Pueblo West High School
IB World School
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 70
661 Capistrano Avenue • Pueblo West, Colorado 81007
Telephone (719) 547-8050
Fax: (719) 547-8041

Dear Incoming Honors English I Students:

Welcome to Honors English 1. Pueblo West High School is proud to offer rigorous coursework and a focused atmosphere for our students; our honors classes uphold demanding standards. Please be advised that this course is designed for students who not only *love to read and write, but also those who actively seek a challenge, value academic rigor, and demonstrate a mature work ethic.* The coursework for Honors English 1 will be challenging and fast-paced. Students will participate in discussion and analysis daily. Additionally, students will be required to complete work outside of class, such as: reading and writing, in-depth research, and long-term projects. This course will help students prepare for the Advanced Placement (AP) exams, which in turn can reduce the number and expense of required college courses.

The summer reading assignment is attached on the following page. If you have any questions, you may email me. I will check my email about once per week over the summer.

Happy reading,

Chelsi Spinuzzi
English Department
Pueblo West High School
cspinuzzi@district70.org

Summer Reading 2026 Requirements

1. Reading Assignment



One of the goals of Honors English 1 is to help you gain confidence in your ability to respond to and write about literature. To accomplish this, we will focus on examining why authors make the choices they do and the effects they create with their choices. This is the process of literary analysis, and this leads us to a deeper understanding of literature. The summer reading assignment will be based on the following novel:

***Scythe* by Neal Shusterman**

You will need to purchase your own new or used copy. This novel is quite lengthy, so do not wait until the last minute to complete the reading and assignment. *Scythe* is a young adult dystopian novel set in the future. Shusterman explores the **themes** *of immortality, morality & ethics, power & corruption, nature of humanity, personal growth & identity, and coming of age.*

2. Annotations

Annotation is a key component of close reading; annotating purposely slows down your reading in order to aid in comprehension and analysis. Annotations should be your own ideas - your own processing. Please do not consult any other sources; this should be authentically YOU.

**Academic Dishonesty: plagiarism is not tolerated. Webster's Dictionary defines plagiarism as "to use and pass off [someone else's ideas, inventions, writings, etc.] as one's own." As this is an honors-level course, independent critical thinking is a foundation of our interactions. Use of generative AI (artificial intelligence) applications, like ChatGPT, in place of a student's original work OR thinking is also considered academic dishonesty.*

Annotations will NOT be collected. You may write your annotations on sticky notes or create two-column notes on lined (college-ruled) paper.

Here are some suggestions for annotations:

- ✔ effects of word choice (diction)
- ✔ sentence structure (syntax)
- ✔ point of view/effect/reliability
- ✔ repetition of words/phrases/actions
- ✔ narrative pace or sequence of events
- ✔ irony
- ✔ contrasts/juxtaposition/shift
- ✔ characterization
- ✔ figurative language (imagery, simile, etc.)
- ✔ motifs
- ✔ tone/mood
- ✔ themes
- ✔ setting/historical context
- ✔ symbols
- ✔ text-to-text, text-to-world connections

3. Vocabulary Log

As you read *Scythe*, record a minimum of 20 unfamiliar or challenging vocabulary words. Even if you've heard of the word, if you couldn't teach what the word means, log it. You should include the word, page number where you found it, its definition, one synonym and one antonym. The synonyms and antonyms must be the same part of speech as the original word. You may print this vocabulary graphic organizer, or you may recreate it on your own paper, but you must keep this format. The Vocabulary Log is DUE on the SECOND DAY OF SCHOOL, AUGUST 11th.

4. In-Class Analysis, Discussion, and Quiz

Bring your novel and annotations to class on the THIRD DAY OF SCHOOL, AUGUST 12th. Within the first full week of class, we will have discussions, activities, and quizzes over the text.