



TENAFLY HIGH SCHOOL

English Department

Summer 2023 Reading Assignments

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Entering 9th Grade: World Literature I Honors

The summer reading assignment for World Literature I Honors requires you to read a total of two (2) books. These are the first of the books that you will read on your own this year.

Book 1: *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd

You must read [*The Secret Life of Bees*](#) by Sue Monk Kidd. Author Luanne Rice said, “*The Secret Life of Bees* proves that a family can be found where you least expect it--maybe not under your own roof, but in that magical place where you find love. *The Secret Life of Bees* is a gift, filled with hope.”

Think about whether you agree or disagree with Rice’s statement. Do you believe that *The Secret Life of Bees* is a hopeful story and that, based on Lily’s experiences, “family” can be found in unexpected places? Write a 5-paragraph essay explaining why you agree or disagree with the above statement. Make sure to include quotations from the novel in order to support your ideas.

Make sure that your essay contains an introduction paragraph with a clear thesis statement, three body paragraphs in which you develop your ideas and incorporate quotations, and a conclusion paragraph to wrap up your thought. Bring your essay to class on the first day of school.

Book 2: Student Choice

You must then read a book of your choosing from the following list:

- [*The Color of Water*](#) by James McBride
- [*The Bean Trees*](#) by Barbara Kingsolver
- [*A Separate Peace*](#) by John Knowles

As you read, think about the characters, symbols, and themes in the text. After reading, locate 15 quotations and rewrite the quotation on a document. Your chosen quotations should not exceed 3 consecutive sentences. Then, for each of the 15 quotes, write a brief explanation by discussing the ways in which this quote is meaningful to you and also including ways this quote aids in the development of the characters, symbols, themes, etc of your chosen text.

Bring your work to class on the first day of school.



Entering 10th Grade: World Literature II Advanced

The summer reading assignment for World Literature II Advanced requires you to read a total of two (2) books. The books you have to choose from fit the general reading focus of the sophomore curriculum—Western Literature. Please choose from the list below:

- [*Jane Eyre*](#) by Charlotte Bronte
- [*Wuthering Heights*](#) by Emily Bronte
- [*Sarah's Key*](#) by Tatiana De Rosnay
- [*A Tale of Two Cities*](#) by Charles Dickens
- [*The Count of Monte Cristo*](#) by Alexandre Dumas
- [*Rebecca*](#) by Daphne Du Maurier
- [*Angela's Ashes*](#) by Frank McCourt

Make your selection based on which stories appeal to you and which you have not read before. You can pick up a copy from any of the area libraries, or if you want a personal copy, purchase one so you can highlight and mark up passages.

As you read, pay attention to how the story is written; to how the writer delivers the story to you. When you return to school in September, you will be expected to demonstrate your reading in the first assignment of the year. Assignments may include, but are not limited to, written and/or oral reports, projects, and presentations.

Make note of at least **TEN passages** from **EACH** book that you find to be especially interesting or important. You will need to bring these passages to school with you in September, so photocopy and/or re-type the passages if you are not able to bring the book itself with you in September.

Since one of our goals is to encourage the habit of lifelong reading, we also assign independent reading during the school year. This summer reading assignment is the first of the books you will read on your own this year.

Note: Expect assessments for each book at the beginning of the school year.



Entering 10th Grade: Sophomore Humanities Honors

The summer reading assignment for Sophomore Humanities Honors requires you to read a total of two (2) books. These are the first of the books that you will read on your own this year.

Book 1: Robert Fagles' Translation of *The Odyssey*

You must read the first 12 “books” (ie: chapters) of [Robert Fagles' translation of *The Odyssey*](#). If you want to keep reading, you are encouraged to complete the entirety of the text, but only the first 12 books (which will take you through page 285) are required.

Book 2: Student Choice

You must then read a book of your choosing from the following list:

- [Six of Crows](#) by Leigh Bardugo
- [The Count of Monte Cristo](#) by Alexandre Dumas
- [Rebecca](#) by Daphne Du Maurier
- [The Ocean at the End of the Lane](#) by Neil Gaiman
- [The Song of Achilles](#) by Madeline Miller
- [Salt to the Sea](#) by Ruta Sepetys

These texts will prepare you for our discussions on archetypes and world-building in Western literature, so select wisely—choose a book which appeals to you, or select one that could invite you to approach storytelling from a new perspective.

You can pick up copies of these books from any of the area libraries, or if you want a personal copy, purchase one so you can highlight or underline passages.

As you read, pay attention to how the writer delivers the story to you, and consider using Post-it notes to keep track of such moments.

Reflect on at least ten significant passages; consult the suggested elements listed below, but feel free to add notes and questions of your own. To prepare for our opening discussions, take notes on the following elements within the books:

- Incarnations of good and evil
- The function of fate or free will
- The role of the hero
- Depictions of deities or divinity
- The values of the society within the text (customs, culture, attitudes, etc.)
- Writing style and diction
- Figurative language, symbols, and motifs



Entering 10th Grade: Sophomore Humanities Honors

Be sure to cite page numbers as you take notes, especially since they will help you save time when revisiting a part of the story. One of the expectations for Humanities Honors is that you will make the effort to notice details, so avoid merely writing down trite quotations or chapter summaries. Using “SparkNotes” (or any other print or online equivalent) is not an acceptable substitute for the experience of reading a book. Let the stories reward you for your patience.

