

English I

Summer Reading Assignment 2025

Task #1:

Read and annotate *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* by Marjane Satrapi ISBN: 978-0-375-71457-3

Synopsis:

Persepolis is Marjane Satrapi's wise, funny, and heartbreaking memoir of growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution. In powerful black-and-white comic strip images, Satrapi tells the story of her life in Tehran from ages six to fourteen, years that saw the overthrow of the Shah's regime, the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, and the devastating effects of war with Iraq. The intelligent and outspoken only child of committed Marxists and the great-granddaughter of one of Iran's last emperors, Marjane bears witness to a childhood uniquely entwined with the history of her country.

Annotating:

While you're reading, be sure to mark the pages in the novel:

- a) Look up words you don't know.
- b) Ask questions.
- c) Comment on the actions or development of a character.

Does the character change? Why? How? The result?

- d) Comment on any conflicts that occur.
- e) Comment on lines/passages you think are significant, powerful or meaningful. f) Express agreement or disagreement.
- g) Summarize key events. Make predictions. Formulate opinions.
- h) Note anything you'd like to discuss in class or don't understand.

*Please bring the book with you to class on the first day of school.

English II Academic
Summer Reading Assignment 2025

Task #1: Read and annotate *The Seventh Day* by Yu Hua

ISBN-13: 978-0804172059

Guiding Questions

You do not need to write responses to these questions. They are designed to help guide you as you read this summer.

- 1) What is the role of storytelling in *The Seventh Day*?
- 2) What social commentary do you see in *The Seventh Day*?
- 3) What other important ideas do you see in *The Seventh Day*?
- 4) Does *The Seventh Day* have a first person (I, we, me, etc.) or third person narrator (he, she, it, they, etc.)? How would you characterize the narrator?
- 5) What unanswered questions do you have about *The Seventh Day*?

Annotation Advice:

There are many ways to interact with a text. Everybody has a tendency when it comes to the type of annotations they tend to write – I ask a lot of questions, define words I don't know, make personal connections, and comment on language that I find beautiful, challenging or confusing. Find a way to balance your annotation with your enjoyment of reading.

Book Information:

The Seventh Day is available on Amazon and other online and in-store locations. You are responsible for purchasing the books on your own.

Please finish reading and annotating *The Seventh Day* before the first day of school and bring your book to your first English class.

***The Seventh Day* Synopsis (from amazon.com):**

“Yang Fei was born on a train as it raced across the Chinese countryside. Lost by his mother, adopted by a young switchman, raised with simplicity and love, he is utterly unprepared for the changes that await him and his country. As a young man, he searches for a place to belong in a nation ceaselessly reinventing itself, but he remains on the edges of society.

At forty-one, he meets an unceremonious death, and lacking the money for a burial plot, must roam the afterworld aimlessly. There, over the course of seven days, he encounters the souls of people he's lost. As he retraces the path of his life, we meet an extraordinary cast of characters: his adoptive father, his beautiful ex-wife, his neighbors who perished in the demolition of their homes. Vivid, urgent, and panoramic, Yang Fei's passage movingly traces the contours of his vast nation—its absurdities, its sorrows, and its soul. This searing novel affirms Yu Hua's place as the standard-bearer of Chinese fiction.”

English II Honors
Summer Reading Assignment 2025

Task #1: Read and annotate *The Seventh Day*
Yu Hua ISBN-13: 978-0804172059

Task #2: Read and annotate *The Memory Police: A Novel*
Yoko Ogawa ISBN-13: 978-1101911815

Task #3: Guiding Questions

You do not need to write responses to these questions. They are designed to help guide you as you read this summer.

- 1) What is the role of storytelling in *The Memory Police* and *The Seventh Day*?
- 2) What social commentary do you see in *The Memory Police* and *The Seventh Day*?
- 3) What other important ideas do you see in *The Memory Police* and *The Seventh Day*?
- 4) Does *The Memory Police* have a first person (I, we, me, etc.) or third person narrator (he, she, it, they, etc.)? How would you characterize the narrator?
- 5) Does *The Seventh Day* have a first person (I, we, me, etc.) or third person narrator (he, she, it, they, etc.)? How would you characterize the narrator?
- 6) What connections do you see between *The Memory Police* and *The Seventh Day*?
- 7) What unanswered questions do you have about *The Memory Police* and *The Seventh Day*?

