove Chocolates are my favorite candy, and Coca-Cola is my go-to drink (and Ice Mountain bottled water).

This is my 24th year in education, and I love what I do. I am looking forward to sharing my love of literature and working with you during the 2024-25 school year. If you or your parents/guardians need to reach me for any reason, please feel free to call the school at 812-591-3330, or to email me at skalli@decaturco.k12.in.us.

*Mrs. Kalli*

Mrs. Kalli  
AP English 11, English 9, Yearbook Adviser  
Junior High Cross Country Coach  
Room 411, South Decatur Jr./Sr. High School

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 8/5/24

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 8/5/24

Title & Author & Annotation	Comments	Rank
<p><b>1984</b> by George Orwell (1948)            Annotation: This novel warns against a world governed by propaganda, surveillance, and censorship. Today, phrases like "Big Brother" and "doublespeak" have become common expressions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seems spooky</li> <li>• interesting</li> <li>• cliffhangers</li> </ul>	1
<p><b>Animal Farm</b> by George Orwell (1944)            Annotation: A timeless and timely allegorical novel. A satire on an oppressed society's blind march towards totalitarianism. A farm is taken over by overworked, mistreated animals, including pigs, horses, and dogs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seems kidish</li> <li>• not real</li> <li>• <u>fairy-tale</u></li> <li>Not at all!</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Blindness</b> by Jose Saramago (1997)            Annotation: A plague of "white blindness" sweeps the country, and attempts to quarantine the blind fail to contain the spread. Disturbing possibilities of what might happen when society's organization dissolves. (Sexual violence, unusual punctuation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seems on 'edge'</li> <li>• cliffhanger</li> <li>• thrilling</li> <li>• explains good Explains what? -1</li> </ul>	2
<p><b>Brave New World</b> by Aldous Huxley (1931)            Annotation: A searching vision of a technologically-advanced future where humans are bred, taught, and numbed to uphold an authoritarian ruling order at the cost of freedom, humanity, and soul. (Sexual situations, drug use)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don't want to read about <u>humans</u> being "bred"</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?</b> by Philip K. Dick (1968)            Annotation: A post-apocalyptic world in which Earth has been made unlivable by natural disasters. A bounty hunter receives an order to identify and kill six androids that resemble organic creatures. (Violence)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doesn't seem interesting.</li> <li>• <u>fake animals?</u> Not true</li> <li>• didn't catch my eye why not? -1</li> </ul>	
<p><b>The Handmaid's Tale</b> by Margaret Atwood (1985)            Annotation: A powerful, potentially disturbing dystopian satire set in a future America where women have been stripped of all their civil rights under a patriarchal society (Strong language, sexual situations, violence)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seems realistic</li> <li>• <u>too strong</u> what do you mean? -1</li> <li>• <u>life related</u></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Ready Player One</b> by Ernest Cline (2011)            Annotation: Wade Watts studies the puzzles hidden within the confines of a worldwide virtual reality game. Solving the puzzles could lead him to inherit the game creator's fortune. (Strong language, game violence)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seems <u>true</u> kinda</li> <li>• <u>competing</u></li> <li>• seems like <u>teens</u> now</li> </ul>	3
<p><b>Slaughter-House Five</b> by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. (1969)            Annotation: An sci-fi-infused anti-war novel centering on the bombing of Dresden in WWII. Billy Pilgrim's trek through time (and to planet Tralfamadore) reflects the journey of our own lives as we search for meaning in what we fear most.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To much <u>history</u>.</li> <li>• seems "nerdy" he</li> <li>• <u>weird</u></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Station Eleven</b> by Emily St. John Mandell (2014)            Annotation: Set in the days of civilization's collapse, and moving back and forth in time, this novel charts the strange twists of fate that connect five people traveling together. (Violence, abuse).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seems <u>catchy</u> How? -1</li> <li>• <u>thrilling</u></li> <li>• <u>grabs you in</u></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Unwind</b> by Neal Schusterman (2007)            Annotation: Three teenagers are on the run from a government that believes "unwinding," or body harvesting, is an alternate solution to abortions and unwanted teens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don't think <u>abortion</u> is <u>right</u>, not my type</li> </ul>	

This book isn't about abortion it's about organ donation

1984  
1948

[I picked 1948 because it was the only one that really caught my eye.] This is not a strong argument. It seems like it would catch you and bring you in. I am interested in books that have cliffhangers and thrills.

