



SUMMER READING HONORS **American Literature**

WELCOME To Honors American Literature

Below are three literary works for your summer reading assignment. Directions for your paper in response to these readings follows. **PLEASE print them out in color if possible.**

Do NOT wait until the last minute to write this.

- The Great Gatsby....**F. Scott Fitzgerald**
- The Catcher in the Rye....**J.D.Salinger**
- The Age of Miracles...**Karen Thompson Walker**

These three works capture dominant themes in American literature: a search for self and a search for home combined with major conflicts that entail combating antagonistic forces that derive from internal and external origins.

Two are based in New York City while another could be any town or city in America.

.....
The Catcher in the Rye : Since his debut in 1951 as “the catcher in the rye”, Holden Caulfield, the novel’s alienated, mourning and cynical protagonist, narrates a few days in his sixteen-year-old life, following his expulsion from prep school. Holden is furious with somewhat normal teenage anger; however, the loss of his younger brother, Allie, to leukemia, has emotionally paralyzed him. This novel, which has survived many rounds of being banned, remains as one of the most significant and popular books with American youth. In addition, films and other books have been inspired by Salinger’s novel, including the now popular *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. It is also a penetrating example of a very common theme: innocence to experience.

The Great Gatsby: This classic, set in the 1920s, explores the misconception that money can buy devotion, can guarantee eternal youth, can purchase an ideal. The “ideal” is found in Daisy Buchanan, a beautiful, selfish, rich Southern belle to whom Gatsby devotes his life. As narrated by Nick Caraway, Daisy’s cousin who is spending summer in New York City to work, the novel reveals Gatsby’s devotion is pure; however,



SUMMER READING HONORS **American Literature**

Gatsby is blind to Daisy's emptiness. He truly undergoes a religious quest but uses money to capture his "object" of devotion. This has become known as **non-material materialism**.

The Age of Miracles: Told from the point of view of the protagonist, Julia, who is on the verge of turning 12, this is another novel focused on the movement from innocence to experience. However, the framework is very different.

In this novel, the rotation of the Earth has begun to slow causing days and nights to grow longer and longer. All normal life has come to a halt. As days and nights become longer, people begin to grow sick and to act abnormally. Crops begin to fail, oceans rise, flooding homes; soon food and water are hoarded, just like when a major storm is coming. There is talk about the end of the world and even the possibility of moving to another planet. Julia is a quiet, observant girl with a major crush on a boy, Seth. As the '**the slowing**' begins, Julia says she remembers feeling, "not fear but a thrill"... "a sudden sparkle amid the ordinary, the shimmer of the unexpected thing." As the "**slowing**" continues, Julia realizes it is not temporary. Rather it is species-threatening as the changes to Earth's gravity make people sick. Soon the widespread use of sunlamps and artificial heating during the longer and colder nights will create energy shortages and periodic blackouts. While the drastic change to life on the outside narrates a large part of the novel, Julia's transition towards adulthood is as eventful as the earth's gravity shifting. "Light unhooked from *day*, darkness unchained from *night*" could also describe the turmoil occurring within Julia. (some wording taken from Kaukutani, *The New York Times Book Review*) The disruption of normal life depicted in this work will echo the disruption of normal life in March of 2020, when COVID first invaded our lives.



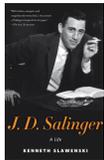
SUMMER READING HONORS *American Literature*

.....
Below are important details related to writing this paper. **READ THEM OVER VERY CAREFULLY** before you begin and use it as a checklist when you finish. I know there is much to go over, but it is all vital to helping you receive a strong grade on your first paper. For both parts, the biography and the prompt, you must provide some direct quotations from outside sources.

****Remember, even if the information/details you provide from a source are not directly quoted, they still must be cited or you are committing plagiarism.**

PART I BIOGRAPHY (20 pts)

Select **ONE** of the three authors.



Look for sophisticated information. Make it interesting. Connect it to the novel. Do not begin with: “_____ was born on “....

Do not give me the author’s resume (dates, who they married, etc. unless it connects to the novel). If you choose Fitzgerald then much of the history of his life did inspire his novel.

No use of author’s first **name alone** EVER**

Use of some primary sources and recent information (letters, interviews)

Use of **good sources**...shows effort and “digging/exploring”.

Not like a Wikipedia entry

Offers insight into the writer’s subject matter/connects to work analyzed

Most verbs in biography section will remain in PAST tense.

If choosing Fitzgerald or Salinger, **do not end with, “Though this author is dead, his works live on forever”**



SUMMER READING HONORS *American Literature*

Do NOT forget to vigorously provide in text citation. Any information other than birth and death MUST be cited in text and on works cited page.

3 paragraphs **REQUIRED** (no more and no less)
Each paragraph must be **at least** 8 sentences long.

PROMPTS: You **MUST** respond to prompt that is assigned to the letter of your **last name**.

A-M

PROMPT 1: Using **either** *The Age of Miracles* **OR** *The Catcher in the Rye*, examine how the protagonists are displaced by forces beyond their control.

**** Whichever novel you choose to write about, use one of the below as your FIRST SENTENCE, which is basically your thesis.**

In *The Age of Miracles*, the protagonist attempts to hold on to the present, pushing away the threat of the future.

