

Honors English 11 2026-2027
Summer Reading and Writing Assignment
Mr. Fontanez
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Required reading:

Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Jesmyn Ward, *Sing, Unburied, Sing*

Essay assignment

- Your essay should be a minimum of two pages long (12 point font, double-spaced with standard margins of 1.25" and 1") but no more than three pages. Develop your own thesis and support it through a standard essay format.
- Use these books as your only sources; do not use any other material. Direct quotes from the text are encouraged, but should make up no more than 20% of the paper. MLA format for in-text citations looks like this: (Hurston 34). Since you may have editions of the book with different page numbers, include a Works Cited page with an MLA citation for your copies of the novels.
- You will be graded on content and mechanics.
- Avoid working in groups or using digital book summaries. One of the goals of this course is to give you the skills you need to interpret literary works **on your own**.
- You must arrive on the opening day of school with your composition; 25% will be deducted from your grade for one day late and ten percent additional for each day thereafter (15% percent over weekends).
- Your paper must be turned in to Schoology during our first class period.

See the next page for your essay prompt and directions.

Below you will find a list of themes. Choose one and develop it into a well-thought-out essay with textual evidence in which you analyze the presence and importance of the theme in **both** *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and *Sing, Unburied, Sing*. Again, one essay analyzing both novels.

Themes:

- Generational and historical trauma
- The Search for Identity and Voice
- True love and Connection

Be sure to annotate your text-- that means notes, not just highlighting or underlining. I'll be checking them the first couple of days of school. **If** you are using an electronic copy of the books or library copies, I suggest you use sticky notes or keep a dialectical journal. Also, if you check these books out of the library, you will need to check them out again for the start of the school year, as we will be using them during the first month of school.

BY THE WAY: As you shop for school supplies this August, please purchase a **three-subject notebook** (preferably with pockets) for Honors English 11. We will use this daily, and it will be collected at intervals throughout the year. You'll also need highlighters and Post-it notes.

NOTE: ANY indication of plagiarism, including the use of AI, will result in a zero on the assignment. This includes but is not limited to: ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Quillbot.