

Honors Humanities Summer Assignment 2025-2026

Thank you for joining us in Honors Humanities. In this course you will have the opportunity to study about the history, literature, art, music, and philosophy of western civilization with the overall goal of explaining the human experience. How cool is that?

We would like to get you started in the course by having you prepare for our first units in the class. You will not be tested on this material, but this activity will help to prepare you for early discussions and writings in the course. Furthermore, students who show commitment enough to complete the summer assignment tend to do well in the class.

Pick two (from different categories) of the following examples of artistic creation below. Research and analyze the pieces as they pertain to the prompt below, which we will discuss on the second day of class (no need to write an essay). Please remember that you do not know if you will have the class first or second term, so some of you will have to review all of this again in January.

Discussion prompt: Why does art impact us as humans? How do your particular pieces of chosen art add to this universal impact? What can or should we learn about life from art? What does the artist communicate about the human experience? Be ready to discuss your findings on day two of class. **We do NOT want a report on your art piece.**

Pick two (each one should be from a different category) of the following topics:

Sculpture:

- Magdalena Abakanowicz – *Backs*
- Auguste Rodin – *Gates of Hell*
- Maya Lin --Vietnam Veterans Memorial
- Koons – *Tulips*
- Giacometti – *City Square*
- George Zongolopoulos -- *Umbrellas*
- Yayoi Kusama - *Narcissus Garden*

Paintings:

- Aaron Douglas - *Creation*
- Marc Chagall - *The Blue Fiddler*
- Vermeer - *Girl with a Pearl Earring*
- Wassily Kandinsky – *Improvisation 28*
- Rene Magritte – *La Condition Humaine (The Human Condition)*
- Franz Marc – *Fate of the Animals*
- Kathe Kollwitz – *Woman with Dead Child 1903*
- Pablo Picasso -- *Guernica*
- Titian - *Salome*
- Joseph Wright of Derby - *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump*

Other:

- Opening ceremonies 2008 Olympics
- Radio Broadcast (Welles)--*War of the Worlds*
- Charlie Chaplin -- *The Great Dictator*
- *Lunch Atop a Skyscraper* (1932 photo)

Literature:

- Basho--Selected poems
- Henry David Thoreau—*Conscience*
- Langston Hughes--*I, too, sing America*
- Jack Kirby--*Captain America #1* (1941)
- Shane Koyczan--*To This Day*
- Nikki Giovanni -- *Still I Rise*
- Robert Frost – *Out, Out*
- William Faulkner – *A Rose for Emily*

Music:

- Aaron Copland--*Fanfare for the Common Man*
- Bob Dylan--*Blowing in the Wind*
- Don McLean--*American Pie*
- Eric Whitacre—*Sleep*
- Grandmaster Flash--*The Message*
- Hector Berlioz--*Symphonie Fantastique*
- John Newton--*Amazing Grace*
- Ludwig von Beethoven--*Symphony 5*
- Nirvana--*Smells Like Teen Spirit*
- Pyotr Tchaikovsky--*1812 Overture*

*Please note: some of these pieces deal with mature themes or language.