



High School Summer Reading Assignments 2026

Summer reading is an interdisciplinary experience for our students where they will be reading and discussing the same book for both their Bible and English classes. The students will have an assignment to complete for their Bible class that will be due the first week of school, and they will complete activities in their English classes related to the same book when they return to school in August. Below you will find summer reading books listed by grade as well as the corresponding summer Bible assignment.

Please note that Accelerated English Courses (Honors/DE/AP) require an additional summer reading assignment which is also listed below by grade.

Academic Integrity Reminder: English Department Policy on Artificial Intelligence

It is important to remember that the expectation is that the work submitted will be the student's own and that AI should not be used for these assignments. In the section on Artificial Intelligence, the student handbook states, "The use of AI could be subject to the Academic Integrity Policy." Therefore, we want to be clear that in the English Department, any use of AI related to the writing process is considered unacceptable use of AI. In addition to writing itself, this includes other parts of *the writing process*, such as idea generation and editing. Please be aware that the use of Grammarly could be flagged as AI in AI detection software. The ability to thoughtfully and articulately communicate is a key 21st-century skill, one to which the English Department is especially deeply committed. This policy is consistent with our Graduate Profile desire to see students grow as Resilient Learners, which entails the desire that each student grows in the following: "Thinks critically, logically and Biblically and is furthermore able to communicate those thoughts clearly, articulately and persuasively through both the written and spoken word" (Col. 4:6). Students are equipped and inspired to understand, live and persuasively defend Biblical values in their cultural moment" (1 Pt. 3:15). Therefore, in English classes, any use of AI related to *the writing process* will be treated as plagiarism and subject to the Academic Integrity Policy.

9th Grade

Bible/English Book: *The Pilgrim's Progress: A Readable Modern-Day Version of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, revision by Alan Vermilye

(to aid in classroom discussions, we recommend purchasing [this edition](#))

Bible Assignment:

1. **Paper** (*due on the first day of class*): Students will choose *four* different encounters throughout the whole book (from different chapters) that Christian has along his journey to the Celestial City. Using 75 -100 words for each encounter, students will write a 300-400 word paper (12 point font, double spaced) which needs to include the following:
 - a. **Description of** each encounter in your own words
 - b. **Explanation of** why it is significant for Christian
 - c. **Explanation of** why this event has significance to you personally
2. **Quiz**: Be prepared to take a short quiz on the book during the first week of school.

Additional Assignment for Honors English 9

The Alchemist. After you have read the book, complete all parts of the assignment listed below:

1. What is the overall message (theme) of the text? Incorporate two quotes (with page numbers) in your response as evidence of the theme. Discuss the significance of your two quotes in separate paragraphs as they relate to character, plot, or theme development. Remember to use the word “character,” “plot,” or “theme” within your answer.
2. Draw a timeline of key events in Santiago’s life and one of yours. How do they compare? (You may use a timeline template when answering this question.)
 1. Choose 5-7 key events in Santiago’s life and include a short description as to why each event was important.
 2. Choose 4-6 key events in your life with ages or dates and include a short description as to why each event was important. This timeline will be turned into a narrative essay in class once the school year has started.
3. Choose a quote from the book (include page number) and make specific connections to a novel, poem, non-fiction work, movie, historical or cultural event, or religious text of which you have knowledge. Connections can be thematic, character connections, life’s journey, etc.

10th Grade

Bible/English Book: *The Lost Letters of Pergamum: A Story from the New Testament World*
by Bruce W. Longenecker

Bible Assignment:

1. **Written Response.** Choose **THREE** of the question options below to answer as a response to reading *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*. Answer in complete sentences.
 - a. After reading the book, what is “going around” in your mind? What are you pondering or don’t fully understand - a question or two that you have after reading?
 - b. What are 2-3 main points from the book that stood out to you as important?
 - c. What is something you may have known previously but is now more clear or solid in your mind after reading this book?
 - d. What would you want to add to this book (ideas, themes, writing style, character development, etc.) that you believe may have been left out or needed more treatment?
 - e. What point or points do you think you and the author of the book might disagree about? What would you want to offer helpful pushback on?
 - f. What is an example of how you can apply something from this book in your life in the near future?
2. **Quiz:** During the first week of classes, students will take a **quiz** designed to demonstrate they have read the book.

