The Pre-AP and Advanced Placement Program in English at St. Edmond Campion Catholic High School is an enrichment program that is designed to challenge motivated and hardworking students to pursue their love of reading, the analysis of literature, oral and written communication and media studies. The program emphasizes a commitment to academic excellence and requires students to engage in close textual reading, to focus on analytical assignments, and to complete a considerable amount of independent work. The long-term goal is to sharpen thinking and communication skills so that students are prepared for university. A secondary goal is to prepare students for the Grade 12 Advanced Placement Literature and Composition Course and Exam that takes place in the spring semester of their grade 12 year. Qualifying scores on the AP exams can enable students to receive advanced standing or first year university equivalency credits. Students should check the credit-and-placement policy at the schools they are considering applying to. Policies vary from one institution to another.

According to the College Board Advanced Placement Program: “The AP English course in Literature and Composition should engage students in the careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature.”

What are the characteristics of AP English Students?

- Reading at or above grade level
- Willingness to closely reread for meaning
- Inspired and challenged by texts of literary merit
- Strong study skills and self-motivated
- Self-disciplined to plan, organize, and carry out tasks to completion
- Proficient in oral and written communication skills
- Independent learner who thrives in a rigorous setting
- Perseveres to complete summer reading assignments and analytical writing tasks

Summer Reading is an integral factor in academic success in countless studies. Summer reading is one of the most effective remedies for the “summer slide,” a phenomenon in which students lose much of what they learned the previous year due to the academic inactivity of the summer months. In addition, the myriad benefits of summer reading for AP students far exceed the inconvenience of reading a few hundred pages over two months. Reading a book or two from the course syllabus allows teachers and students to plunge into the curriculum. Required summer reading also helps establish a habit of reading outside of a classroom environment. Summer reading encourages students to make a schedule and set priorities. Exposing students to rich literature outside of the confines of the classroom also increases the chance of creating a lifelong habit of self-enrichment that many Canadians have abandoned.

How is AP English Different from Regular Academic or University Level English?

The Pre-AP and AP English courses cover the same Ontario curriculum expectations as the Academic and University English courses. However, the AP Courses will require students to study a few more texts of literary merit over four years, and focus on higher-order thinking skills, essay writing, poetry analysis at a more in-depth level, and media deconstruction. There will be substantial and deliberate preparation for the AP College Exam. As well, class will begin with students looking closely at the text that was assigned for summer reading. It will be the basis for the first few written and oral assignments. Students should be prepared to work diligently to complete readings, projects and activities.

According to the College Board Advanced Placement Program, “AP Curriculum is one that is different in pace, depth, breadth, and/or complexity.”

Differing pace means:

- moving rapidly through content, themes, and issues
- compacting the curriculum

Differing depth means:

- going past facts and concepts into principles, theories, conventions, literary forms, and seeing relationships between and among ideas, concepts, and genres
- analyzing from the concrete to the abstract, the familiar to the unfamiliar, known to unknown

Differing breadth means:

- extending the content by seeing the broader picture
- considering multiple interpretations formed by several cultural, social and historical factors
- building comprehension by participating in related extension opportunities outside the class, and enrichment activities and/or projects

“The College Board recommends allowing any students who are motivated and prepared academically to take an AP course.”

“A book is the axe for the frozen sea within us.” – Franz Kafka