

Honors English II
Summer assignment 2026

The purpose of the summer reading assignment is for you to work through the reading independently, exercise your critical thinking skills, and ultimately prepare you for what is next. The expectation, if you elect to take this course, is that you are functioning at an advanced level and that you are capable of working through these assignments without the help of an instructor. Read the novel carefully and please be prepared.

The following assignments are due on the second day of class, Friday, August 22nd. In addition, you will also have an objective test over the novel on Monday, August 24th. The test will cover items such as characterization, plot, theme, and setting. Read carefully and please be prepared.

SPECIAL NOTE: The completion of summer assignment is a requirement for this course. Failure to complete all or part of the summer assignment will result in removal from the course. NO EXCEPTIONS

TEXT:

A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest Gaines

1. **Actively read the novel.** I expect you to actively read at all times. Good readers actively engage with the text; it is a time tested strategy to use when you are studying a literary work. Do your active reading on the pages of the novel, not a separate document. Merely highlighting or underlining is not active reading.

Summarizing is also not active reading. You must connect with the text by questioning, reacting, predicting, connecting to your life or a character/novel you have read. This is done on the pages of the book.

2. When you return from summer break, you will write a 3 page paper on this novel and two other works. In preparation for this paper, you must begin to analyze and compare how education, employment, and housing impacted the lives of the people in the works.

To that end, you will **complete the Tracking Chart** which covers Employment, Education, and Housing. This **must be handwritten**. Page numbers must be included.

3. Complete the Guiding and Reflection questions for A Lesson Before Dying. Be sure that these questions are your own work. I am asking you to think critically on these responses. Be sure that they are thorough. They should not be answered quickly or briefly. Be detailed and refer to specific parts of the novel during your responses. They **must also be handwritten**.

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES

-The summer assignment is due on Friday, August 22nd.

- I expect you to actively read at all times. Good readers actively engage with the text; it is a time tested strategy to use when you are studying a literary work.

-I am looking for quality work--be thorough and complete with your data sheet, responses, and notes.

-Please be aware that additional assignments (tests, essays, presentations) may occur after the school year begins as we discuss this work in class.

****Remember to bring the summer reading novel with you to school in August because we will be working with it for the first several weeks of school.**

Be sure that all of the work is YOUR OWN. Do not consult the internet, chatgpt, another student, or an adult. If you need clarification on an assignment, please contact me. Cheating of any kind will result in a zero. Do not wait until the last minute to complete these assignments.

Point totals: (rubrics are included)

<u>A Lesson Before Dying</u> tracking chart	20 points
<u>Questions</u> on impact of education, employment, and housing	20 points
Active reading of LBD	30 points

TOTAL - 70 points

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact me if you have questions.

Mrs. Higley

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Tracking Chart

Aspect	Examples / Quotes from the Novel (include page #s)	Explanation / Significance
Employment		How do jobs reflect racial inequality or opportunities?
Education		What role does education play in empowerment or limitation?
Housing		How does housing show economic status or segregation?

Guiding Questions

Employment

1. What kinds of jobs do the characters hold or seek?
2. How are job opportunities limited by race and social status?
3. How does Grant feel about his job as a teacher?
4. How does Jefferson's work (or lack of it) affect his sense of dignity?
5. Are economic hardships linked to employment? How do these shape characters' lives?

Education

6. What role does education play for Grant and others?

7. How accessible is education in the community?

8. How does education affect Grant's worldview?

9. Is education shown as a source of hope or frustration? Explain.

10. Does the novel suggest education empowers characters? Why or why not?

Housing

11. How are living conditions described?

12. What do housing conditions reveal about economic status and segregation?

13. How might housing affect safety, belonging, or opportunity?

14. Are there contrasts between different homes or neighborhoods? Explain.

15. How does housing relate to larger social inequalities?

Reflection Questions

16. How do employment, education, and housing contribute to the novel's overall message?

17. How do these factors connect to themes of justice, dignity, and human worth?

18. Identify moments where characters resist or challenge these social limitations?

Part 1: Tracking Chart (20 points total)

Criteria	10 - Excellent	7 - Proficient	4 - Developing	1 - Needs Improvement
Examples & Quotes (10 pts)	Strong, specific textual examples for all three categories	Adequate examples for all, but may lack specificity	Limited or weak examples; missing 1 category	Little/no textual support; 2+ categories incomplete
Explanations (10 pts)	Clear, insightful analysis that connects details to themes	Clear explanations with some connections to larger issues	Basic explanation; little thematic insight	Explanations vague or missing

Part 2: Guiding & Reflection Questions (20 points total)

Criteria	10 - Excellent	7 - Proficient	4 - Developing	1 - Needs Improvement
Completeness (10 pts)	All questions answered thoughtfully and fully	Most questions answered; some lack detail	Several incomplete or underdeveloped answers	Multiple missing responses
Depth of Analysis (10 pts)	Insightful, critical thinking evident; strong connections to themes	Thoughtful answers with some analysis	Limited analysis; responses are mostly surface-level	Little analysis; minimal effort or understanding shown