

Introduction to Horror Summer Reading Directions 2026

Reading and Active Reading Journal

- Every student must complete a **HANDWRITTEN** journal.
- The journal will consist of pre-reading responses for each of the three books along with analysis and reflection for each book.
- We encourage everyone to read for at least 30 minutes each day.
- Please read all directions to ensure the journal is formatted and completed correctly.

Pre-Reading

- Before reading each book, complete a search of the author's biography, major historical, and cultural events that might impact the messages and events in the book.
- Then, complete a one-page, **HANDWRITTEN** response inferring how might the author's birthplace, religious beliefs, political beliefs, cultural values, historical era, etc. play a role in the book's subject matter and meaning. This should be completed before reading or journaling.

Journal Pacing

- **For each ¼ of each book**, you will **HANDWRITE** responses based on the attached directions.
- For example, if your book is 300 pages, you will respond to prompts 1 & 2 after every 75 pages read.
- If your book is 125 pages, you will write responses after every 31 pages.

Fiction Book

- Every student must select **ONE** book from the fiction list.
- Fiction responses in the journal will be based on literary analysis using literary elements such as characterization, setting, conflict, narration, and theme as well as literary devices such as symbolism, irony, metaphor, imagery, and paradox.
- Analysis of the book will lead to connections with the "Big Questions" provided.

Non-Fiction Book

- Every student must also select **ONE** book from the nonfiction list.
- Nonfiction responses will determine how the author makes choices within the book to communicate a message about a complicated to the readers. Nonfiction analysis requires evidence of the author's style such as tone, diction, and syntax, the author's use of rhetorical appeals such as ethos, pathos, logos and rhetorical devices such as analogies, allusions, repetition, rhetorical questions, and figurative language and writing strategies/organizational patterns such as cause/effect, compare/contrast, narration, description, persuasion, and use of evidence.
- Analysis of the book will lead to connections with the "Big Questions" provided.

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FORMATTING THE SUMMER READING FICTION AND NONFICTION BOOKS JOURNAL

For each ¼ reading session, the journal must be formatted as follows:

1. The title and author of the book must be written across the top line of every page.
2. The number of the journal entry must follow (Journal Response 1, 2, 3, or 4)
3. The dates of the reading must be recorded (7/10/26-7/15/26, for example)
4. The range of pages read must be recorded. For example, *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card is 324 pages long. 324 divided by 4 is 81. So, for every 81 pages, you must write a journal response: Pages 1-81
5. There are two responses required for each ¼ of the book. Prompt 1 should be completed on the left page. Prompt 2 should be completed on the right page

Heading for Each Journal Response in the Handwritten Journal

Left Page of Notebook / Journal	Right Page of Notebook / Journal
<i>Ender's Game</i> by Orson Scott Card	7/10/26-7/15/26
Journal Response 1	Pages 1-75
Prompt 1 (FICTION and NONFICTION) Choose ONE "Big Question" from the list that applies best to the section of text you read. In your response be sure to do the following: - Avoid summarizing the story/narration and instead discuss <i>how</i> the writer directly or indirectly conveys a message or makes an argument through the lens of the "Big Question". - List two quotes from the section you read that provide context for your selection of the "Big Question" Fiction: analyze literary elements, style elements, & literary devices that the author relies upon to explore the question. Nonfiction: analyze style elements, rhetorical appeals, & rhetorical devices that the author relies upon to explore the question. - Provide logical commentary to convince the reader that your analysis is accurate.	Prompt 2 (FICTION and NONFICTION) Big Questions and Personal Reflection Journal Following your analysis, reflect personally on the Big Question you chose by examining your own experiences and perspectives as they apply to the question. There are a variety of ways to respond. You may not repeat the use of a prompt below more than once for each book. - Write about a moment in your life that you can connect to the events and narration in the book through the lens of the Big Question. - Connect the events in the book to events happening in today's society. How do your views or the views of the news media or people posting on social media or even friends and family agree or disagree with the events in the book or the perspectives of the author/characters regarding the Big Question? - Draw a picture, write a comic strip, create a political cartoon, or create an image that addresses the Big Question in an abstract, visual form. - Write a poem that expresses your perspective on the Big Question. - Interview someone who you think is an expert on the topic presented in the Big Question. Record their response to the meaning of the question and compare/contrast it with the perspectives of the author. - Choose a song, book, movie, or TV show that you like that addresses the Big Question - Write advice related to the Big Question to your future self as a reminder of some early wisdom you've discovered - Write a letter to a friend (real or imaginary) who needs advice related to the Big Question. - Write a letter to the author in which you agree or disagree with his/her perspective of the Big Question. - Develop a graphic organizer-chart/graph/infographic to creatively illustrate the Big Question.

