

2026 English Summer Reading Guide:

English 4 College Prep

Instructions:

- Choose **ONE** of the four books listed below. Read your chosen book carefully and thoughtfully before the first day of school.
- **Obtain the physical book, not an ebook.** * For most in-class work related to the book, you will *not* be able to use your iPad, so you need your own physical copy. You may purchase the book or get it from the library – but you must have it in your possession each day of class to start the school year.
 - *Students with specific ebook accommodations should follow their learning plan and can consult with their school learning specialist with any questions about their accommodations.
- **Follow the instructions** for annotating while reading and preparing for the in-class assessment.

Annotation Guidance:

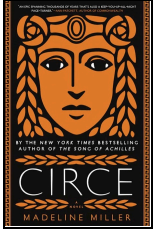
- Take your time to read and annotate your book. Your annotations should be physically written on the pages of the book OR on post-it notes placed on the pages. Track your thinking and noticings about the following, across the entire book:
 - Important characters / people and how they develop
 - Plot points
 - Setting details
 - Conflicts
 - Themes
 - A theme is a complex, abstract idea that an author explores or communicates through the telling of the story in the book. Themes should relate to universal human and/or societal ideas. Books have *more than one* theme.

In-Class Assessment:

At the end of the first week of classes, you will have an **in-class exam** on your chosen summer reading book. The exam will have two parts: (1) multiple choice and (2) short essay response.

- **Part 1: Multiple Choice.** The first part will be 25 multiple choice questions over important characters, plot points, setting, conflict and themes. You will **not** be able to use your book for this part.
- **Part 2: Short Essay Response.** You will write two to three paragraphs in response to a thematic question specific to your book. For this part of the exam, you can use your book and annotations but no other materials.

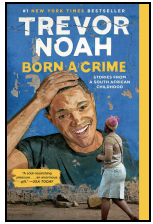
Your English teacher will provide further specific instructions about this assessment during the first week of school.



[Circe by Madeline Miller](#)

ISBN-13: 9780316556323

In the house of Helios, god of the sun and mightiest of the Titans, a daughter is born. But Circe is a strange child--neither powerful like her father nor viciously alluring like her mother. Turning to the world of mortals for companionship, she discovers that she does possess power: the power of witchcraft, which can transform rivals into monsters and menace the gods themselves. Threatened, Zeus banishes her to a deserted island, where she hones her occult craft, tames wild beasts, and crosses paths with many of the most famous figures in all of mythology, including the Minotaur, Daedalus and his doomed son Icarus, the murderous Medea, and, of course, wily Odysseus. But there is danger, too, for a woman who stands alone and Circe unwittingly draws the wrath of both men and gods, ultimately finding herself pitted against one of the most terrifying and vengeful of the Olympians.

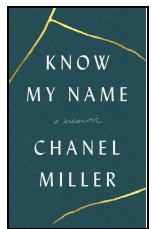


[Born a Crime by Trevor Noah](#)

ISBN-13: 9780399588198

***Please check that you are purchasing this version and not the young adult version.**

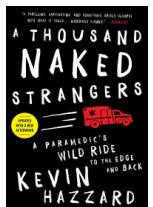
Trevor Noah's unlikely path from apartheid South Africa to the desk of *The Daily Show* began with a criminal act: his birth. Trevor was born to a white Swiss father and a black Xhosa mother at a time when such a union was punishable by five years in prison. Living proof of his parents' indiscretion, Trevor was kept mostly indoors for the earliest years of his life, bound by the extreme and often absurd measures his mother took to hide him from a government that could, at any moment, steal him away. Finally liberated by the end of South Africa's tyrannical white rule, Trevor and his mother set forth on a grand adventure, living openly and freely and embracing the opportunities won by a centuries-long struggle. Born a Crime is the story of a mischievous young boy who grows into a restless young man as he struggles to find himself in a world where he was never supposed to exist. It is also the story of that young man's relationship with his fearless, rebellious, and fervently religious mother--his teammate, a woman determined to save her son from the cycle of poverty, violence, and abuse that would ultimately threaten her own life.



[Know My Name by Chanel Miller](#)

ISBN-13: 9780735223721

She was known to the world as Emily Doe when she stunned millions with a letter. Brock Turner had been sentenced to just six months in county jail after he was found sexually assaulting her on Stanford's campus. Her victim impact statement was posted on BuzzFeed, where it instantly went viral--viewed by eleven million people within four days, it was translated globally and read on the floor of Congress; it inspired changes in California law and the recall of the judge in the case. Thousands wrote to say that she had given them the courage to share their own experiences of assault for the first time. Now she reclaims her identity to tell her story of trauma, transcendence, and the power of words. It was the perfect case, in many ways--there were eyewitnesses, Turner ran away, physical evidence was immediately secured. But her struggles with isolation and shame during the aftermath and the trial reveal the oppression victims face in even the best-case scenarios.



[A Thousand Naked Strangers: A Paramedic's Wild Ride to the Edge and Back](#)

ISBN-13: 9781501110863

In the aftermath of 9/11 Kevin Hazzard felt that something was missing from his life--his days were too safe, too routine. A failed salesman turned local reporter, he wanted to test himself, see how he might respond to pressure and danger. He signed up for emergency medical training and became, at age twenty-six, a newly minted EMT running calls in the worst sections of Atlanta. His life entered a different realm--one of blood, violence, and amazing grace. Thoroughly intimidated at first and frequently terrified, he experienced on a nightly basis the adrenaline rush of walking into chaos. But in his downtime, Kevin reflected on how people's facades drop away when catastrophe strikes. As his hours on the job piled up, he realized he was beginning to see into the truth of things. There is no pretense five beats into a chest compression, or in an alley next to a crack den, or on a dimly lit highway where cars have collided. Eventually, what had at first seemed impossible happened: Kevin acquired mastery. And in the process he was able to discern the professional differences between his freewheeling peers, what marked each--as he termed them--as "a tourist," "true believer," or "killer."