PASSAIC VALLEY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
Summer Reading & Writing Assignment
Grades 9-12

Please note: Students in Honors and AP English have different books and assignments. Please scroll down to find the correct Honors/AP assignment for your year and class.

All grades 9-12: English I, II, III IV
Assignment Due Date: All students must be prepared to submit this written summer reading assignment by the first full week of school in September. Your teacher may require you to do more with this book after school begins.

➢ FIRST STEP: Choose a book from the English Summer Reading Book List posted on the PV website at www.pvhs.k12.nj.us. Then, do the following assignment:

The summer reading assignment has two parts:
I. **Quotebook** (which you will be able to refer to this as you complete the second part)
II. **In-class timed writing** which will be scheduled by your English teacher early in September.

I. The Quotebook

As you read, you find that some passages are more striking, more surprising, more significant, more intriguing, or simply more memorably satisfying than others. These are the passages you want to record in your Quotebook.

**Number your passage.** Type a quoted passage and the page number where you found it in a parenthetical note—like this (78). Under the quote, add your explanatory notes, which will answer two questions:
A. What is the context? This question focuses on this passage as part of the book. If you read a novel, this includes information about who said it and to whom? What is happening in the plot at this point?
If you read a nonfiction book, this means what was the topic under discussion?
How does this passage fit—-it is evidence from a new source? A confirming fact?
A great example? A new direction in the argument? A surprising contradiction?
An anecdote? A joke? (4-sentence minimum)

B. What do you like about this quote? This questions focuses on your experience as a reader. Your notes here will capture your reaction to the passage and single out the things that make it significant/funny/startling/deep for you.
(3 sentence minimum)

Quotebook FAQ’s (frequently asked questions)

1. How long is a passage?
More than one sentence, less than a paragraph.

2. How long should my note on each passage be?
A. Explaining the context: 4 sentence minimum. If it’s complicated, it may be longer.
B. Explaining what you like: 3 sentence minimum. Again, if it’s complicated, it may be longer.
So, that’s a minimum of 7 sentences per entry.

3. How many passages should be in the Quotebook?
10 minimum—but if it’s a good book, you will probably have more.

4. Is it O.K. if they are all from the first 25 pages, because that part was really, really good?
NO. Space out your quote choices through the book—no more than one every 20 pages.
Remember, part of this assignment is showing that you finished the book.

5. Do I have to type this?
Yes. You will be submitting it to Turnitin.com, so you need to type it and have it available either as an attachment in an email or in your student transfer folder or on your desktop or on a flashdrive so that you can submit it. The excuse, “It’s on my laptop at home but I can’t access it from here” translates into “I didn’t even start yet, so I am playing for time right now.”

6. What if I don’t like the book very much?
Your reactions don’t have to be positive—if you dislike a book, you should definitely say so, and the quotes you chose can reflect the flaws you see in the book. Sometimes it’s just as useful to figure out why you don’t like a book as it is to figure out why you do. On the other hand, since you have the summer, why not try another book that you may like more?

7. How are you grading this?
The Quotebook is 50% of your summer reading grade. Your grade on it depends on
a. completeness—it includes at least 10 quotes, spaced through your book with notes that answer both questions and fulfill the length requirement.
b. specificity—the notes are focused on the passage rather than vague, all-purpose ramblings
c. coherence—solid sentence structure and grammar.
d. look- a reasonable degree of care and neatness
8. What if my friend and I “work together” on it together?
Everyone will be required to submit this assignment to TURNITIN. If two or more assignments match, this is may be considered plagiarism. This is an individual project, and not a difficult or burdensome one. The quotes you choose will reflect your reading of the book; what you have to say about them should be in your own words. Turnitin.com checks submitted assignments, not only against online sources, but also against the pool of other assignments. Please do your own work.

III. In-class Writing

Early in September, you will have a class period to respond to an essay topic about the book you read. You will be able to refer to your Quotebook in writing the essay. In fact, the essay will require you to use some direct quotes which you can draw from your Quotebook.