Introduction to Horror Reading List 2026

SELECT ONE FROM EACH SECTION

Fiction

- *Dracula*, Bram Stoker
- *From a Buick 8*, Stephen King
- *Interview with the Vampire*, Anne Rice
- *Later*, Stephen King
- *Pet Semetary*, Stephen King
- *Phantoms*, Dean Koontz
- *The Ballad of Black Tom*, Victor LaValle
- *The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon*, Stephen King
- *The Gunslinger*, Stephen King
- *The Haunting of Hill House*, Shirley Jackson

Non-Fiction

- *Chain Saw Confidential: How We Made the World's Most Notorious Horror Movie*, Gunnar Hansen
- *If Chins Could Kill: Confessions of a B Movie*, Bruce Campbell
- *On Writing Horror: A Handbook by the Horror Writers Association*, The Horror Writers Association
- *Room to Dream*, David Lynch
- *Trejo: My Life of Crime, Redemption, and Hollywood*, Danny Trejo

Summer Reading Big Questions 2026

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| 1. Are old ways the best ways? | 37. Should religion be tied to politics? |
| 2. Can allies be opponents? | 38. Should you trust your instincts? |
| 3. Can America achieve equal rights? | 39. What are we entitled to? |
| 4. Can appearances deceive? | 40. What breeds terror? |
| 5. Can first impressions be trusted? | 41. What can we learn from stories? |
| 6. Can ordinary people be heroes? | 42. What do we learn from experience? |
| 7. Can reporters always stay objective? | 43. What do we owe others? |
| 8. Can values be imposed? | 44. What does a community owe its children? |
| 9. Can we be alone and not lonely? | 45. What does it take to be a survivor? |
| 10. Can you be from two cultures at once? | 46. What does one's name really mean? |
| 11. Can you recover from tragedy? | 47. What drives human behavior? |
| 12. Can your conscience mislead you? | 48. What if life had a reset button? |
| 13. Do the ends justify the means? | 49. What is cowardice? |
| 14. Do we set our own course? | 50. What is dignity? |
| 15. Does everyone have a dark side? | 51. What is our place in nature? |
| 16. Does fate control our lives? | 52. What is the role of a witness? |
| 17. Does knowledge come at a price? | 53. What keeps you on the edge of your seat? |
| 18. How can nature inspire you? | 54. What makes a great competitor? |
| 19. How can people honor their heritage? | 55. What makes a setting sinister? |
| 20. How can we achieve the impossible? | 56. What makes someone feel like an outsider? |
| 21. How can we change society? | 57. What responsibility comes with wealth? |
| 22. How do expectations affect performance? | 58. What responsibility comes with power? |
| 23. How good are you at judging people? | 59. What should be sacrificed for justice? |
| 24. How has science changed our lives? | 60. When are the little things a big deal? |
| 25. How important is culture? | 61. When do attitudes need adjusting? |
| 26. How important is telling the truth? | 62. When is a risk worth taking? |
| 27. How important is wealth? | 63. Where do people look for truth? |
| 28. Is curiosity a gift or a curse? | 64. Where do we get our values? |
| 29. Is emotion stronger than reason? | 65. Which memories last? |
| 30. Is fear our worst enemy? | 66. Who are the victims of war? |
| 31. Is it better to escape or face reality? | 67. Who has the right to rule? |
| 32. Is privacy an illusion? | 68. Who really shapes society? |
| 33. Is revenge ever justified? | 69. Why are we fascinated by the unknown? |
| 34. Is technology taking over? | 70. Why do people break the rules? |
| 35. Is the price of progress ever too high? | 71. Why do people fear change? |
| 36. Is there dignity in silence? | 72. Why do people seek power? |