



High School English Department
Summer 2026
Grades 9-12 Reading Assignments

**Please search for the correct UPCOMING
grade level for your Gateway student! All
secondary grades 9 -12 are listed in this
document.**

Summer Reading for 2026-27 school year!

Incoming 9th Graders

WELCOME Honors English 1 students!

“One of the greatest adventures in life is to know something that nobody else knows. Something that makes you different, where it really counts: inside yourself.”

- e.l. konigsburg (name in lowercase intentionally per author request)

This summer’s reading assignment, “The Hobbit” by John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, is a classic high fantasy adventure novel first published in 1937. There are many books to help entice your child to read over their summer vacation, and this is a beautifully written, quick, light, and breezy book perfect for summer day reading extravaganzas.

Assignment:

1. Please purchase a hard copy of “The Hobbit”, a blue pen, and a composition notebook. *(The composition notebook will be used for writing in the ‘26-’27 school year as well.)*
2. Make Annotations on the pages (as you know how to make them) when you read throughout the summer.
3. At the end of each chapter you read, take a moment to put down the book, and write a brief recap of what you recall happening in that chapter. You must enter the date and time of each entry into your composition notebook. A few paragraphs should suffice for each entry.
4. Do read throughout the summer. Do not procrastinate and read this book at the last minute. The idea of Summer Reading is to keep somewhat engaged with the academic mind.
5. At the beginning of the school year, bring your composition notebook with your handwritten work for a grade. This portion of the assignment will be due on the first day of ELA1. (This will count as a Major Grade, and the Gateway Handbook’s “4 Days Late Rule” will be in full effect for this assignment.)
6. Upon Return, we too will take a test on the book, and then, once that is over, we will deep dive into the book the first few weeks of school, as a class in group discussion. We will discuss the book in detail and specifically look at the “Author Tools” used to tell this amazing story.
7. Here is a link to the book: <https://tinyurl.com/yechxtt4>

Summer Reading for 2026-27 school year!

Incoming 10th Graders

Welcome 10th graders! This year you will read various genres in Honors English II. To get acclimated to the level of reading expected for your sophomore year, you will need to read the following philosophical text over the summer. At the start of the year, we will be studying several of the classics of Greek myth, philosophy, and political discourse – the works of Homer, Aristotle, and Plato. This book will be your introduction to classic philosophy.

- *Meditations* by Marcus Aurelius

Amazon link: <https://tinyurl.com/5z5erjz3>

AbeBooks link: <https://shorturl.at/76sGD>

The Assignment:

As you read the book, ponder about the teachings and philosophies explored by Marcus Aurelius.

1. In a composition notebook, write important lessons you learned with the author and your experience in applying his teachings to your own life. The notebook will be your journal, which must contain your journey with the stoic philosophy and observations made during the reading. **No summaries will be accepted.**
2. Journey **entries should be done daily** as you read the book. There should be at least a total of 30 summaries.
3. *Meditations* is not a book to be rushed through, consider every statement, so read a few pages per day only (1-3) to absorb its dense content.
4. Upon finishing the reading, write a brief paragraph with an overall reflection of your journey.
5. You will bring the notebook to class at the beginning of the school year to receive a grade. Note that *Meditations* will serve as background information for many texts we will explore in class.

Summer Reading for 2026-27 school year!

Incoming 11th and 12th Graders

Honors English – American Literature

Summer Reading List 2026

1) Your summer reading assignment is to read and annotate both of the following texts. You will not read the entirety of Irving (just 2 of the included short stories). Read carefully and annotate within your book or in separate notes. You will be required to show these notes when you return to school, as well as compose a written essay in class.

Please bring the short story collection and the novel with you to class as you will need it for the writing assignment; the electronic version is not suitable for this assignment.

| | | |
|---|-------------------|---|
| <i>The Legend of Sleepy Hollow and Other Stories</i> (<u>Dover Thrift Editions: Short Stories</u>) | Washington Irving | This is a collection of short stories by the first popular American fiction writer, Washington Irving. For your summer reading, you are tasked with reading 2 of the famous short stories: <u>The Devil and Tom Walker</u> <u>The Legend of Sleepy Hollow</u> (Both are early American Gothic) |
| <i>Twelve Years A Slave</i> (<u>Original 1853 Manuscript</u>) | Solomon Northrup | The original (and annotated) manuscript of the autobiographical tale of the 12 years that Solomon Northrup suffered in slavery in the early 1800's. An iconic and multi-faceted look at the conditions and culture of early America. |

If you *only* read a summary or notes of the novel or short stories, you will not be prepared for the tests and writing, and your lack of preparation may drastically reduce your grade. Please plan accordingly! :-)

While you read, take organized notes on these five categories as you read:

- internal conflict or external conflict
- characterization of protagonist
- figurative language such as personification, simile, metaphor, or allusion
- other devices such as symbol, theme, paradox, or irony
- setting

2) For your English class, you will need a dedicated system for keeping material given out in class as well as notes taken. Please be prepared with a three ring binder which is at least 2" (or any other suitable file organizer for class handouts and worksheets, like a multi-subject spiral with pockets). You will also need some physical note taking medium (composition notebook, spiral notebook w/ section dividers, etc.)

Summer Reading for 2026-27 school year!

Incoming 11th and 12th Graders

AP English Language and Composition

Summer Reading Assignment 2026

Your summer reading assignment consists of reading The Things they Carried by Tim O'Brien, and getting a copy of Jay Heinrich's Word Hero.

Please obtain both of the texts listed below. The O'Brien should be read over the summer, while the Heinrichs we will read in class in the first nine weeks and throughout the year. Both texts should be in hand at the start of the school year.

Read carefully! When you return to school, you will complete a project and write an essay in class. Please bring the novel or play with you to class as you will need it for the writing assignment. The electronic version is **not** suitable.

| | | | |
|------------|--|---------------|--|
| Class Text | <p><u>Word Hero: A Fiendishly Clever Guide to Crafting the Lines that Get Laughs, Go Viral, and Live Forever</u></p> <p><u>AbeBooks link</u></p> | Jay Heinrichs | <p>Partner text to "Thanks for Arguing" by Heinrichs which we will use throughout the year (provided in class)</p> <p>**Not required as summer reading, but required for the school year**</p> |
| Fiction | <p><u>The Things They Carried</u></p> <p><u>AbeBooks link</u></p> | Tim O'Brien | <p><u>Info from National Endowment for the Arts</u></p> <p>Critically acclaimed and award winning novel – a fictional recounting of O'Brien's experience as a footsoldier in the Vietnam War</p> |

If you only read a summary or notes of the novel, you will not be prepared for the tests and writing, and your lack of preparation may drastically reduce your grade. Please plan accordingly!

While you read, take organized notes on these five categories as you read:

- internal conflict or external conflict
- characterization of protagonist
- figurative language such as personification, simile, metaphor, or allusion
- other devices such as symbol, theme, paradox, or irony
- setting