You will need to have your notes and both books ready for school in September. You’ll be assessed on these books upon your return to school in the fall.



Entering 11th Grade: Advanced Placement English Language and Composition

To prepare for the literary journey we will take throughout the school year, over the summer you are required to read two novels: *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck and *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston. These two books fit the general reading focus of the junior curriculum—American Literature and, as you will come to see, are set during similar time periods.

- *The Grapes of Wrath* tells the story of the Joad family’s experience as they drive west to California after being driven out of their home in Oklahoma due to agricultural and economic hardships in the 1930s. The Joads desperately search for work wherever they can find it and, like the other migrant farmworkers and families making the same journey, earnestly hope for the possibility of a brighter future.
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God* tells the story of Janie Crawford, a fair-skinned black woman living in the South in the 1930s. The novel begins with Janie returning to Eatonville, Florida, one of the first self-governed, all-black towns in America, after the death of her third husband. The story then flashes back to tell the story of Janie’s life from her girlhood up to her return to Eatonville.

Neither reading “Cliffs Notes” (or any other print or on-line equivalent) nor watching a film version is an acceptable substitute for the experience of reading a novel. Do not attempt to substitute one of these activities for actual reading—either now or during the school year.

On the first day of school, come to class with the following two completed assignments:

Assignment 1: A personal essay

Write a personal essay in which you discuss your experience of reading these two novels, individually and as a pair. A personal essay is meant to expose your reader into who you are *as a person*. Think of it as a one-way conversation where you show (and tell) your audience about how your experiences shaped your inner workings and made you into the person that you are. Do not use AI to assist you in writing the essay. Just trust your own writing voice and skills. Be sure to proofread and to [format your essay in MLA style](#).

During and after reading the texts, consider the following (note that these are not required questions for you to answer, but rather suggestions to guide and inspire your own thinking):

- What were your initial thoughts? What were your thoughts later on?
- What were some puzzling aspects of the book(s)? What were some intriguing aspects of the book(s)?



Entering 11th Grade: Advanced Placement English Language and Composition

- What connections can you make to other books/movies, to the real world, to your own experiences?
- Did you enjoy reading one book more than the other?
- Did you find yourself more emotionally invested in the characters' experiences in one book more than in the other?
- To what extent did you notice, and perhaps appreciate, the writing style of each author? Are they similar in any way? How do they differ?
- What questions, if any, are you left with after reading?

Since the essay is personal, we encourage you to write, at least in part, in the modes of narration and description, as well as exposition. Unlike a formal, scholarly essay, a personal essay allows you the freedom to ask questions, to tell stories, to be free to express yourself as you wish. Write from a personal point of view (i.e.: use "I") and be honest. You do not need a thesis—in fact, you can begin with a story, a declaration, a quote, or anything else you like—but it does strengthen your writing if you have an overarching idea that ties your thoughts together. From there, go where you wish, provided that you stay focused on discussing how your personal experiences shaped your understanding of the two novels. Be sure to tell a story. Remember that part of telling a story is creating immersive scenes using techniques such as description and dialogue.

When referencing the text, use the present tense to discuss the events in each novel. When referencing your own experiences, use the appropriate tense. We will look for evidence of genuine reading, so refer to details and even passages from the novels; but this is not a book report—we will expect a story to unfold about who you are as a person. We'd like you to blend short quotes rather than lengthy passages into the essay and to cite them in MLA style.

We will expect your essay to be cohesive and technically accurate, and we encourage you to strive for grace and style in your essay and to take compositional risks using techniques such as engaging diction, varied sentence structure, allusion, humor, reference to popular culture, etc. This essay should be at least three typed, double-spaced pages in length—but not more than five typed pages. [Click here to see the rubric for this essay.](#)

We will collect these essays on the first day of class, and we will grade them; that grade will count as a major grade.

Assignment 2: Copy of two passages—one from each novel

We will devote the first few weeks of school for follow-up activities and discussions related to your reading of the two novels. Please choose from each novel a passage that you would be interested in discussing with the class and/or exploring further. These passages should



Entering 11th Grade: Advanced Placement English Language and Composition

demonstrate an aspect of writing style or rhetorical language (for example, a device of classical rhetoric, figurative language, description, shifting point of view, irony, or syntactic patterning).

Soon into the school year, you will likely be asked to lead a discussion on a passage from one of the books. Be sure to include on each of your copies the page number on which the passage is found.

Considerations:

You might want to consider purchasing your own copies of the books, as that option offers you the freedom to write in your books as you please—which can be useful when discussion time comes.



Entering 12th Grade: Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition

To prepare for our literary journey, over the summer you are required to read two novels: *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens, and *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker.

