

# Sophomore Honors English Summer Assignment 2026

Dear Pre-AP Sophomore English Students,

What did the Zen Buddhist say to the hot god cart vendor? Make me one with everything!

We read from a variety of sources and cultures to find our way among the people and places of the world. Our deepest hope is that you continue on this journey of amassing knowledge and attaining self-discovery throughout this academic year and beyond.

## The Summer Assignment

- Read The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho. It is widely available at bookstores, public libraries and through Amazon as well as other online vendors. Purchasing the book is recommended, but you can use the online version at the following site if you wish:
- <https://books-library.net/files/books-library.online-12230111b9C3.pdf>
- Identify ten significant quotations from the book and write inferences concerning the effect of the text, the author's possible intentions, or any thoughtful analysis that displays active interaction with the text. The notes must be
  - Typed (12 pt font) - -Single spaced
  - In two columns, following the format provided in this packet (Do not use the examples already provided)
  - The quotes should come from throughout the book, not just from the first half - for example
- Write two paragraphs using the directions and quotation on the last page of this packet.
- Use correctly a total of TEN vocabulary words from the two lists linked to this document throughout any of the writing created for this assignment. **BOLD these words in the text of your writing.**

All work must be submitted on Turnitin.com **AS ONE SINGLE DOCUMENT** upon your return to school in August. **YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SUBMIT TO TURNITIN.COM UNTIL YOUR TEACHER PROVIDES YOU WITH THE CODE ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.** So simply save your work until then if you finish early. (Turnitin.com is a website used by educators to verify that your work is original.) All summer assignments must be submitted to Turnitin.com in order to receive credit.

All writing you submit must be your own work. You may not plagiarize words or ideas from other websites or use AI (Artificial Intelligence). Include the following certification at the top of your submission to indicate your work is your own: **On my honor, I pledge that all work was created WITHOUT the use of ChatGPT or other Artificial Intelligence websites.**

There will be a project assigned in the first week of the school year to assess your knowledge of The Alchemist.

## Online Assistance

If you have any questions about the assignment over the summer, please contact one of the Pre-AP sophomore English teachers through the following email addresses:

Ann Goodson [aegoodson@olatheschools.org](mailto:aegoodson@olatheschools.org)

Steve Franzen [sfranzenoe@olatheschools.org](mailto:sfranzenoe@olatheschools.org)

Sincerely,

Olathe East Language Arts Staff

## **Words to Use In Writing (Literary/Rhetorical Analysis)**

### **Describing tone and character**

The words (**diction**) you write, the order of the words you arrange (**syntax**), the figurative language you choose to conjure (**imagery**), the information you choose to include – and leave out (**details**), the category of the words you use (**language**) all contribute to the tone of the writing.

We are not studying only the “what”. That is only the beginning. It’s very important, but by far not all there is. This summer assignment is meant to build your vocabulary to describe and your versatility at analyzing differing tones and the effects that authors create. Let’s begin with words that describe (adjectives) tone in writing:

Use the following link:

[Tone Words](#)

You likely do not know all of these words. And there will not be a test over all of these words. But if you trust that all of these words are useful, it won’t matter which ones you choose, only that you choose ones that you find will be most useful for you. Learn (that means not only the definition, but also how to use them effectively) as many of them as you can. If you have a friend completing this assignment, feel free to choose the same words and use them repeatedly with each other. The goal is to make these words part of your working vocabulary. **Please choose the more challenging words that you may not know, such as “disdainful” or “elegiac” rather than simple words like “cheery” or “angry”.**

### **Describing what an author is doing**

Here is a different set of words that have a different purpose. They articulate the actions (verbs) of the author’s rhetorical **choices**; **moves** are another way to describe what an author does. They are necessary to not just explain what a writer is **DESCRIBING**, but also what the writer is **DOING**.

Use the following link for a list of effective words to describe what an author does with writing:

[Analysis Verbs - Sheet1.docx](#)

These words will help more clearly articulate inferences you can make about any text that you are reading.

**Throughout this summer assignment - including the quote inferences and the 2 paragraphs - choose a total of 10 words from one or both lists to use in the text that you write. Bold the words in your document.**

## Inferences

Inferences are conclusions a reader can draw about a passage based on the information given.

Inferences are not directly stated in the text. They are the conclusions that occur to the reader based on the information and the style (diction, syntax, detail, figurative language, and images) contained in the text reflected through the knowledge and experience of the reader.

EXAMPLE:

The small child cried at the sight of her dog's food bowl, knowing Pickles would never use it again after the events of last night.

What are some inferences that can be drawn from the information given? Some "events" occurred that prevent Pickles from eating today. What could they be?

POSSIBLE INFERENCES:

Pickles ran away.

Pickles died.

Pickles was stolen.

Pickles had to be put to sleep.

Pickles was gobbled up whole by an alligator.

Ok. So the last one is more far-fetched, but it is a possible conclusion we can draw. But generally, the most likely inferences are the ones that are the most useful in understanding the text, the ones the author intends you to conjure.

