

## 9th Grade Honors English Summer Assignment

Welcome to Honors English I! I'm so excited to share a classroom with you all again, and I can't wait for us to hit the ground running next year. Congratulations on making the choice to challenge yourself by taking on a high school honors course. Honors English I will be designed to grow you as a reader, writer, researcher, and critical thinker, and it will focus on helping you develop the tools you need for success throughout high school and beyond - both in continued education and your future career readiness.

Get ready for a year of exploring big ideas through literature - we'll be looking at epic, timeless stories of heroes, villains, conflict, context, and how people have used literature to explore and understand what it really means to be a human being throughout all of history.

Your summer reading assignment is designed to:

- Help you build and sharpen strong reading habits
- Introduce key themes we'll explore throughout the school year
- Give you choice and flexibility
- Give you the opportunity to examine a text in two different mediums (text & film)
- Connect you to an incredible story!

Most importantly: my goal is for you to **ENJOY** the reading experience and start the school year prepared to share and engage in critical conversations about the text you choose. We'll use these texts as touchstones throughout the entire year, so it's very important that you really engage with the reading process.

These texts are longer than what you may be used to, and book length non-fiction requires stronger reading stamina than reading fiction, so plan accordingly. Don't expect to read the book in a couple of days! If it is helpful to you to listen to an audiobook along with your reading, that's totally fine. However, I cannot stress enough the importance of reading along with your eyes in a physical book as you listen. Research shows that this type of immersion reading is incredibly helpful in supporting comprehension and pacing.

1. **READ:** Choose ONE of the nonfiction books from the list below. These books tell us the stories of real life heroes, and most of them contain elements of sports, competition, or endurance, and connect to important historical moments:
  - *Boys on the Boat* by Daniel James Brown
  - *Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand
  - *Moneyball* by Michael Lewis
  - *Into Thin Air* by Jon Krakauer
  - *Friday Night Lights* by H.G. Bissinger
  - *Seabiscuit* by Laura Hillenbrand

2. **WATCH:** Each of these books has a fairly recent film adaptation. Watch the film that correlates to the book you chose. They are all streaming on a variety of platforms. If you're feeling adventurous, watch more of the films on the list. These are all really great stories and widely loved and acclaimed films, and we will touch back to them throughout the year.
3. **ANALYZE:** Choose an important scene that is depicted in *\*both\** the book and the film. Reread and rewatch the specific scene you choose and compare. Think critically about how each medium (text & film) works, and analyze what is most powerful about the book's scene vs. what's most powerful about the film's scene. Compare and contrast how each medium highlights the important character development, conflict, setting, and thematic development that makes the story work.
4. **CREATE:** Choose a way to share your observations about the strengths, weaknesses, and impacts of the scene of your choice in both book and film format. This is open ended, but it should reflect your close reading, watching, analysis, and critical thinking skills. Consider a digital or physical presentation, a dialectical journal, a short video analysis, etc. I don't intend for you to write an essay, but if a formal writing approach feels more comfortable to you, go for it! However, there should be absolutely no evidence of AI usage in your writing. Come up with your own ideas! Be prepared to articulate your ideas and analytical process in class discussion. Projects will be due on Thursday, August 13.

Parent Note: All of the text options are widely considered to be age appropriate and are commonly included on high school reading lists and AP Language & Composition test lists. Additionally, all film adaptations are rated PG or PG-13. However, if you have questions or concerns about the content of any of the text options, check out the website [www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org) for more information (be sure to differentiate between book & movie in your search), and feel free to reach out to me via email at [jjacksongross@gunterisd.org](mailto:jjacksongross@gunterisd.org) if you have concerns or need help!