

9th Grade Honors English I Summer Reading

Task A

Please select one of the following texts to read this summer.

- *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott (1868) – fiction; 759 pages
 - A classic coming-of-age novel that follows the lives of the March sisters as they progress from childhood to womanhood.
- *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens (1860) – fiction; 536 pages
 - A literary classic set in England where a humble orphan's life is turned upside down by a secret benefactor, launching him into a world of mystery, ambition, and heartbreak.
- *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles (1959) – fiction; 236 pages
 - Friendship turns fierce in this hauntingly classic coming-of-age story set at a boys' boarding school during World War II.
- *Heroes, Gods, and Monsters of the Greek Myths* by Bernard Evslin (1966) – informational; 240 pages
 - An accessible and entertaining guide to Greek myths arranged in four sections: the Gods, Nature Myths, Demigods, and Fables.
- *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking* by Malcolm Gladwell (2007) – nonfiction; 320 pages
 - A popular science exploration into the adaptive unconsciousness – choices that seem to be made in an instant but are far more complex than they appear.
- *Chasing Lincoln's Killer* by James Swanson (2009) – nonfiction; 208 pages
 - A riveting account of the search for Abraham Lincoln's assassin using archival material, trial manuscripts, and interviews.
- *Killers of the Flower Moon: Adapted for Young Readers* by David Grann (2021) – nonfiction; 336 pages
 - An adapted version of Grann's bestseller that investigates the shocking crimes against the Osage people.
- *March: Book One* by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell (2013) – graphic novel; 128 pages
 - A vivid graphic novel that offers a first-hand account of John Lewis' struggle and pursuit of civil and human rights.

- *Bomb: The Race to Build – and Steal – the World’s Most Dangerous Weapon* by Steve Sheinkin (2018) – nonfiction; 304 pages
 - A fascinating (and frightening) true story of the creation of the most destructive force that birthed the arms race and the Cold War – the atomic bomb.
- *Unwind* by Neal Shusterman (2009) – fiction; 384 pages
 - A popular dystopian tale of three teens on the run from a government that believes in “unwinding” or body harvesting.
- *When the World Was Ours* by Liz Kessler (2021) – fiction; 328 pages
 - The story of three young friends whose fates are intertwined during the devastation of the Holocaust. This novel is inspired by a true story.
- *Bikeman: An Epic Poem* by Thomas Flynn (2021) – poetry; 96 pages
 - Modeled after Dante’s *Inferno*, Flynn chronicles the morning of September 11, 2001, through his personal account of the day as a journalist and a survivor.

Task B

As you read your selected novel, you will complete 15 entries in a dialectical journal.

What is a dialectical journal? The term “dialectic” means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with the texts we read during this course. The process is meant to help you develop a better understanding of the texts we read. Use your journal to incorporate your personal responses to the texts and your ideas about the themes we cover in our class discussions. You will find that it is a useful way to process what you’re reading, prepare yourself for group discussions, and gather textual evidence for your literary analysis assignments.

Procedure:

- Select a title from the approved list as your summer read.
- As you read, choose passages that stand out to you and record them in the left-hand column of the chart (ALWAYS include page numbers).
- In the right column, write your response to the text – ideas, insights, questions, reflections, and comments on each passage.
- You must label your response using the following codes:
 - Q = Question: ask about something in the passage that is unclear
 - C = Connect: make a connection to your life, the world, or another text
 - P = Predict: anticipate what will occur based on what’s in the passage
 - CL = Clarify: answer earlier questions or confirm/disaffirm a prediction
 - R = Reflect: think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense – not just to the characters in the story/author of the article. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or just the way things work?
 - E = Evaluate: make a judgement about what the author is trying to say
- Make sure to use a variety of codes. Using the same codes for most or all of your entries will result in a lower score.
- Your dialectical journal must have at least 15 entries and cover the entire book.
- Your dialectical journals must follow the template included at the end of this document.
- You cannot use AI for this assignment. We want to know your thoughts about the text, and AI cannot think for you.

- You will be required to submit your dialectical journal the first week of school and prior to grading.

Sample Dialectical Journal Entry: Beyond the Yellow Highlighter

Passages from the text	Page Number and Paragraph Number	Response
1. "The yellow marks in my college textbooks... did not help me very much."	Page 82/Paragraph 1	C – I can relate since I often used to highlight what I thought was important and then end up with most of the page highlighted.
2. "Annotations do make me read a lot slower and I wish I didn't have to do them. It is so much harder to fake read if you have to annotate like we have to do now. So now I actually read because it's too hard to fake annotate."	Page 87/Paragraph 2	C – It is harder to fake annotate – it almost takes more time. R – People are prone to find the easy way to do something. Since there's really no easy way to annotation – fake or real – it makes more sense to really read and think about the texts. Q – Is it really harder to fake read if you have to annotate? Or does it just take longer?

The above sample would denote two journal entries.

Dialectical Journal Help

Choosing Passages from the Text:

Look for quotes that seem significant, powerful, thought-provoking, or puzzling. For example, you might record:

- Effective and/or creative use of stylistic or literary devices
- Passages that remind you of your own life or something you've seen before
- Structural shifts or turns in the plot
- A passage that makes you realize something you hadn't seen before
- Examples of patterns: recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols, or motifs
- Passages with confusing language or unfamiliar vocabulary
- Events you find surprising or confusing
- Passages that illustrate a particular character or setting

Responding to the Text:

You can respond to the text in a variety of ways. The most important thing to remember is that your observations should be **specific and detailed**. You can write as much as you want for each entry.

Basic responses include:

- Raising questions about the beliefs and values implied in the text
- Giving your personal reactions to the passage
- Discussing the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- Telling what it reminds you of from your own experiences
- Writing about what it makes you think or feel
- Agreeing or disagreeing with a character or the author

Higher level responses include:

- Analyzing the text for use of literary devices such as tone, structure, style, or imagery
- Making connections between different characters or events in the text
- Making connections to a different text (or film, song, etc...)
- Discussing the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- Considering an event or description from the perspective of a different character
- Analyzing a passage and its relationship to the story as a whole

Sample sentence starters include:

- I really don't understand this because...
- I really dislike/like this idea because...
- I think the author is trying to say that...
- This passage reminds me of a time in my life when...
- If I were (name of character) at this point, I would...
- This part doesn't make sense because...
- This character reminds me of (name of person) because...

Dialectical Journal Template

Q = Question – ask about something in the passage that is unclear

C = Connect – make a connection to your life, the world, or another text

P = Predict – anticipate what will occur based on what's in the passage

CL = Clarify – answer earlier questions or confirm/disaffirm a prediction

R = Reflect – think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense – not just to the author of the text. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or just the way things work?

E = Evaluate – make a judgment about what the author is trying to say

A = Analyze – explain how the author is using rhetoric and language to make a point and persuade the audience

Quotation from the Text	Page and Paragraph Numbers	Response to Text