English II 2026-2027
Summer Reading Assignment

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Dear students,

Welcome to English II! One of the primary concerns of this course is the world around us and how we make sense of it, and the consumption of literature allows for these questions and studies to take place. Your Summer Reading Assignment is to choose and independently read one work of fiction from the list of books below and write a review. This list was generated using recommendations from past English II students and in consideration of the reading level expected from students in a sophomore English course; many titles on this list have received awards and accolades from a wide variety of literary magazines and organizations.

To help with your selection, and as you preview each option, you will need to research authors, reviews, and story summaries. Amazon and Goodreads are good places to start this process. Additionally, please keep your personal and family values in mind as you choose a title, and know that we encourage you to speak with your parents/guardians about your text selection. Remember that we want you to enjoy reading this novel! You may obtain a hard copy or digital version of your book. As you read, keep a pencil or sticky notes handy to annotate your observations and thoughts as you read. The purpose of these is to help you be thoughtful in your written assignment. Be ready by the first day of school to discuss your reading with your classmates and to complete an in-class writing assignment using your book in addition to the completed review (instructions below).

Angela's Ashes-Frank McCourt
The Goldfinch–Donna Tartt
The Joy Luck Club–Amy Tan
Jane Eyre–Emily Bronte
All the Pretty Horses–Cormac McCarthy
1984–George Orwell
Brave New World–Aldous Huxley
The Art of Racing in the Rain–Garth Stein
Emma–Jane Austen
The Count of Monte Cristo–Alexandre Dumas
The Hound of the Baskervilles–Arthur Conan Doyle
The Book Thief–Markus Zusak

Your Summer Assignment: Novel Review
Your assignment will be to write a review of your chosen novel. This will be due the second day of class, so it is suggested that you complete this before the school year begins. This review should include the following:

- Title of novel, author's name, and genre
- Brief summary of the plot that demonstrates your understanding of the novel
- Why someone might like or dislike the book
- Theme of the book (reminder: theme cannot be described in one word)
- Include a passage from the novel that supports your identified theme and briefly explain

Be thoughtful and honest in your review. Type your review in a Google Document following MLA formatting. An appropriate length for your review would be one to two typed pages of complete, double-spaced, size 12, Times New Roman writing. Maintain an academic tone throughout your writing and do not use 1st or 2nd person (I, you, we, my, etc.) This document should be ready to submit to your teacher on the second day of school. Please be aware that this document will be submitted to Turnitin and will be checked for plagiarism, AI use, and against internet sources. Please do your own work. Instructions for submitting your work will be provided in class. Scoring will be based on meeting the requirements and following the above instructions.

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Submission Guidelines:

* You must not paste anything into your document.
* You must not submit a PDF document.
*You may not use any AI websites or any other sites that use some type of technology to enhance your writing (i.e., Grammarly, Magic School, a translation program, ChatGPT, etc.).
*Your document will be submitted to several programs that will track your progress and authenticity.
*You may not share your document with another person (parent, friend, tutor, etc.).
*You may not have anyone else type or comment on your document. Documents will be checked for revision/editing history.
*Any violation of these rules will result in a zero (0) on the assessment.

In addition to reading one book from this list, we encourage you to continue reading for your own enjoyment. We will read the following titles (whole class/choice literature circles) during the school year, so please do not select them for your independent reading**:** *The Catcher in the Rye*—J.D. Salinger, *Outliers*—Malcolm Gladwell, *A Long Way Gone*—Ishmael Beah.

Please finish reading your book before the first day of school. Have a great summer! 😎

Best wishes,
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