



## 2026 Advanced Academics Summer Study

### PreAP English II

**A Note for Students and Guardians:** Aledo ISD Advanced RLA courses are focused on College Board's Areas of Focus for English classes: **reading closely**, **valuing evidence**, and **noticing language choices**. Our Pre-AP Summer Studies were designed with these focal points in mind. All students enrolled in PreAP English II are required to watch several brief videos and read at least ONE text from a list of titles curated for their literary value and the author's purpose and craft evident in the text. Students will be asked to use their resulting deep understanding of texts in classroom discussion and compositions during the first unit of instruction for the 2025-26 school year. If you have any questions, please contact AHS/DNG at 817-441-8711.

#### **Overview - Please watch ALL videos and then select ONE title from the selection below.**

Both of the texts below establish the power of perseverance. Please watch all videos, taking notes on the content and how the authors/creators make and support their claim. Then choose one of the books from the list to read over the summer. As you read, keep what you learned from the videos in mind and note how the author communicates his or her stance on perseverance through craft (language choices, structure, and tone) and literary devices: characterization, plot events, or the setting. Collect key quotes from the text that represent how the author establishes the necessity for perseverance through the author's craft. Note: The annotations and collected quotes will not be graded, but you will use this work and text in assignments during the first grading cycle.

*\*Some of these titles may contain mature language and/or situations. Select the text with which you and your family are most comfortable.*

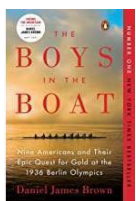
#### **Videos - Watch all (can be found on YouTube).**

- ["How to Write Perseverance"](#) (5 minutes)
- Ted Talk: ["The Power of Passion and Perseverance"](#) (6 minutes)
- ["Grit: The Power of Perseverance"](#) (9 minutes)

#### **Books - Choose at least one. Make sure to bring it to class for the first 3 weeks of school.**



***Before We Were Free*** by Julia Alvarez is a coming-of-age novel set in the Dominican Republic during the Trujillo dictatorship. Told through the eyes of twelve-year-old Anita, the story follows her awakening to the dangers surrounding her politically active family and the oppressive regime they secretly resist. As Anita's world becomes more uncertain, she must find courage, voice, and strength in the face of fear and censorship. This poignant and accessible novel explores themes of freedom, family, and the loss of innocence in a time of political unrest.



***The Boys in the Boat*** by Daniel James Brown tells the inspiring true story of nine working-class American rowers who overcame incredible odds to compete in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Set during the Great Depression, the book focuses on the personal journey of Joe Rantz and his teammates as they face hardship, build trust, and strive for excellence. Their story highlights the power of perseverance, teamwork, and determination in the face of adversity. With rich historical context and emotional depth, *The Boys in the Boat* offers both a compelling narrative and a window into a pivotal moment in world history.