

Bloomington HIGH SCHOOL



May 21, 2024

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Bloomington High School and Honors English I! The purpose of Honors English is to prepare students for the college-level Advanced Placement English classes we offer in 11th and 12th grade. Some parents and students are surprised by the rigor and expectations of our program. Students who may be accustomed to doing reasonably well in school without much effort will be held accountable for what they do—and don't—in ways that dramatically impact their grades.

Honors English I offers rigorous pacing, work, and expectations. We will not spend six weeks mastering the essay format; we will likely move through the material and demonstrate reasonable proficiency in one to two weeks. Likewise, students will be expected to read several novels independently at home.

High school can prove to be a difficult transition for many students. Students with multiple extracurricular activities and other Honors/AP classes must be sure they will have time in their schedules to meet the new demands of high school while still having time to be kids and have fun.

With that said, Honors English I students will have a rigorous and engaging summer reading program as part of their preparation for classwork in the fall. Please discuss the attached summer reading with your student. This is necessary to prepare each student for the work covered throughout the year and will help prepare them for our class. This material is the basis for quizzes, essays, and discussions. As a parent, your participation and encouragement is strongly recommended.

In preparation for their first year in Honors English, we expect students to read **two** books this summer: *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee and *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates. Instructions for each reading are found on the following pages. Students will have a total of **TWO TYPED or HANDWRITTEN JOURNAL ENTRIES (their choice)** to turn in on the **first day of class**. Students are also required to refer to the **literary terms** listed, which will assist students in composing valuable journals. Please be aware that **ALL STUDENTS WILL BE TESTED ON THE TWO SUMMER READING BOOKS WITHIN THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASS**. Lastly, please complete the Google form indicating that you are aware of the work that will be covered and the assignments that must be completed. [Honors English I Required Form](#)

I look forward to working with your student in the fall. If you have any questions, please email Mr. Ayala (jerry_ayala@cjusd.net).

Books that need to be read:

Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates (Please find in Sora) [Between the World and Me](#) (Audio)

To Kill a Mockingbird Book by Harper Lee (Please find in Sora) [To Kill a Mockingbird](#)(Audio)

Sincerely,

Mr. Ayala
Honors English I Teacher

Bloomington High School
Honors English I Summer Reading Instructions
2024-2025

I expect you to create a **TYPED/ HANDWRITTEN** reading-response journal for *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Between the World and Me* that focuses on the theme of each book, using the following format:

As you read **each** book, choose **1** passage that relates to the theme and record it in the left-hand column of a T-chart (**ALWAYS include page numbers**). In the right column, write your response to the text (ideas/insights, questions, reflections, and comments on the passage).

WHEN CHOOSING YOUR PASSAGES FROM THE TEXT:

Look for quotes that seem significant, powerful, and thought-provoking in terms of the **theme**. For example, you might record:

- Examples of patterns: recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols, or motifs that reinforce the theme.
- Make connections between different characters or events in the text in relation to the theme.
- Make connections to a different text (or film, song, etc...) with the theme.
- Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s) and their relation to the theme.
- Analyze a passage and its relationship to the story as a whole in terms of how it relates, reinforces, or displays certain aspects of the theme.

RESPONDING TO THE TEXT:

You can *respond* to the text in various ways. **The most important thing to remember is that your observations should be specific, detailed, and related to the theme.** Your length requirement for each journal entry is **6-8 sentences minimum**. You will need **20** journal entries for each book.

Sample Dialectical Journal entry: TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD by Harper Lee

Passages from the text	Pg#s	Comments & Questions
<p>“You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view . . . until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.”</p>	<p>Pg. 39</p>	<p>Lee chooses to have Atticus say this to Scout to reinforce her theme of compassion. By Scout putting herself into another character’s shoes, she allows herself to see things from their perspective. By doing this, she becomes more compassionate to the feelings of others. In this instance, Atticus tries to get Scout to see things from Miss Caroline’s point of view. Scout doesn’t want to go to school because of how her teacher treated her. Miss Caroline tells Scout that her father shouldn’t read with her anymore and that it’s the teacher’s job to teach. Atticus helps Scout realize that Miss Caroline is new to Maycomb and learned something new that day about the Cunninghams. Scout also learned something new about her teacher. Later in the novel, Scout puts herself in Jem’s shoes when he begins to spend less time with her and begins to mature. She even puts herself in Boo Radley’s shoes at the very end of the novel and sees him for what he truly is, which is misunderstood. This recurring theme in the novel allows the reader to gain insight into how we, as individuals, should try to empathize with others before making a judgment.</p>

Literary Terms

Focus on these terms when writing your journals for *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Theme, symbol, conflict (internal/external), character (flat, round, protagonist, antagonist), figurative language (metaphor, simile, personification), imagery, plot (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, denouement), setting, irony, tone, diction, syntax.

Notice to Parents:

Your child is enrolled in an English class requiring the significant reading of high-quality literature. Typically, English teachers select the literature for study in their courses from the Recommended Reading list published by the California Department of Education. Teachers choose all books because they support the curriculum standards, and in the case of Advanced Placement classes, they help to prepare students for the AP exam. The literature is taught as a whole work, not in edited or summary form. High-quality literature sometimes includes themes and/or language some parents find objectionable.

This notice is intended to inform you that some of the books on the reading list for your child's class may have been challenged by one or more parents or community members in the past. As required in Board policy, when a book is challenged, a committee reviews the novel and makes a recommendation to the Board of Education. When looking at your child's reading list, any book with an asterisk, (*), by the title has been challenged, and the Board of Education has determined the book will remain on the reading list.

As a parent, you may review any book on the reading list to determine if you would like your child to read the assigned novel or request an alternate. You may request to see the books in the classroom or library by scheduling time with the teacher or librarian. You have the right to request that your child not be assigned to read a particular novel but instead read a comparable alternate book. Please see your child's teacher if you want further information or request an alternate.