Annotation Advice:

There are many ways to interact with a text. Everybody has a tendency when it comes to the type of annotations they tend to write – I ask a lot of questions, define words I don't know, make personal connections, and comment on language that I find beautiful, challenging or confusing. Find a way to balance your annotation with your enjoyment of reading.

Book Information:

The Seventh Day and *The Memory Police* are available on Amazon and other online and in-store locations. You are responsible for purchasing the books on your own.

Please finish reading and annotating *The Seventh Day* and *The Memory Police* before the first day of school and bring your book to your first English class.

***The Seventh Day* Synopsis (from amazon.com):**

“Yang Fei was born on a train as it raced across the Chinese countryside. Lost by his mother, adopted by a young switchman, raised with simplicity and love, he is utterly unprepared for the changes that await him and his country. As a young man, he searches for a place to belong in a nation ceaselessly reinventing itself, but he remains on the edges of society.

At forty-one, he meets an unceremonious death, and lacking the money for a burial plot, must roam the afterworld aimlessly. There, over the course of seven days, he encounters the souls of people he's lost. As he retraces the path of his life, we meet an extraordinary cast of characters: his adoptive father, his beautiful ex-wife, his neighbors who perished in the demolition of their

homes. Vivid, urgent, and panoramic, Yang Fei's passage movingly traces the contours of his vast nation—its absurdities, its sorrows, and its soul. This searing novel affirms Yu Hua's place as the standard-bearer of Chinese fiction.”

The Memory Police Synopsis (from amazon.com):

“On an unnamed island, objects are disappearing: first hats, then ribbons, birds, roses. . . . Most of the inhabitants are oblivious to these changes, while those few able to recall the lost objects live in fear of the draconian Memory Police, who are committed to ensuring that what has disappeared remains forgotten. When a young writer discovers that her editor is in danger, she concocts a plan to hide him beneath her floorboards, and together they cling to her writing as the last way of preserving the past. Powerful and provocative, *The Memory Police* is a stunning novel about the trauma of loss.”

English III

Summer Reading Assignment 2025

Please finish reading and annotating **BOTH** *The House on Mango Street* and *Between the World and Me* before the first day of school and bring your books to your first English class.

Task #1: Read and annotate *The House on Mango Street* Sandra Cisneros ISBN-13: 978-0679734772

Task #2: Read and annotate *Between the World and Me*

Ta-Nehisi Coates ISBN-13: 978-0812993547 Guiding Questions:

You do not need to write responses to these questions. They are designed to help guide you as you read this summer.

1. How does our past influence our present and future?
2. What does it mean to be American?
3. How does one define the American Dream and do all people have equal access to it?
4. How has the American Dream changed over time?
5. What is the American ethos and how are these values reflected in art, literature, and culture?

Annotation Advice:

There are many ways to interact with a text. Consider asking questions, defining words you don't know, making personal connections, and commenting on language that you find beautiful, challenging, or confusing. Find a way to balance your annotations with your enjoyment of the reading.

Book Information:

The House on Mango Street and *Between the World and Me* are available on Amazon and

other online/in-store locations. You are responsible for purchasing the books on your own. *The House on Mango Street* Synopsis (from amazon.com):

Told in a series of vignettes stunning for their eloquence, *The House on Mango Street* is Sandra Cisneros's greatly admired novel of a young girl growing up in the Latino section of Chicago.

Acclaimed by critics, beloved by children, their parents and grandparents, taught everywhere from inner-city grade schools to universities across the country, and translated all over the world, it has entered the canon of coming-of-age classics. Sometimes heartbreaking, sometimes deeply joyous, *The House on Mango Street* tells the story of Esperanza Cordero, whose neighborhood is one of harsh realities and harsh beauty. Esperanza doesn't want to belong, not to her rundown neighborhood, and not to the low expectations the world has for her. Esperanza's story is that of a young girl coming into her power, and inventing for herself what she will become.

Between the World and Me Synopsis (from amazon.com):

“In a profound work that pivots from the biggest questions about American history and ideals to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son, Ta-Nehisi Coates offers a powerful new

framework for understanding our nation's history and current crisis. Americans have built an empire on the idea of "race," a falsehood that damages us all but falls most heavily on the bodies of black women and men—bodies exploited through slavery and segregation, and, today, threatened, locked up, and murdered out of all proportion. What is it like to inhabit a black body and find a way to live within it? And how can we all honestly reckon with this fraught history and free ourselves from its burden?