This essay will be the other 50% of your summer reading grade.

Good luck~ happy reading

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English I Honors Summer Reading Assignment

Welcome to English I Honors! The summer reading book for our class is Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe. Please finish reading it and complete the written assignment below by the time class starts in the fall. Bring the written assignment with you the second full day of class. I am looking forward to meeting you and to working together on this novel.

Dr. Clinton

Written Assignment: Complete A, B, and C. (If I give you a minimum length, it means that, while it is fine to write more, you should not write less.)

A. Fables and Proverbs

1. Define fable.
2. As you read, make a list of the five fables that characters tell each other. This list will include the page number and a phrase briefly identifying each.
3. One of the five fables is about Lizard and the Greens. Answer the following two questions about this fable.
   a. What would you say is the lesson or moral of this fable? (State your moral and give a brief 3-4 sentence explanation)
   b. What connections of parallels can you draw between this fable and the characters and events of the novel? (Minimum 6-sentence paragraph)

4. Define *proverb*.

5. List two proverbs that you find in the novel along with the page number where you find each of them. For each of the proverbs you chose, give a brief explanation (2-3 sentences) of what the speaker means by it.

B. Six Character Traits

What kind of character is Okonkwo?

1. List three of his character traits that you think are admirable. Find two specific examples—concrete things that he says or does—that demonstrate each trait. Be sure to include page numbers for each of your examples.

2. List three of his character traits that you think are weaknesses or failings. Find two specific examples—concrete things that he says or does—that demonstrate each trait. Again, be sure to include page numbers for each of your examples.

C. Talking Back to an Online Essay. At times students go to online sources to help them understand what they’re reading. The danger is that these online sources will replace your own thoughts and impressions—those reactions and impressions and questions and associations are valuable! They are your inroads to understand that reading. Hold on to them!!

Sometimes students also go to online sources for ideas and interpretation. This is where it gets extremely risky, because there is a lot of weak, questionable, and out-and-out wrongheaded commentary out there, so this next assignment is an exercise in trusting yourself.

Below is an online essay that one of my students actually referred to interpret the fable of Tortoise and the Birds. (The lines are numbered for easy reference.)

1. First read it through, looking for the writer’s opinions—places where the writer offers her own interpretation or analysis of what the fable means. You are not looking for errors of fact or grammar or spelling here. The very first sentence, for example, has a big factual error about the ending of the fable, and the writer misspells Okonkwo every time (!), but that sort of mistake is not what you are after. You are looking for one of the parallels that the writer draws between the fable and Okonkwo that, in your opinion, just doesn’t hold up.

2. Choose one of those statements that you disagree with and explain why in a 7-sentence paragraph. Your explanation should use examples from the book to support your point of view.
Online essay

In the novel *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe includes a fable about a tortoise and his fatal demise. I feel that Achebe included this tale in order to foreshadow the fate of the novel's main character Okonkow. This fable is also used as a tool in order to display Okonkow's character to the reader, showing his tragic flaws which will eventually lead to his demise. Although Okonkow is seen as a "superman" among his tribe, his fear of failure becomes his driving force behind his tragic heroicness.

I feel that there are many similarities between the tortoise in the fable and Okonkow. "Tortoise saw all these preparations and soon discovered what it all meant...he was full of cunning" (Achebe, 96). This shows how the tortoise, like Okonkow, noticed that there was great importance to accomplishment, that the praise of others and inclusion in their activities was one of the most important achievements to strive for during his life.

Another display of Okonkow's character comes when Achebe states: "I am a changed man. I have learned that a man who makes trouble for others is also making it for himself" (97). This statement, made by the tortoise, is a direct reflection of the character of Okonkow, and also, in many ways, a direct reflection of the fear he holds with in him. Okonkow is haunted by the idleness and irresponsibility of his father. He dreads becoming what he viewed as a child, he is terrified that he will die an Agbala. This statement also shows that despite his fear of becoming like his father, Okonkow is also trying to show everyone else that he is not destined for the same fate his father had. Okonkow strives to be the best in everything that he does, in wrestling, farming, village titles, and also in his family.