Only one other person had 1984 as #1, ~~that~~ but blindness will also have cliffhangers.

58  
21

Good Evening. My name is [REDACTED] I am 16 years old, and I'm a Junior at South Decatur High School.

I decided to talk about how my parents and I were ignored when we requested that I be transferred from AP English because the book list covered abortion, rape, violence, and sex without consequences.

I have copies with dates, details, and quotes from the teachers and students that I'll give you at the end. Please take time to read that.

What I'm going to do is try to describe what happened to me under your watch. **Because of that, I respectfully ask that you look at me as I speak.**

This school has a teacher who has made it her top priority to remove me from my southern Indiana ways even though she was hired to teach English.

I want you to know this more than anything else: I was coerced into reading the book *Blindness* instead of my first choice which was *1984*.

Mrs. Kalli wouldn't let me read my first choice, *1984*, because only one other person picked it. Instead, she told me to read *Blindness*, but because we had a group of 4, she didn't have enough books. Mrs. Kalli gave me her personal copy with notes throughout the entire book, graphic parts underlined, and some profanity written in the margins. I believe it is important for my parents to be able to review that copy, since I had to read it.

I can never unsee the graphic words I read the night my dad found me in tears. Are you happy about this?

You need to make sure this never happens again. This has nothing to do with how mature a student is and everything to do with forcing students to accept sexual books from someone who's not their parent.



I am speaking out because this school can do better. Instead of looking for an excuse to bring in porn, I want you to end it. Making excuses is the easy way out, but what I'm asking you to do takes courage.

I am asking you to do the right thing, obey the law, and remove porn from Decatur County schools.

Thank you.

(give handouts to Board)

Good Evening, My name is Adam Smith.

Evening, September 15: I found [REDACTED] crying in her room and asked what was wrong. She handed me this book: *Blindness* by Saramago. I was blown away with its graphic description of having sex.

Sept 16: 8 a.m. [REDACTED] and I arrived at school and I informed the secretary that my daughter would not be reading porn at school and that I wanted her removed from AP English. Amy Cockburn, Principal, then took us to her office, and we were joined by Sariina Kalli. I repeated, "[REDACTED] is done and is not reading porn." Mrs. Kalli tried blaming [REDACTED] for choosing the book, however, [REDACTED] FIRST choice was a DIFFERENT book—one of two from the list of ten that were not "Satanic" in nature. Mrs. Cockburn said, quote....."The school doesn't pick them," but Mrs. Kalli corrected her and said she DID pick them. I said either [REDACTED] is removed from this class or I am pulling her out of school.

[REDACTED] then met with guidance counselor to change classes and was told she should be mature enough to read that book at 16 years old! Per [REDACTED] that afternoon the principal was collecting other AP English students' books--supposedly from lockers.

Later I called superintendent Burns, whose daughter had read one of these books to get the credit. **He said school had to go along with that class or they would lose the funding. I told him my daughter's soul is worth more than a school credit. He said he agreed but couldn't lose that class.**

**Burns' assertion that funding requires pornographic materials to be included is false! Schools can most definitely meet AP criteria and uphold Indiana law! These ARE NOT mutually exclusive.**

This is the content my 16- year old daughter was required to read:

**(READ BOOK HERE)**

**Close with this.....**

**I do not consent to graphic materials and the sexual exploitation of minors and I  
EXPECT DECATUR COUNTY SCHOOLS TO ALIGN WITH INDIANA LAW  
IMMEDIATELY.**

Good evening, My name is Susi Dean,

I present the following laws from Title 20 dash 28 of Indiana Code.

First, the Secretary of Education can recommend the IDOE suspend or revoke a license for either immorality or misconduct.

Second, a teacher can be suspended without pay or they can have their contract canceled, and in both cases...immorality is the first reason listed.

Third, a Superintendent's contract can be terminated by the school board for immorality or misconduct, which raises the question of this Superintendent's tacit (*ta-set*) approval of Harmful Matter being distributed within Decatur County Schools.