Between the World and Me is Ta-Nehisi Coates's attempt to answer these questions in a letter to his adolescent son. Coates shares with his son—and readers—the story of his awakening to the truth about his place in the world through a series of revelatory experiences, from Howard University to Civil War battlefields, from the South Side of Chicago to Paris, from his childhood home to the living rooms of mothers whose children's lives were taken as American plunder. Beautifully woven from personal narrative, reimagined history, and fresh, emotionally charged reportage, *Between the World and Me* clearly illuminates the past, bravely confronts our present, and offers a transcendent vision for a way forward."

AP English Language and Composition

2025 Summer Reading Assignment

Ms. Durham

jdurham@whschool.org

**Task: Read and annotate selected short essays in *50 Essays: A Portable Anthology 7th Edition* Edited by Samuel Cohen
ISBN: 9781319331658**

Annotation Advice:

There are many ways to interact with a text. Everybody has a tendency when it comes to the type of annotations they tend to write – I ask a lot of questions, define words I don't know, make personal connections, and comment on language that I find beautiful, challenging or confusing. Find a way to balance your annotation with your enjoyment of reading.

Guiding Questions:

You do not need to write responses to these questions. They are designed to help guide you as you read this summer.

- 1) Which essays have the strongest openings that draw you in as a reader?
- 2) Which essays have the strongest closings?
- 3) Which essays have the strongest writing voice?
- 4) What connections do you see between essays?
- 5) What essays impact you the most as a reader (positively and negatively)? What techniques do those writers use?
- 6) What can essays convey that other forms of writing cannot convey?

Very Important Information:

50 Essays: A Portable Anthology 7th Edition Samuel Cohen is available on amazon and here:

<https://store.macmillanlearning.com/us/product/50-Essays/p/1319331653>

You are responsible for purchasing the book on your own. **DO NOT** get an electronic version or rent the book.

You may be able to find used copies of the book on other websites but make sure you get a copy that is not already annotated.

Please finish reading and annotating the required essays **before the first day of school** and bring your book to your first English class.

Make sure you get the **7th Edition**. Earlier editions do not have the same essays in them.

You should carefully read and annotate the essays that are listed below. You can, of course, read all of the essays but only the essays listed below are required.

These essays will serve as crucial foundations for key ideas in the course and also provide us an opportunity to begin the year with meaningful discussions from our shared observations about our summer reading.

- “Graduation” Maya Angelou
- “Notes of a Native Son” James Baldwin
- “The Burning Desire for Hot Chicken” Danny Chau
- “Only Daughter” Sandra Cisneros
- “Clearcut: Explaining the Distance” Eli Clare
- “The Paranoid Style of American Policing” Ta-Nehisi Coates
- “Patriot Days” Samuel Cohen
- “Every Dog is a Rescue Dog” John Dickerson
- “On Dumpster Diving” Lars Eighner
- “The Ways We Lie” Stephanie Ericsson
- “Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted” Malcolm Gladwell
- “Going It Alone” Rahawa Haile
- “America Wasn’t a Democracy, Until Black Americans Made It One” Nikole Hannah-Jones
- “When Pink Ballet Slippers Won’t Do” Jenine Holmes
- “Salvation” Langston Hughes
- “How It Feels to Be Colored Me” Zora Neale Hurston
- “Guns in the Family” Walter Johnson
- “The Council of Pecans” Robin Wall Kimmerer
- “What’s Wrong with the Way We Work” Jill Lepore
- “The Fourth of July” Audre Lorde
- “The Ghosts in Our Machines” Matthew J.X. Malady
- “A Woman of Substance” Saima Mir
- “Two Ways to Belong in America” Bharati Mukherjee
- from *There There* Tommy Orange
- “I Just Wanna Be Average” Mike Rose
- “Where the Wild Things Go” Kathryn Schulz
- “Just Walk on By: Black Men and Public Space” Brent Staples
- “Breathe” Jerald Walker
- “The Refugee Crisis Isn’t About Refugees. It’s About Us.” Ai Weiwei
- “Professions for Women” Virginia Woolf
- “A Pet Tortoise Who Will Outlive Us All” Hanya Yanagihara
- “The Tyranny of Time” Joe Zadeh
- “Crying in H Mart” Michelle Zauner

English IV
Summer Reading Assignment 2025

Please finish reading and annotating *Slaughterhouse-Five* before the first day of school, and bring a hardcopy of the text to class.

