Below is a list of novels that will supplement the adopted curriculum in this year’s language arts class. This document is intended to inform parents/guardians and students about the ancillary novels that will be used in this course.

I. Macbeth

_Macbeth_ is a hallmark of English literature and considered by many to be amongst Shakespeare's finest works. It is often included in the literary canon as a prime example of Jacobean tragedy, but its age makes it no less accessible for students. “Macbeth,” notes American poet Jones Very, “is contending with the realities of this world.” The play's thematic elements of betrayal, morality and lust for power raise interesting issues in a modern socio-political context.

II. 1984

Published in 1949 as a warning about the menaces of totalitarianism, _1984_ is set in an imaginary future world that is dominated by three perpetually warring police states. The book's hero, Winston Smith, is a minor party functionary in one of these states. His longing for truth and decency leads him to secretly rebel against the government. Smith has a love affair with a like-minded woman, but they are both arrested by the Thought Police. Orwell's warning of the dangers of totalitarianism made a deep impression on his contemporaries and upon subsequent readers. The book's title and many of its coinages (such as "Newspeak" and "Big Brother") have become bywords for modern political abuses and manipulation.

III. Wuthering Heights

A masterpiece of Victorian gothic literature, _Wuthering Heights_ is Emily Bronte’s only novel. Called a novel of “appealing darkness,” by writer Alice McDermott, the book offers students an unflinching look at the conflict between storm and calm as it delves into the protagonists’ passionate, destructive love. It is recognized as a work of literary merit by the College Board’s AP Literature and Composition Test, and as high-quality literature, it demands good reading skills from students. The book raises issues still highly relevant today, such as social class, gender and race, economic status, the problem of revenge, and the manifestations forms of love.

IV. Brave New World

_Brave New World_, Aldous Huxley’s unsettling dystopian look into the year 632 A.F. (“After Ford”), deals with modern issues of psychology and conditioning, leisure culture, human sexuality, and individuality vs. the collective good among others. Deeply satiric, the novel’s critical gaze through the eyes of outsider John the Savage anticipates our own struggles with entertainment and consumerism. _Brave New World_ was ranked #5 on the Modern Library’s list of 100 best English-language novels of the 20th century and continues to challenge its readers to look beyond the façade of the World State’s slick, manufactured perfection.