

2026-2027 ELA 3-4 Honors Summer Reading (REQUIRED)

Welcome readers and writers to ELA 3-4 Honors:

We look forward to working with you during the next school year. As part of this course, students will read and annotate a novel during the summer. Reading over the summer helps keep students' minds "in the game," and it adds to the number of major literary works students will have read. Please review the "Steps to Success" to ensure a successful start to the year. If questions arise, please feel free to contact us at holly.maxwell@dvusd.org, micaela.corponi@dvusd.org, kelly.simon@dvusd.org, and ben.boisclair@dvusd.org.

STEPS TO SUCCESS

STEP 1:

Read the following novel. This novel offers readers a unique opportunity to step into the shoes of another person and gain empathy and understanding for different experiences and perspectives. Literature provides insights into the human condition, exploring universal themes such as love, loss, resilience, and identity, while allowing readers to reflect on their own lives in meaningful ways.

***Life of Pi* by Yann Martel**

"A story to make you believe in the soul-sustaining power of fiction."—*Los Angeles Times Book Review*

Life of Pi is a fantasy adventure novel by Yann Martel published in 2001. The protagonist, Piscine Molitor "Pi" Patel, a Tamil boy from Pondicherry, explores issues of spirituality and practicality from an early age. He survives 227 days after a shipwreck while stranded on a boat in the Pacific Ocean with a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. This unforgettable work of literary and philosophical fiction, *Life of Pi* is at once a realistic, rousing adventure and a meta-tale of survival that explores the redemptive power of storytelling and the transformative nature of fiction.

STEP 2:

While reading, you are expected to **annotate** the novel to assist in your comprehension. If you are unable to mark up and make notes in your book, you may use sticky notes. **STUDENTS MUST HAVE A PHYSICAL COPY—NO DIGITAL**

How do I annotate?

- Underline or highlight the major points, important scenes, or key sections of dialogue, character descriptions, key decisions, motivations, and flaws + explain WHY they are important, impact characterization, connect to developing themes, etc.
- Circle keywords or phrases that are confusing or unknown to you + define them.
- Questions and inferences that pop into your head as you are reading
- Connections you make to other texts, films, t.v. shows, or to your personal life
- Figurative language (allusions, alliteration, metaphors, similes, etc.) used effectively—what is the effect/impact?

STEP 3:

You can expect a test/project during the second week of school. In addition, you are expected to participate in class or group discussions. If you do not read it, you will almost certainly struggle the first several weeks. Therefore, you must come to the first day of class having read the literature, completed your annotations, and be prepared to discuss the novel.

****Helpful Hint:** Don't wait until the week before school begins to try and read the novel and complete the annotations. Unexpected events may pop up that could get in the way of you completing your reading on time. Make a plan for the number of pages or chapters you are going to read per week and stick to it.