Kurt Vonnegut ISBN-10 : 0385333846 ISBN-13 : 978-0385333849

Annotation Advice:

There are many ways to interact with a text. Consider asking questions, defining words you don't know, making personal connections, and commenting on language that you find beautiful, challenging, or confusing. Find a way to balance your annotations with your enjoyment of the reading.

Text Description:

Slaughterhouse-Five, an American classic, is one of the world's great anti-war books. Centering on the infamous World War II firebombing of Dresden, the novel is the result of what Kurt Vonnegut described as a twenty-three-year struggle to write a book about what he had witnessed as an American prisoner of war. It combines historical fiction, science fiction, autobiography, and satire in an account of the life of Billy Pilgrim, a barber's son, turned draftee, turned optometrist, turned alien abductee. As Vonnegut had, Billy experiences the destruction of Dresden as a POW. Unlike Vonnegut, he experiences time travel, or coming "unstuck in time."

An instant bestseller, *Slaughterhouse-Five* made Kurt Vonnegut a cult hero in American literature, a reputation that only strengthened over time. It was precisely the elements of Vonnegut's writing—the political edginess, the genre-bending inventiveness, the frank violence, the transgressive wit—that have inspired generations of readers not just to look differently at the world around them but to find the confidence to say something about it.

Fifty years after its initial publication at the height of the Vietnam War, Vonnegut's portrayal of political disillusionment, PTSD, and postwar anxiety feels as relevant, darkly humorous, and profoundly affecting as ever, an enduring beacon through our own era's uncertainties.

AP English Literature and Composition

Summer Reading Assignment 2025

Ms. Byrne
abyrne@whschool.org

You must complete ALL THREE tasks!

Task 1:

Read and annotate: *In the Time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez

ISBN-13: 978-1565129764

Task 2:

Read and annotate: *The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka

ISBN-13: 979-8311448277

Task 3:

In MLA format, write a 5-7 paragraph essay comparing and contrasting the emotional development of the characters in the two works. Do not use an AI chatbot to write this paper.

Writing Advice:

- A proper introduction with a thematic statement and thesis statement, titles, authors
- At least 2 body paragraphs (with clear and strong topic sentences + textual evidence from both novels that support/prove each paragraph's topic sentence and the thesis of your essay)
- A conclusion that does not simply repeat the introduction but rather provides a more compelling and convincing closing

Remember the 3Ts: third person language (so avoid using "you" and "I"), present tense, and serious tone.

Briefly PLAN your essay before writing and PROOFREAD it afterward.

Annotation Advice:

There are many ways to interact with a text. Consider asking a lot of questions, defining words you don't know, making personal connections, and commenting on language that you find beautiful, challenging, or confusing. Find a way to balance your annotations with your enjoyment of the reading.

Synopsis of *In the Time of the Butterflies* (from amazon.com):

It is November 25, 1960, and three beautiful sisters have been found near their wrecked Jeep at the bottom of a 150-foot cliff on the north coast of the Dominican Republic. The official state newspaper reports their deaths as accidental. It does not mention that a fourth sister lives. Nor

does it explain that the sisters were among the leading opponents of Gen. Rafael Leónidas Trujillo's dictatorship. It doesn't have to. Everybody knows of Las Mariposas—the Butterflies.

In this extraordinary novel, the voices of all four sisters--Minerva, Patria, María Teresa, and the survivor, Dedé--speak across the decades to tell their own stories, from secret crushes to gunrunning, and to describe the everyday horrors of life under Trujillo's rule. Through the art and magic of Julia Alvarez's imagination, the martyred Butterflies live again in this novel of courage and love, and the human costs of political oppression.

Synopsis of *The Metamorphosis* (from amazon.com):

The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka is a novella that follows the life of Gregor Samsa, a traveling salesman who wakes up one morning to find himself transformed into a giant insect. The story explores Gregor's alienation, as well as his family's reaction to his transformation, which shifts from initial concern to rejection and abuse. The work delves into themes of identity, isolation, the struggle between personal desires and societal expectations, and the dehumanizing effects of modern life. Kafka's existential and surrealist elements challenge the reader to consider the absurdity of human existence and the nature of self-worth.

It's a deeply thought-provoking and symbolic work that raises questions about personal responsibility, the meaning of life, and the devaluation of the individual in a capitalist society.