In the fable, the tortoise is admired by all of the birds flying with him to the feast. They have great respect for him just as Okonkow's peers do for him. The birds flying with tortoise agree and support him as he offers his custom of taking on a new name for the feast, just as Okonkow's villagers support him, especially when he commits a wrongdoing during times like the "Week of Peace." The birds soon realize that the tortoise was only concerned with himself, and had no real ideals of community, just as villagers begin to notice that Okonkow is selfish and has no respect for the community in which he lives.

Just as the tortoise is repaired by the medicine man, Okonkow is given new life by the refuge that his mother's village provides for him. Also, like the tortoise, Okonkow may have survived his hardships, but he returned damaged. The tortoise did not die from his fall from the sky, and Okonkow was not physically harmed by his exile, but both would remain forever changed by the experience of falling from grace.

The tortoise and Okonkow are, in my opinion, a direct reflection of one another. They each have the cunning ability to become great members of the community in which they live, but they also possess the capability to have that quality become their greatest downfall. They have the opportunities presented to them, but their greed, and fear, consume them and eventually become a fatal quality.
English II Honors

Dear Students of Sophomore Honors,

Welcome to Sophomore Honors English. I hope you are excited about meeting the challenges of this course; your summer reading is the first step in preparing you for the demanding and rewarding class you will be taking next year. In September, we will begin by discussing and writing about the novels you have been assigned. To prepare, you must take notes as you read the literature. Record observations about plot, characters, setting, themes, as well as the author's style and tone. Taking notes is imperative; students have found that referring to their notes helps them to recall information about the books. I also encourage you to explore your reactions to the works through writing; reader response journal are excellent tools for discovery, and they provide excellent writing practice. You will be completing a written evaluation for each novel; one will be completed this summer and the other two will be assigned in the fall.

You are required to read three titles over this summer.

1. *The Scarlet Letter*  Nathaniel Hawthorne


To supplement your notes, you must create a vocabulary list for *The Scarlet Letter*. While you must understand these words to fully comprehend the novel, increasing your vocabulary will also help you prepare for the *PSAT*. Hawthorne's novel includes a rather lengthy introduction called “The Custom House.” You will not be tested on this portion of the book; you may begin taking notes and defining new vocabulary on page 45, the first chapter of the novel. In addition to reading these required texts, I recommend that
you read other novels, short stories, poems, etc. A student of Honors English must be a voracious reader! Have a wonderful summer; I look forward to welcoming you in September.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Kathleen Dellanno
Teacher of Sophomore Honors

*See below for English II Honors writing assignment

**Writing Assignment**

After reading *The Color of Water*, think about the changes the two central figures undergo and the forces behind those changes. Choose either James McBride or Ruth McBride Jordan, and write an essay detailing the character’s growth and development. Be sure to incorporate textual evidence, and avoid mere plot summary.

Please submit this paper to me by August 18th. You can e-mail it to me at dellannok@pvhs.k12.nj.us. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to e-mail me at any time.

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**English III Honors Summer Reading Assignment**

Welcome to English III honors. This summer you will be reading three American literary works that will help to initiate our discussion on American literature. While you read, I strongly suggest that you take notes on characters, plot, setting, and theme as these notes will help you to recall information about the readings. I would also advise reading with post-its in order to keep any questions or comments about these works within your reach. You will be completing a short and informal writing piece on *The Glass Castle: A Memoir* and *Long Day’s Journey into Night* plus an analytical essay on *The Poisonwood Bible*. See below for details on these assignments. You should email each of your assignments to me at garofalom@pvhs.k12.nj.us
Here are the titles that you are required to read over this summer:

- **The Glass Castle: A Memoir** by Jeannette Walls (this novel must be purchased)
- **The Poisonwood Bible** by Barbara Kingsolver
- **Long Day’s Journey into Night** by Eugene O’Neill

Reading is an emotional experience. For *The Glass Castle* and *Long Day’s Journey into Night*, you will write me an email expressing how you feel about the literary work. Select an event in the novel, a character, a theme or anything else that affects you. Tell me what about the literary work moves you and why. Please speak freely (no need to be too formal); I want to understand your reaction and emotions. Include details and evidence from the literary work, but do not summarize. Send one reaction by 8/15 and the second by 8/30.

