Benilde-St.Margaret's
A Catholic, college preparatory school

Honors English 9 Summer Assignment

Your first assignment for Honors English 9 is to read and **annotate** *To Kill a Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee (*you will need to **BUY** your book to begin this course. There will also be a limited number of copies available to borrow at the front desk at BSM during the summer months*).
Our first unit together in the fall will be writing a literary analysis paper on one of these topics, so taking good notes will really help you in the future!

As you read the novel, keep in mind these themes, and annotate references to them as you go. Your annotations will be graded upon your return to school in the fall, so read carefully through the annotation instructions and tips below.

Theme	Explanation
Race	Race is about people's skin color, culture, or background. Look for how characters from different races are treated or how their identities affect their lives.
Social Class	Social class is about how rich or poor people are, and the power they have. Pay attention to how money, jobs, or status change the way characters live and interact.
Gender	Gender is about the roles and expectations society has for people based on whether they are male, female, or different from traditional ideas. Notice if characters are treated differently because of their gender or the expectations placed on them.
Justice and Prejudice	Justice is about fairness, and prejudice is about judging others unfairly. Watch for when characters are treated unfairly or when they fight for what's right.
Growing Up	Growing up means facing challenges, making choices, and changing as a person. Look for moments when characters learn important lessons or mature during the story.

Guiding Questions:

- How does each factor affect how someone sees themself?
- How does it affect how others view and treat them?
- How does each factor determine someone's place in Maycomb's society?
- What expectations does each factor place on individuals?
- Do any characters defy the expectations placed upon them? How does that affect their sense of identity or treatment from others?

How to Annotate To Kill a Mockingbird

Why Annotate?

Annotation helps you slow down, notice important details, and prepare for class discussions and essays. Think

of it as having a conversation with the book. The more you engage with the text and record your thoughts as you read, the better you'll understand and remember important details later for discussions and essays.

Be Intentional.
Do not just underline or highlight everything. This will make it harder to find the really important parts later. Only mark passages that really connect to important ideas, characters, or themes. Always think about *why* you are marking something.

Annotation Tips:

- **Underline** or **use brackets** around important sentences or passages.
- **Write a question mark (?)** in the margin if something is confusing.
- **Circle** or **highlight** words you don't know. Write a quick definition in the margin or on a sticky note.
- **Use different colored sticky tabs** to mark different themes. (Example: blue for justice, pink for growing up, green for race.)
- **Write 2–3 words** in the margin explaining why you marked something. (Example: "Scout matures," "unfair trial," "gender roles.")
- **Place a star (★)** next to scenes or quotes you think are especially important.

Extra Tips:

- At the **end of each chapter**, write a **1–2 sentence summary** in the margin or on a sticky note.
- **Ask questions** in the margins to stay engaged. (Example: "What does this tell us about their community?" or "Why does this person act this way?")
- **Choose carefully.** Don't mark everything—only the most meaningful parts.
- **Stay consistent.** Use the same symbols or colors throughout the book to stay organized.