



Honors English I: Mrs. Ballou

Summer Reading Assignment 2026 - 2027

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Dear student,

I look forward to getting to know you and working with you next school year! In the meantime, I hope you 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 shortcut 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'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
- *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 *Of Mice and Men*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *And Then There Were None*, and *Romeo and Juliet* in Honors English I, so please do not read those texts. Furthermore, you may not use a text that is required for another summer assignment. I have access to all summer assignments and will not grade your assignment if you use a text from another class's assignment. You will also receive a zero if you reuse an assignment from a previous class. I also have a list of the books you read for summer reading in 7th and 8th grade.

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

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