

Wichita East Accelerated English 1 Summer Reading 2026

Your Choice from the List Below

Dear Incoming Aces,
Your summer reading book will be used to ground our study of literature in the first weeks of school, and **we will start with it on the first day**.

Read thoughtfully and reread when you need to. As you read, make sure you take a few moments to look up any terms, names, ideas you aren't familiar with. You're reading both to jumpstart your literary criticism skills after the summer and to think about the novel as a carefully constructed artwork with something to say to its readers.

1. Read the novel carefully and *enjoy it*. **Pay particularly close attention to these ideas; you might consider either keeping some notes or annotating the book, or both:**

- SETTING: What is the setting of book? We can summarize this as time and place the novel is set, but we want you to go beyond the obvious. What is the actual geography like and the scenery? What is the general manner of the people of this time and place? What are the various social constructions of this setting, the history of the place, the season(s) of the year, the overall social and emotional conditions, etc.
- POINT OF VIEW / NARRATION: Is the point of view 1st person, 3rd person limited, 3rd person omniscient? A mix? Why might the author have chosen the POV that they did and how does the very nature of the POV help provide meaning? If it is 1st person or 3rd limited is the POV from the main character or a minor character? You can look at narration a little differently. Is the story told chronologically? Are there flashbacks? Two or more timelines? Are there cliffhangers? Narration relates to the overall manner in which a story is told.
- CONFLICT / SHIFTS / RESOLUTION: All literature anchors on conflict and resolution. Along the way there will be various shifts—in tone, understanding, plot, etc. Often times we can uncover a book's themes by evaluating the various conflicts and how they are (or perhaps are not) resolved. EXAMPLE: if Harry Potter had destroyed all the horcruxes and Voldemort alone, the series would be akin to a lone superhero who alone can save the world. Instead, Rowling chose to have numerous people destroy horcruxes, which therefore helps to illuminate one of the themes: strength through love and friendship.
- FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE: Figurative language in its most basic form is a catch-all term for language that his not literal—though love can be compared to a rose, it is clearly not literally a rose. The most common types of figurative language are the following: metaphors, similes, personification, and hyperbole. To what extent does the author utilize figurative language? What overall tone and mood does their figurative language create?
- CHARACTERS / CHARACTERIZATION: A well-crafted novel will lead us to forget that the characters are not actually real people but created by the right words on the page. Pay close attention to how an author creates their characters and what that says about them. Especially pay attention when a character is introduced for the first time. Additionally, how do the characters interact with one another? Are there foil characters or characters that complement one another in some fashion. NOTE: Characterization is established by what the narrator says about a character, what a character says and does and what other characters say about them.

Content Warning: Please research your book and discuss your options with your parents or guardians. There may be material in these books that are difficult to process.

2. **<u>Assignment</u>: Choose ONE passage, approximately one-two pages in length and do the following:**
    - annotate the passage as if you were about to write about it (marking of important text, marginal explanations, and reflections—you'll receive a grade for this as well)
    - Type (double-spaced) a well-written paragraph explaining the following about the passage you chose:
        a. the passage's primary meaning and significance—that is, an interpretation, not just a retelling or paraphrase of what happens. What does the passage imply that it doesn't directly say that requires your interpretation?
        b. quote the passage itself; choose quotes that help you explain your interpretation
        c. explanation of how authorial choices (literary elements) in the passage contribute to your interpretation
        d. By "well-written paragraph" above, we are suggesting that your ideas should be integrated and coherent as a paragraph—not a mere listing of ideas.
    - *Our suggestion is that you note several passages as you read the entire book. After you have finished the book, reread the passages that you felt were significant. Knowing the outcome of the book will inform how well you can analyze individual passages.*

There will be additional writing assignments upon your return to school that depend upon you reading the book and completing the assignment above—so failure to do it will hurt you doubly when you return. Please make a plan to complete both the reading and writing.

PLEASE do not hesitate to email us with questions. We are happy to help:
jvandermolen@usd259.net or rcompton@usd259.net or kkope@usd259.net

About acquiring your books:
Watermark Books & Café will have all next year's books on hand over the summer. Apart from your summer read, You can also order from Watermark online at their website:
Summer Reading - IB Freshmen | Watermark Books & Café

If household finances make buying the books difficult for you, please call the IB office (973-7289) or send Ms. Tanner an email (etanner1@usd259.net)

YOUR BOOK OPTIONS—Choose only one title
Last Night at the Telegraph Club—Malinda Lo
Legendborn—Tracy Deonn
I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter—Erika Sanchez
Salt to the Sea—Ruta Sepetys
I'll Give you the Sun—Jandy Nelson
Life of Pi—Yann Martel

FOR LATER IN THE YEAR, purchase the following book if you like to have your own to mark in.
Scythe—Neal Shusterman