The following assignment on *The Poisonwood Bible* is due September 12, 2016.

Throughout the course of the novel, each of the women deals with her journey separately and differently. Please write an analytical essay where you breakdown each character and, through evidence from the text, discuss why they do what they do and how their journeys impact their lives. Please do not retell the story, discuss- do not summarize!

I look forward to reading your thoughts on this summer’s readings, and I especially look forward to working with you throughout your junior year and to getting to know your thoughts on life and literature. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me @ garofalom@pvhs.k12.nj.us

Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely,

Ms. Mary Garofalo
“Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and a few to be chewed and digested.”

Dear AP student,

Welcome to Advanced Placement English class! Your summer reading is the first step in preparing you for the challenging and stimulating sessions ahead next year. In September, we will begin by discussing, speaking and writing about the literature you have read. As you read, you should take notes on characters, settings, events, themes and such features of style as diction, imagery, tone and figurative language. Your notes should be thorough enough to serve as a resource when we begin our study and discussion. These notes will enable you to discuss the books readily and to write about them. You will be required to deal with one book in an in-depth writing assignment and one other in a more creative way when we return in September.

Attached you will also find two writing assignments: one due late summer and the other two (2) due when we return in September. You are required to read (3) three titles over the summer.

**Brave New World:** Aldous Huxley  
**A Prayer for Owen Meany:** John Irving  
**One book of your choosing written since you have been born**  
(Copyright 1999 to the present)  
(I trust you won’t be reading Goosebumps or Harry Potter)  
Challenge yourself to look at the NY Times list, NPR, or solicit titles from friends and family.

Of course please feel free to read other novels, stories, poems, etc. as you wish this summer. We can plan a day when you can share your favorites with the class.

I look forward to meeting with all of you in September to begin our journey of discovery and dialogue. Congratulations on your decision to join the AP class; if you come to it with an open mind and a willing spirit, your ambitions will be rewarded.

Have a wonderful summer.  
Ms. Peters

P.S. Any problems/questions, etc. over the summer, you can e-mail me at: petersj@pvhs.k12.nj.us
AP ENGLISH HONORS SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENTS

There are two (2)

1. Write a one page reflective letter to me (the teacher) in which you talk about one summer book. Reflect upon or react to a character, an event, a conflict. Write it in letter form- not in the style of an essay. Be informal but informative. Due: August 26, 2016 Email letter to me @ petersj@pvhs.k12.nj.us. I will always respond to you by email when you send me the letter in August. So if you email me something and you don’t hear from me with an ok, then I did not get it.

2. Double Entry journals: Select a second book, not the one you used for the reflective letter, and complete 10 double entry journals. Divide the book into tenths to spread out your responses. (i.e.: novel has 10 chapters- do a journal for each chapter or if a novel has 350 pages do a journal every 35 pages or so). In total, you will select 10 quotes/scenes and you will respond with one journal entry for each. Please type this.

Due date: mid-September 2016- I will give you exact date when we meet

My point is: spread out the thinking and writing. I want to see your progression of thinking and writing as you read the novel.

You can recreate and duplicate the double entry journal page below as a document to keep a running journal record or use a form you are used to.

Double Entry Journal: Model page

The Double Entry Journal allows you to record your responses to text as you read. In the left-hand page or column, copy or summarize text which is intriguing, puzzling, or moving, or which connects to a previous entry or situation. In the right-hand page or column, react to the quotation or summary. The entry may include a comment, a question, a connection you made, an analysis. Write whenever a natural pause in the reading occurs, so that the flow is not interrupted constantly. Do not retell the plot.

Don’t think of this as a book report.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Double-Entry Journal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quotation</strong> - A phrase or sentence I especially like.</td>
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