

Public Schools of Edison Township
English Honors: 9th to 10th grade
Study Guide for Summer Reading

Dear Student:

Welcome to the tenth grade honors English class!

The summer reading program for honors English classes is designed to promote enrichment of the students' reading experiences, to provide additional resources and background for the discussion and understanding of literature, and to enhance its enjoyment. With this in mind, you are being asked to read **J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*** and **Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird***. Both are **required** reading for entering tenth grade honors English students.

Discussion of these two novels will serve to create a bridge from the previous year's work to a new foundation of literary studies beginning in September. As you read, you are encouraged to take notes on characters, settings, events, themes, symbols, and such features of style as diction, imagery, and figurative language. You are encouraged to buy your own copies of the books so that you can mark particularly significant passages and/or write questions and comments in the margins, engaging in a dialogue with each book. If you choose not to buy your own book, use post-it notes to record your questions and comments.

Since these two novels will be an important element of the first quarter's curriculum, it is imperative that you enter school in September with a working knowledge of each book's characters, events, and themes. In order to get the year off to a successful start, we must be able to count on everyone's preparedness for class.

The following will help you to focus on your readings and to serve as a guide for what to look for when reading the two summer assignments:

To Kill a Mockingbird and *The Catcher in the Rye*, like other novels we will read in the tenth grade, are reflections of American life. As you read *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which illustrates images of the rural American South of the 1930s, and *The Catcher in the Rye*, which depicts post-World War II urban America of the Northeast, use the list of topics found below as a guide to help you consider what you have discovered about American cultural experiences that you did not know before.

Family	Education
Mores/values	Standards of behavior
Expectations	Racism
Conformity	Bucking the system
Relationship between the protagonists and other characters	
Recognition of social class system	

Essential Questions:

What does it mean to be an American at the time of each novel?

What do these books tell us about life in America today?

Your notes should be thorough enough to serve as a personal review of the books, enabling you to discuss them readily and to write about them in depth in September. Your notes should NOT be taken from the internet. Within the first marking period, your summer work will be used for oral presentations in group sessions, for in-class, impromptu essay assignments or other writing assignments. The summer work itself will NOT be graded. However, the better your notes are, the better the results will be in the corresponding assignments. Therefore, be prepared when you return in September to actively engage in any and all of the work related to the two summer readings.

Finally, you should expect to be TESTED AND/OR expect to COMPLETE A WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT on these books BEFORE we discuss them. We are interested in how thoughtfully, critically, and carefully you read rather than in how well you listen to class discussion and regurgitate information.

Enjoy the summer. We look forward to meeting you and discussing these books with you.