Note: The book will be referenced throughout the school year to help provide cultural context in New Testament understanding. *It is, therefore, required that students keep possession of the book throughout the school year.*

Additional Assignment for Honors English 10

1. Choose one of the following books:

The Pearl by John Steinbeck: *The Pearl* tells the story of a poor Mexican peasant named Kino who finds a valuable pearl that brings both hope and destruction to his family. It is a stirring tale that delves into the destructive power of greed.

Lord of the Flies by William Golding: *Lord of the Flies* tells the story of a group of young boys who find themselves alone on a deserted island. They develop rules and a system of organization, but without any adults to serve as a civilizing impulse, the children eventually become violent and brutal.

2. Choose one of the novels above, **annotate** as you read for **passages that have meaning** to you, for passages that you think indicate a **theme**, and for **vocabulary words** you do not know.

3. Write a five paragraph essay about how a character faces conflict.

- a. **(Paragraph 1)** Identify the conflicts one of the characters faces.
- b. **(Paragraph 2)** Discuss whether the character deals with the conflicts he or she faces successfully or not.
- c. **(Paragraph 3)** Identify a theme that arises out of the way the character deals with the conflicts.
- d. The introductory paragraph should have a thesis statement.
- e. Follow grammatical conventions and use MLA format.
- f. **Bring your printed essay on the first day of class.**

11th Grade

Bible/English Book: *10 Questions Every Teen Should Ask (and Answer) about Christianity* by Rebecca McLaughlin

Bible Assignment:

1. **Book Report** (*due on the first day of class*): Students will choose a chapter and write a 2-page book report on that chapter with the following outline:
 - a. Question: What question does the author address in your chapter and how does she explain its significance during this cultural moment?
 - b. Answer: What answers does the author give to the question?
 - c. Response: What made you interested in choosing this chapter? What did you think of how she developed the question and answer? What other thoughts do you think the church needs to consider with regard to the topic of your chapter?
2. **Quiz** (*will be on the first day of class*): Students will take a multiple choice quiz on the book to make sure they've read the entire book, not just their chapter.

Additional Assignment for Honors English 11

1. Read **one** of the following plays:

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams, 1944

A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry, 1959
2. After reading the play, complete the following assignment:
 - a. Write a 5-paragraph essay discussing how a character's internal conflict reflects his/her place in society.
 - b. You may choose one character from the play and discuss that character through all three body paragraphs, or you may choose three separate characters and discuss each one individually in his/her own body paragraph. Each body paragraph should have two quotations from the play for supporting evidence. Your essay should follow MLA format. Be sure to proofread your work for spelling and grammar.

Additional Assignment for AP Language and Composition (11th Grade)

1. **Choose** a book from the following list you have not yet read. As you read, annotate for meaningful passages and vocabulary you do not know. Each book is narrative nonfiction.

Into the Wild by Jon Krakauer

Educated by Tara Westover

Night by Elie Wiesel

2. Complete the [Assignment sheet](#) and **bring a printed copy on the first day of class.**
 - **Do not consult any type of notes like Sparknotes but rely on your own interpretation**
3. You will write an in-class essay on an assigned topic the first week of school.

12th Grade

Bible/English Book: *Atheistika: An Atheist Nation* by Matt Slick

Bible Assignment

1. **Write** a minimum of two paragraphs explaining what you believe the book communicates about **one major worldview issue**, such as truth, morality, human nature, freedom, society, or the need for God, from a **Christian perspective**. Your response should include **specific examples from the story** and, where appropriate, connections to **biblical truth or Scripture**. The purpose of this assignment is not simply to summarize the plot, but to show that you can think carefully about one of the book's central ideas and respond to it thoughtfully.
 - a. In your response, make it clear **what you believe, why you believe it, and how the book supports or challenges that perspective**. You will not be graded on arriving at a particular conclusion, but on the clarity of your writing, the strength of your reasoning, and your ability to demonstrate genuine engagement with the book. This assignment is due in the first week of class and will serve as the starting point for an in-class discussion of the book.
2. **Quiz:** You'll have a quiz to show you've read *Atheistika: An Atheist Nation*. It will be straightforward just to check that you are familiar with the book.