- *Great Expectations*, written by a British author in the nineteenth century, is quite long and presents a lengthy cast of characters to the reader. It is very good but does require time and focused attention in order to be appreciated and enjoyed. Be sure to allow yourself enough time and space to read this novel. Make sure to read an **UNABRIDGED** copy of this novel.
- *The Color Purple*, written by an African-American author in the twentieth century, is shorter and stylistically more modern. The novel is very graphic, raw, and requires your ability to handle controversial material in a mature fashion.

Additionally, you will write an essay about your reading. This essay, due on the first day of school, is an opportunity for your teacher (and other potential readers) to learn about you as a person, as a reader, as a thinker, and as a writer.

Your task is to write a personal essay in which you capture your experience reading these two novels. We believe that each reader's encounter with a text is unique because each reader brings to the text his/her own prior experiences, his/her personal outlook, and so on. Convey in your essay how you, as a specific reader, read the texts.

Keep in mind that often questions are just as valuable, if not more valuable, than answers to questions. We will spend the first few weeks of school exploring these texts together. You are not expected in your paper to come up with your final thoughts on the novels and are in fact asked to remain open-minded to further thinking and exploration.

The questions below might help you generate material for your essay. Keep in mind that you do not necessarily need to answer all of these questions – just the ones that relate to your reading experience:

- What especially interests you about each text?
- What characters and/or topics drew your attention the most, and why?
- To what did you find yourself paying attention as you read?
- What were you asking as you read? (Your questions are important; they can be questions about each text and/or might be questions that exist outside of each text—questions about life, literature, etc.)
- In what ways did you find the two texts to complement one another (through comparison, contrast, other)?
- To what other texts and/or narratives are you able to connect these texts?



Entering 12th Grade: Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition

- What do you hope, and/or want to suggest, our class discuss about each text? Refer to general features of each text as well as to more specific passages/features.

Notes/Reminders:

- The source material for this paper must be your full and authentic reading of these two texts (not movie versions, online summaries – NO SHORTCUTS). Research is not required, nor is it encouraged; we are looking for your personal encounters with these texts, and the meanings and questions you find in your interaction with the texts. If you do consult any sources, you must cite those sources, and you must include a Works Cited page.
- You don't need to praise each text. In fact, feel free to express dislike if that is your informed reading of the one or both text(s). We hope that your class is composed of many voices, with many different readings and opinions of the two novels; express yours.
- Support your discussion with specific details and quotes from the texts; in this way, show your reading.
- You will write in the first-person ("I") voice. Allow your voice to be expressed. In a personal essay, you are allowed to be more casual than you can be in formal essays.
- Your essay needs to be cohesive, but it does not necessarily require formal essay structure (introduction with thesis, topic sentences in each body paragraph); the essay structure can be more organic.
- We encourage you to feel comfortable bringing thinking from other disciplines (e.g., history, science) into your reading and discussion of texts, as one of our interests this year will be connecting texts to other disciplines and to the world.
- We hope you enjoy the process of writing and the right to express yourself creatively through how you write.
- Be sure to revise, to edit, and to proofread your essay. Do not leave either your reading or your writing for the last minute; you will need to dedicate time and effort to both. It is our hope that you will enjoy both processes.
- Reading your essay aloud is always a good idea. See if the essay flows, if you are expressing your voice, and so on.
- Please limit your personal essay to 3-5 pages (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, 1" margins, MLA format). Give your essay a title that reflects and/or emphasizes the paper's content.
- On the first day of class, you will be asked to submit your essay to turnitin.com; be sure you have an electronic copy of the paper.

Copies of the Texts



Entering 12th Grade: Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition

We encourage you to buy your own copies so that you may highlight and mark the texts as you wish. Don't forget that you will need an UNABRIDGED copy of *Great Expectations*. If you would like to borrow copies of the texts from the English Department, come to our office (room 212) after school.

As you read each novel, you might use Post-Its to respond to, and to reflect upon, the experience of reading the novels—your emotional, cognitive and aesthetic responses. Mark memorable passages; places where you felt confused; places where you have questions; and so on. Mark passages containing interesting examples of “diction, syntax and imagery” and passages you simply find “well written.” The passages you mark, and whatever notes you choose to make, will help you participate actively in the class discussions on the two novels—which will be one of our “great expectations” for the first few weeks of school.

Formatting Your Paper

Follow all [MLA Paper Format](#) guidelines.

- Formatting the first page of your paper
 - Do not make a title page for your paper
 - Provide a double-spaced entry in the top left corner of the first page that lists your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date.
 - Center your title on the line below the header with your name, and begin your paper immediately below the title.
- General Formatting Guidelines
 - Type your paper and print it out on standard-sized paper (8.5 X 11 inches).
 - Double-space your paper.
 - Set the margins of your document to 1 inch on all sides.
 - Create a header that numbers all pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin; in the header, one every page, your last name should precede the number.
 - Use *italics* throughout your essay for highlighting the titles of longer works and providing emphasis.



Entering 10th or 11th Grade: AP Seminar (Elective)

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to access the full instructions and the AP Seminar required reading packet, as it is quite long, but consolidated into one .pdf file. Over the summer, I'll also be adding you to our Google Classroom, which will provide you a chart to organize and gather your notes.

Best,
Mrs. Malanka