

AP English IV
Literature and Composition
Summer Reading
Ms. Kelly

Students will read *The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother* by James McBride. As you read, thoroughly **annotate** your text (see the guide to annotating on the next page). Be ready to discuss the book on day one. We will spend the first two weeks of class discussing the memoir; there will be multiple assignments corresponding to the summer reading.

Annotating Literature:

Whenever you read a book for English class, you should do so with pen or pencil in hand, ready to add your own thoughts and questions to the book. This will help prepare you for class discussions and writing essays. In class, keep your pen handy to write down thoughts directly in the book. Don't ever be afraid to mark up your book!

How to Annotate:

- Mark passages that seem important. (You can highlight them, or put stars next to them.) These might be a hint about something to come, a key moment in the plot, a bit of dialogue that reveals character, clues about the setting, an arresting figure of speech or image, an interesting sentence pattern, etc.
- Write questions and comments to yourself in the margin. You might ask questions about information you don't understand, why a character would act in a certain way, or comment on something surprising.
- Look for patterns and label them. Is there an image that keeps reappearing? Or a repeated phrase? Or a similar action that keeps happening to a character?
- Circle words you don't know. Try to guess what they mean. If you can, look the word up in a dictionary (your phone is useful for this!) and write a synonym or quick definition in the margin (don't write the whole dictionary definition - put it in your own words). You can also use sticky notes to flag words you don't know and look them up later.
- At the end of each chapter, write a bulleted list of key plot events. This not only forces you to think about what happened, see the novel as a whole, and identify patterns, but also gives you a convenient record of the whole plot.