



Honors English I: Mrs. Ballou

Summer Reading Assignment 2025 - 2026

selena.ballou@beechwood.kyschools.us

Dear student,

I look forward to getting to know you and working with you next school year! In the meantime, I hope you will have a wonderful summer break with your families and friends. During this time off, try to set aside time to read. As you know, the only way to improve your reading skills is to read; there's no short-cut to becoming a strong reader. All students enrolled in Honors English I next year must complete the following assignment.

Part 1:

Choose any book (fiction or nonfiction) that's grade-level appropriate (no *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, *Harry Potter*, etc.) and read it. Please choose something that you haven't read before. If you need suggestions, here are some great lists created by the [Kenton County Public Library](#). If you're not sure if your chosen book is grade-level appropriate, please email me. I'm happy to help! If you would like to go above and beyond in your reading, may I suggest one of the following books? These texts have appeared on the AP Literature exam and are not currently taught at Beechwood. Consider reading one of the following after discussing it with the adult(s) in your life, as some contain more mature themes:

- *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho
- *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck
- *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan
- *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel
- *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott
- *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith
- *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd

Please note that we will be reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, and *Romeo & Juliet* in Honors English I. Please do not read those texts. Furthermore, you are prohibited from using a text that is required for another summer assignment. I have access to all the summer assignments and will not be able to give you credit for your work if you use a text from another class's assignment.

Part 2:

Prepare a three-minute book talk about your chosen book to share with the class. (You may create a visual aid, but it is not required.) Your goal is to convince the class to read your chosen book! Your book talk should include the following elements:

1. Title and author
2. General author info: other books, relevant background, etc.
3. Genre
4. Main characters
5. Conflict that the main characters face
6. Setting
7. Brief plot overview (but don't give away the ending!)
8. Recommendation!! This is important!!
9. Read a brief excerpt of a key passage.

If you would rather not present your book talk live in class, you could create a book trailer instead. Your book trailer should contain the same elements that are listed above. Here are some examples of book trailers:

- [Example book trailer 1](#)
- [Example book trailer 2](#)
- [Example book trailer 3](#)

Assignments are due on the 2nd day of school. Please reach out if you have any questions this summer!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Ballou

selena.ballou@beechwood.kyschools.us