Additional Assignment for Dual Enrollment (DE) English 12

1. Choose one of the following texts for summer reading. **You must choose a book that you have not read before. Each student should purchase a hardcopy of the text and have it in class on the first day of school. DO NOT USE A KINDLE VERSION or e-book.**
 - a. *Same Kind of Different as Me* by Ron Hall, Denver Moore, and Lynne Vincent
 - b. *The Sun Does Shine* by Anthony Ray Hinton (you must use the adult version, not the kids version)
 - c. *Born Lucky* by Leland Vittert
2. Complete the [Summer Reading Chart](#).
 - a. Do not consult any online/AI resources to complete this.
 - b. Bring a printed copy of the chart completed on the first day of class.
3. You will write an in-class essay on an assigned topic during the first week of class.

Additional Assignment for Honors English 12

And Then There Were None by Agatha Christie

1. Please read the novel and complete the following assignment. There will also be a test on the novel during the first week of school.
2. **Essay Directions:** Choose **ONE** of the prompts and write a well-developed essay. Your essay must include a thesis, correct use of transitions, correct spelling and grammar, MLA format, and in-text citations where applicable. Each essay should be a minimum of five paragraphs. The length of each paragraph should be as follows: introduction—no more than four sentences; body paragraphs--between five-ten sentences; conclusion--no more than four sentences. Please put the number of your prompt on your essay.
 1. Justice Wargrave feels that some of the guests on Indian Island (Soldier Island) are more guilty of murder than others because of the degrees to which they were responsible for the deaths that took place in their pasts. Do you agree that there are degrees of responsibility that can be assigned to those involved in a death? Write a persuasive essay that uses examples from the book, examples from real life, Biblical examples, and/or hypothetical examples to support why you feel the way you do.
 2. Several of the guests on Indian Island appear to be recognized, upstanding members of society who contribute positively to their communities. Provide some examples of characters in this novel who contribute positively to their communities. Can a person's acts of service to others erase a poor decision he or she has made in the past? If so, why, when, and how? If not, why not?
 3. Emily Brent feels as though God will judge those who commit crimes. Vera Claythorne also suggests that she feels similarly (though she does not specify that she believes in God). Do you believe, as these women appear to, that what goes around comes around? What reasons do you have for feeling the way you do? Be sure to defend your answer by using real life examples, Biblical examples, textual evidence (with correct in-text citations), and/or hypothetical support.
 4. Of all the guests who stay on Indian Island, which one deserves the most sympathy? Explain your answer using specific evidence from the text with correct in-text citations.

Additional Assignment for AP Literature and Composition (12th Grade)

1. All of the following are coming-of-age novels, or bildungsromans, which recount the psychological or moral development of a protagonist from youth to maturity, when this character recognizes his or her place in the world. **Choose a novel you have never read before from the list below.**
2. **Essay Prompt:** After reading, select a single pivotal moment in the psychological or moral development of the protagonist, and write a well-organized essay that analyzes how that single moment shapes the meaning of the work as a whole. ***The “meaning of the work as a whole” is simply the theme of the novel.**
3. You will turn in your essay on the first day of class. It should be typed, double-spaced, in 12 point Times New Roman font. No direct quotes should be used in this essay. You will briefly paraphrase the plot moment, use a marker verb (reveals, highlights, communicates, etc.), and write commentary about how the plot moment reveals the theme. Write the entire essay in literary present tense. A marker verb handout may be found by simply completing a Google search: (Marker Verbs for Literary Analysis)

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| 1. <i>Jane Eyre</i> | by Charlotte Bronte |
| 2. <i>All the Light We Cannot See</i> | by Anthony Doerr |
| 3. <i>Peace Like a River</i> | by Leif Enger |
| 4. <i>Great Expectations</i> | by Charles Dickens |

Tips for Organization of Body Paragraphs:

After choosing a “single pivotal moment,” craft the thesis to explore three arguable points about how that moment “shapes the meaning of the work as a whole.” Naturally, the body paragraphs will contain a topic sentence about one of the points and the commentary will connect that point to the theme.