

Slidell High School- Summer/Holiday Reading English IV (G) 2026-2027

Dear Parents and Students,

Reading comprehension skills are essential to a student's academic growth. These skills can benefit a person for a lifetime. In an effort to nurture both the habits of good reading and the love of reading, as well as develop strong reading skills, the following reading assignment has been assigned to all English IV Dual Enrollment students. Every English IV DE student must read and annotate one of the following novels over the summer: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde, *1984* by George Orwell, or *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier.

Reading and annotations must be completed no later than **August 10th 2026**, so get started now! It is strongly suggested that a personal copy of this novel be obtained and annotated. However, one may be checked out from the library and annotations can be done on post-it notes or as split-page notes.

Book Synopses:

The Picture of Dorian Gray

In this celebrated work, his only novel, Wilde forged a devastating portrait of the effects of evil and debauchery on a young aesthete in late-19th-century England. Combining elements of the Gothic horror novel and decadent French fiction, the book centers on a striking premise: As Dorian Gray sinks into a life of crime and gross sensuality, his body retains perfect youth and vigor while his recently painted portrait grows day by day into a hideous record of evil, which he must keep hidden from the world. For over a century, this mesmerizing tale of horror and suspense has enjoyed wide popularity. It ranks as one of Wilde's most important creations and among the classic achievements of its kind.

1984

This dystopian novel by George Orwell, published in 1949, depicts a totalitarian society under the constant surveillance of "Big Brother" and the Party, exploring themes of mass surveillance, censorship, and the manipulation of truth. The story follows Winston Smith, a low-ranking member of the Outer Party, as he rebels against the oppressive regime through a secret love affair and a quest for truth, ultimately leading to his capture and re-education in Room 101. The novel introduced terms like "Big Brother," "thoughtcrime," and "Newspeak" into the English language, serving as a warning against totalitarianism.

Rebecca

A 1938 novel by Daphne du Maurier, this psychological thriller is about a young, unnamed woman who marries the wealthy widower Maxim de Winter and moves to his grand estate,

Manderley, only to find herself haunted by the memory of his first wife, Rebecca, and tormented by the sinister housekeeper, Mrs. Danvers, who preserves Rebecca's legacy. The story explores themes of jealousy, obsession, and identity, blending gothic romance with mystery as the new Mrs. de Winter struggles to overcome the shadow of her predecessor and discover the truth about Rebecca's death.

Assignment:

Annotate this novel using the attached annotation guidelines. Complete reading and annotations no later than Monday, August 10th. Project instructions will be delivered on Monday, August 10th.

Task: The most common complaint about annotating is that it slows down your reading. Yes, it does. That's the point. If annotating as you read annoys you, read a chapter, then go back and annotate. Reading a text a second time is preferable anyway.

Bring your annotations to class the first day to be sure you're on the right track. Approach the work with an open mind. Let the text inspire you and stretch your imagination.

Annotation Guidelines:

Annotation is a key component of close reading. Since we will annotate texts all year, you need to develop a system that works for you (within the following guidelines). Effective annotating is both economical and consistent. The techniques are almost limitless. Use any combination of the following:

- Make brief comments in the margins. Use any white space available - inside cover, random blank pages
- Make brief comments between or within lines of the text. Do not be afraid to mark within the text itself. In fact, you must.
- Circle or put boxes, triangles, or clouds around words or phrases.
- Use abbreviations or symbols - brackets, stars, exclamation points, question marks, numbers, etc.
- Connect words, phrases, ideas, circles, boxes, etc. with lines or arrows.
- *Underline – CAUTION: Use this method sparingly. Underline only a few words. Always combine with another method such as comment. Never underline an entire passage. Doing so takes too much time and loses effectiveness. If you wish to mark an entire paragraph or passage, draw a line down the margin or use brackets.
- *Highlight – See underline. You cannot write with a highlighter anyway.
- Create your own code.
- Use post-it notes only if you have exhausted all available space (unlikely).

What should you annotate?

Again, the possibilities are limitless. Keep in mind the reasons we annotate. Your annotations must include comments. I want to see evidence of thinking.

Have a conversation with the text. Talk to it.

Ask questions (essential to active reading).

Comment on the actions or development of a character. Does the character change? Why? How? The result?

Comment on something that intrigues, impresses, amuses, shocks, puzzles, disturbs, repulses, aggravates, etc.

Comment on lines / quotations you think are especially significant, powerful, or meaningful. *Express agreement or disagreement.*

Summarize key events. Make predictions.

Connect ideas to each other or to other texts.

Note if you experience an epiphany.

Note anything you would like to discuss or do not understand.

Note how the author uses language: Note the significance if you can. Note effects of word choice (diction) or sentence structure or type (syntax) point of view / effect, reliability of narrator, repetition of words, phrases, actions, events – patterns - motifs or cluster ideas narrative pace / time / order of sequence of events, tone / mood, irony***, imagery, contrasts / contradictions / juxtapositions / shifts/themes, allusions, setting / historical period, any other figure of speech or literary device, symbols, etc.



How-to-Annotate Bookmark	Annotation Instructions and Rubric
Before Reading:	Print this page and cut out the attached bookmark. Use it to help you read for important information.
➤ <i>Examine the front and back covers</i> ➤ <i>Read the title & any subtitles</i> ➤ <i>Examine illustrations</i> ➤ <i>Examine the print (bold, italic)</i> ➤ <i>Examine the way the text is set up (i.e. Book, Short Story, Dialogue, Diary, Article, Etc.)</i>	Obviously, annotation is as personal as reading, and there are MANY ways to annotate a book. This system is a suggestion. For example, some people prefer to use colors to differentiate elements, and some prefer to use "Post Its."
During Reading:	93 – 100 Points There should be markings and written commentary throughout the book including: • Recognition of plot points • Commentary on character development • Commentary on theme development • Notation of motifs • Notation of literary devices There will be something significant in every chapter.
➤ <i>Mark in the text: Characters (who), Setting (when/where),</i> ➤ <i>Vocabulary (squiggly line)</i> ➤ <i>Important ideas (straight line)</i> ➤ <i>Write in the margins:</i> <i>Summarize / Make Predictions</i> <i>Formulate opinions / Make Connections / Ask Questions /</i> <i>Analyze Author's Craft /</i> <i>Reflect – React – Comment on Patterns</i>	85 – 92 Points There should be markings and commentary throughout most of the book including: • Recognition of plot points • Commentary on character development • Commentary on theme development • Notation of literary devices There will be something noted in nearly every chapter.
After Reading:	75 – 84 Points There should be markings and commentary throughout the book though some sections may be marked less than others. Highlights and commentary should still show a basic understanding of the plot and characters.
➤ <i>Re-read annotations</i> ➤ <i>Re-read introduction and conclusion</i> ➤ <i>Examine Patterns and Repetitions / Examine the title</i> ➤ <i>Draw Conclusions – Make Connections</i>	0 – 74 Points Annotation reflects that reading was incomplete or there was a lack of understanding. Entire sections may have been skipped or random/insignificant material has been highlighted.