

English II Honors
Mrs. Rodriguez
Summer Assignment 2025

The **Essential Question** for English II Honors is “How does literature help us understand our place in American Identity?”

Directions: For your summer assignment, you will choose an American novel to read and explore the theme of the American Identity. There are **3 parts** to this assignment as explained below. For the double-entry journal, click on the link and make your own copy to work on. On the second page of the chart, you will find an area to write down your notes for #1 and #3; please write in complete sentences. Be ready to submit this work in September. All work should be your **original analysis and will be submitted to turnitin.com when we return to school.**

1. **Listen to the following podcast** on NPR: [“How Books Shaped the American National Identity”](#)
Take notes on what criteria were used to choose the 88 books on this list and what were some of the reasons certain books got cut.
2. **Choose one of the books** from the following list. As you read, complete this [double-entry journal](#). We highly recommend that you and your parents preview the book to ensure it is appropriate for you and your family. One resource to help with this is Common Sense Media.

Their Eyes Were Watching God - Zora Neale Hurston

Kindred - Octavia Butler

The Namesake - Jhumpa Lahiri

How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents - Julia Alvarez

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings - Maya Angelou

The Kitchen God's Wife - Amy Tan

I'll Give You the Sun - Jandy Nelson

Warriors Don't Cry - Melba Pattillo Beals

The Underground Railroad - Colson Whitehead

Just Mercy - Bryan Stevenson

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks - Rebecca Skloot

The Devil in the White City - Erik Larson

A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League - Ron Suskind

The 57 Bus: The True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime That Changed Their Lives- Dashka Slater

Educated - Tara Westover

3. **Research the author and the time period** of your chosen novel. Take notes (use the second page of the double-entry journal) on what you find. What does your book reveal about the **American Identity**?