Conversely, Indiana law (IC20-30-5-5) requires public school teachers to instruct with emphasis on Honesty, Morality, Courtesy, Obedience to Law, Respect for the national flag and the U.S. and Indiana Constitutions, Respect for parents and the home, The dignity and the necessity of honest labor; and Other lessons of a steadying influence that tend to promote and develop an upright and desirable citizenry.

I ask you, is this law being followed in Decatur County Schools?

As of January 1, 2024, public schools no longer have a defense to prosecution for distributing harmful matter to a minor. (35-49-3-3) A person who knowingly or intentionally disseminates harmful matter to minors commits a Level 6 felony,

I ask you, is this law being broken in Decatur County schools?

When an adult introduces sexualized content to a child, it breaks down a child's natural barriers and prepares them for sexual exploitation. (Children become like their surroundings. When a child reads about noble, brave, **and honorable people**, they emulate that conduct. (Classic literature that introduces the struggle between good and evil helps build a child's character. The **point here** is, Classic Literature generally presents a villain that is punished...not held up as a different way we should accept. Likewise, books that glamorize or normalize evil, immorality, violence, and hopelessness negatively influence a child who is unable to deal logically with these concepts. They need to be protected from evil, not introduced to it.

I am asking this Board to implement and publish a policy by December 1, 2024 that will ensure harmful materials are no longer disseminated to students at Decatur County School property.

I look forward to working with this administration to ensure that Decatur County Schools remain accountable to the parents and taxpayers **and that laws on morality, immorality, and harmful matter are being followed.**

**I would like to leave you with this final thought.....What shall it profit America if it gains the whole world and loses its own soul?**

**Thank you.**

The book *Blindness* was made into a movie. That movie was rated 'R.' Wikipedia SPECIFICALLY defines rated 'R' as: "Under 17 **requires** accompanying parent or adult guardian. Contains some adult material. Parents are **urged** to learn more about the film **before** taking their young children with them."

It does **NOT** say minors should be accompanied by a teacher, but by a parent or guardian. Even the movie industry realizes that this content is **NOT** suitable for minors.

Pluggedin.com movie review described the sexual content, as such: "There are sex scenes, rapes, and nudity in *Blindness*. The 1<sup>st</sup> rapes take place largely in the dark, but we still see **and** hear **FAR TOO MUCH!** Men grope women and rip off their clothes. We see shadowy gyrations and hear moans and screams. A woman is forced to give someone oral sex at gunpoint, and the man threatens bodily mutilation, if she doesn't comply. Other men **GRAPHICALLY** describe what they want their victims to do sexually. The MASS sexual assault leaves one woman dead."

As for the argument that [REDACTED] was in a college-level course, she was not enrolled in college. Therefore, the

course was subject to public high school requirements, not vice-versa, and public schools no longer have an obscenity exemption.

The description of this book provided by the teacher did not provide informed consent. This book is depraved and very likely meets the legal definition of obscenity according to IC 35-49-2-1.

The Attorney General created a portal called "Eyes on Education," where students, parents, and educators can submit complaints about objectionable materials that the Office of the Attorney General will investigate to see if it violates Indiana Law.

Regardless of this Board's decision on how to handle this teacher and her absolutely inappropriate reading list, of which we are only discussing one book, but I know there are more inappropriate books on that same reading list, I would encourage those present to go to Eyes on Education and submit a complaint. I would also strongly encourage this Board to suspend this teacher without pay for the following reason of immorality, based on IC 20-28-9-21, until her curriculum is thoroughly investigated to make sure there are no other inappropriate materials.

I would also suggest that the Board talk to this teacher about the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment rights of students, and how she has forced her views about abortion on students, as well as encouraged students to cuss in the classroom. All of these behaviors are completely inappropriate for a teacher in the classroom.





## Parent Education Bill of Rights

13.

You have the right to receive notice from your child's school if he or she is bullied.

14.

You have the right to determine which educational pathway your child pursues for high school graduation.

\* 15.

You have the right to know what books are available to students in the school library and to request the removal of books that are obscene or include material harmful to minors.

16.

You have the right to be notified if your child requests to be addressed by a name or use the pronouns of the opposite sex.

\* 17.

You have the right to defend your child's First Amendment rights to religious expression and free speech in a school environment.