

# News for In-Coming 8<sup>th</sup> graders of Pre-AP English

## Welcome to Pre-AP English!

- **What is Pre-AP?** Pre-AP stands for “Pre-Advanced Placement.” These classes are designed to prepare students for the rigorous academic challenges of AP (Advanced Placement) classes in high school. AP classes are taught similar to a college-level class because at the end of the class the students are required to take an AP exam. If they pass the exam with an acceptable score, they are able to “clep” out of a freshman-level college class. This will save their parents the cost of that college-level class, and it will allow the student to begin college as a second-semester freshman or even as a sophomore, depending on how many classes they “clep” out of.
- **What is A+ College Ready?** A+ College Ready is Alabama’s state-wide AP program (<http://www.appluscollegeready.org/>). Alabama received a \$13 million grant from NMSI (<https://www.nms.org/>) in 2008 to begin training cohorts of math, science, and English teachers in Pre-AP and AP curriculum.
- **What is Laying the Foundations?** Laying the Foundations is the name of the training the teachers receive, and it is also the name of the Pre-AP / AP curriculum taught to the students. Sylacauga joined A+ College Ready in 2013, so this summer will be the third year our teachers have received training and our third year to fully implement the Laying the Foundations Pre-AP and AP classes. (<http://www.nms.org/Programs/LayingtheFoundationProgram.aspx>)
- **What is the curriculum?** The students who take Pre-AP and AP classes do NOT follow the same curriculum the students in regular classes follow. The lessons are not made by the local teacher at the school. Instead, they are prepared by a national board of educators. The local teachers go to three years of training to learn the material and to learn how to teach the students at a Pre-AP/AP level of rigor. The local teachers have a tiny bit of leeway with the curriculum, but not much. All the students in the state who take Pre-AP classes follow the same curriculum.
- **How can I learn more?** The following website is from a competitor of NMSI called CollegeBoard. It also has lots of good information about the AP program. <https://www.collegeboard.org/about>

## Summer Reading Requirements

1. **Expectation** – All students in Pre-AP and AP English classes are expected to read at least one novel (from the Required Reading list) each summer.
2. **Purchase the book** - The summer reading novel required for 8<sup>th</sup> grade pre-AP English is *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll. Students are strongly encouraged to purchase the book rather than check it out from the library because the students will be asked to identify certain literary devices by marking them in the book, and because they will use the book in class after school starts in order to complete several exercises, including writing a composition based on the book.
3. **Join Schoology** – Go to this website and join our class’s Schoology webpage <https://www.schoology.com/> and enter our class code: **GF37Q-2W3DR**. Download Schoology to your phone so you will receive notifications when updates, assignments, and tests are uploaded.

## At-Home Reading During the School Year

1. **Expectation** – All students in Pre-AP and AP English classes are expected to read at least four novels (from the Required Reading list) independently during the school year. Each will have corresponding classroom assignments, homework, and essays.
2. **Purchase the following books.** First 9 weeks: *The Looking Glass Wars* by Frank Beddor, Second 9 weeks: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson, Third 9 weeks: *Ender’s Game* by Orson Scott Card, and Fourth 9 weeks: *A Midsummer’s Night’s Dream* by William Shakespeare.