On the next page are some examples from just the first four paragraphs of the novel. **The second example is an illustration of what NOT to do.** Do not make incorrect inferences for your assignment. This should give you an idea of what is expected of you. Be sure to save the entire summer assignment as **ONE DOCUMENT**. You can only turn in one document to TURNITIN.COM

Cited text with page number	Inference
<p>“He saw to it that all the sheep entered through the ruined gate, and then laid some planks across it to prevent the flock from wandering away during the night. There were no wolves in the region, but once an animal had strayed during the night, and the boy had had to spend the entire next day searching for it.” (page 5)</p> <p>“He told himself that he would have to start reading thicker books: they lasted longer, and made more comfortable pillows.” (page 5)</p> <p>“Dusk was falling as the boy arrived with his herd at an abandoned church.” (page 5)</p> <p>“The roof had fallen in long ago, and an enormous sycamore had grown on the spot where the sacristy once stood . . . ruined gate . . . he could see the stars through the half-destroyed roof.” (page 5)</p>	<p><b>EXAMPLE OF AN APPROPRIATE INFERENCE:</b>  <b>INFERENCE:</b> Santiago is practical and responsible.  <b>EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT INFERENCE:</b> He takes care of a herd of sheep. He is willing to spend a whole day looking for just one sheep that is lost. He makes preparations so that his sheep will not wander off while he sleeps.</p> <p><b>EXAMPLE OF AN INAPPROPRIATE OR INCORRECT INFERENCE:</b>  <b>INCORRECT INFERENCE:</b> Santiago is interested in educating himself.  <b>EVIDENCE TO INVALIDATE INFERENCE:</b> He wants to read bigger books. This would be a misinterpretation based on the text. We may find out later that Santiago is interested in education. But the evidence in this passage states that he wants bigger books because they “make more comfortable pillows.” He’s more interested in the size of the book accommodating his head while he sleeps- a practical consideration, not one that indicates a desire for academic challenge. He also states that he wants the books to “last longer.” Santiago is more concerned with how long books can occupy his thoughts during the lengthy times he is alone as a shepherd in the wilderness. This would reinforce the character’s practicality rather than any interest in learning or even reading about the world beyond his own home area.</p> <p><b>FOLLOWING ARE MORE EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE INFERENCES:</b>  <b>INFERENCE:</b> The narrator wants to convey Santiago’s values by describing what he has to do at the end of the day.  <b>EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT INFERENCE:</b> It is ironic that the story begins at the end of the day. The author began the book at this contemplative time because he wants to share Santiago’s thoughts with the reader in order to introduce him. Beginning the story at the end of the day accomplishes this goal.</p> <p><b>EVIDENCE/INFERENCE:</b> The church building itself has been abandoned for a long time, but it still provides shelter even in its half-destroyed and ruined condition. This can be a symbol of the spirit of the church that endures even when it seems damaged or demolished.  Or  <b>EVIDENCE/INFERENCE:</b> By presenting a dilapidated church building at the beginning of the story, the author is signaling that older more traditional ways of seeing the world have lost effectiveness. An individual understanding of spirituality may be more important than a group experience as felt in a church.</p>

*"To realize one's destiny is a person's only obligation." – Paulo Coelho*

In **The Alchemist** – the characters Paulo Coelho creates make statements that seem convincingly true. These characters' statements could be true, but may not be in all circumstances. For instance, a person may have many obligations to family, to a job, to friends. Yet, one could argue that the obligation to find one's destiny would include all of those and other obligations.

In persuasive writing, it is important to be able to articulate both sides of an issue. To practice this, please write two paragraphs (8-10 sentences each) to answer each of the following questions:

- Explain how the statement at the top of this page might be true? You may use support from your reading, observations, and/or experience.
- How might the statement at the top of this page **NOT** be true? You may use support from your reading, observations, and/or experience.

In your paragraphs, do your best to avoid the following:

- Unnecessary reference to yourself (e.g. "I think", "I believe", type language) It is all right if to refer to your own experiences (e.g. "I have changed" or "I traveled to Colorado.")
- Second person "you" (e.g. "You know when you" or "You see yourself in a whole new way")
- Any form of the word "get" (i.e. "got", "getting", "gotten", etc.)
- Other vague words: a lot, thing, stuff, just, really, very, big, huge, etc.

**Checklist for Summer Work 2026**

\_\_\_\_\_ Obtain and read **The Alchemist** by Paulo Coelho.

\_\_\_\_\_ Choose and write inferences to 10 quotations from the book in the format exemplified in this document.

\_\_\_\_\_ Write 2 paragraphs - One supporting and one refuting the Paulo Coelho quote at the top of this page.

\_\_\_\_\_ Be sure to include 10 words **BOLDED** from the vocabulary documents in your assignment.

\_\_\_\_\_ Be ready to submit all work in a single document on Monday, August 17 (the second day of class)

\_\_\_\_\_ Be prepared to complete in class project assessment the week of Monday, August 17.