OR

In *The Catcher in the Rye*, the protagonist remains affixed to the past, struggling to avoid moving forward into adulthood.



SUMMER READING HONORS *American Literature*

.....

N-Z

PROMPT 2: Selecting either *The Great Gatsby* or *The Catcher in the Rye*, discuss how each protagonist's conflict is amplified or enlarged by distinct settings

***USE the following AS FIRST SENTENCE FOR THIS PROMPT. Remember choose just one novel.**

- In *The Great Gatsby* the settings of the West and East Egg, the Valley of Ashes and Nick's Midwest all grow in symbolism.

OR

- In *The Catcher in the Rye*, Holden's conflicts are amplified through Pencey Prep, the National Museum of History, Central Park, and Phoebe's school.

.....

For everyone:

*****If you select **Catcher**, you MUST work from the fact that Holden's trauma is rooted in Allie's death.

*****If you select **Gatsby**, you MUST work from the premise that his love for Daisy is not normal and that Daisy is an empty vessel; thus,



SUMMER READING HONORS **American Literature**

he his devotion is directed at a nothingness he will not allow himself to accept

Your prompt response must be approximately 3-4 pages. There is no CONCLUSION required. 1.5 spacing 11 pt font

- **You must use direct quotations from the texts for all analysis.** If you are asserting, for example, that Holden is emotionally paralyzed, **SHOW** where this occurs in/throughout the text of the novel.
- **You must use some outside critical sources. Use Beaumont's database.**
- **Some and the Biography. For now, this is the sign in protocol: user: beaumont pass: bluestreak * You might need bluestreaks or remote when accessing from home. Some sites might need your school email address.**
- **Do not use Spark notes, e notes, LitChart, Cliff Notes, Schmoop, Biography.com Personal blogs or College**



SUMMER READING HONORS **American Literature**

student papers, Wikipedia, any encyclopedia, any Dictionary

.)
➤

DO NOT TELL THE PLOT OF ANY WORK

HOWEVER

You must provide context; you must write this as if I have not read the novels.

FOR EXAMPLE, “Holden finds support from his sister, **Phoebe. (Phoebe is the **context**).**

Only analyze the characters/novels. Do NOT relate to everyone in the world. For example, do not begin, “Everyone feels heartbroken when love is lost.”

In fact, do not use “Everyone” or “Every” at all. Avoid cliches and sweeping statements.

Do NOT USE THE READER. Avoid sweeping, over sentimental wording. Do not use any psychology books as resources. **Use literary critics.**



SUMMER READING HONORS **American Literature**



STYLE, CITATION AND ALL THAT AWFUL STUFF:

- ❖ Use in text citation () after quotations. Remember the period comes after the (). **These are grammatically referred to as in text or parenthetical citations.**
- ❖ Any quotation beyond 4 lines..must be separated. **Do Not** use quotation marks for these. **USE ONLY ONE SEPARATED QUOTATION** in your prompt response.
Long, separated quotations should always be kept to a minimum.
You are not required to use any long or separated quotations.
USE PRESENT TENSE for verbs. Holden FEELS lost..not FELT. *Biography will be in past tense. WHEN analyzing literature, the concept of the eternal present is enforced. This is why we use present tense in literary analysis.
- ❖ **Avoid the conditional tense (could, would)**



SUMMER READING HONORS **American Literature**

- ❖ Use context (who, what, when, where).
Use wording APPROPRIATE for a FORMAL paper. **NO CONTRACTIONS**
- ❖ Do not use 'that' when referring to people/characters. Use 'whom' or 'who'
- ❖ ***Italicize* titles of novels and magazines, newspapers. Essays, short stories, poems, any written piece that is short, requires quotation marks.**
- ❖ **No SLANG**
- ❖ **VARY SENTENCE STRUCTURE.** IF your sentences *begin the same or are filled with "ands"* **REVISE.**

USE STRONG AND SOPHISTICATED verbs. "IS" "DOES" "HAS" SHOULD remain very limited.

❖ **WORDS YOU CANNOT USE:**

- ❖ **When referring to people use who/whom NOT THAT**
- ❖ any word with **THING** in it
- ❖ you
- ❖ get, got, go .went
- ❖ mindset
- ❖ issue
- ❖ I think, I feel, to me
- ❖ any contractions
- ❖ the reader
- ❖ **Eliminate Have, Has or Had as Major Verbs**

OTHER:



SUMMER READING HONORS **American Literature**

- * Do not define any literary terms like symbolism, etc. I know what they mean.
- ❖ Works cited and in text citations must match; make sure spacing is correct on Works Cited page and that alphabetizing is accurate.
- ❖ **Do not forget to include the novel(s) you are analyzing.**

PARAGRAPHS , FONT AND SPACING:

No new points at the end of a paragraph

NO PARAGRAPH should be short. It means you have not developed.No Paragraph should be longer than $\frac{3}{4}$ of page

***The spacing and font requirements are tailored for me; they are not MLA standard.**

- ❖ **1.5 SPACES BETWEEN EVERY LINE..NO MORE/NO LESS**
- ❖ **11 pt font**
- ❖ **Use Times Roman or Calibri font style**
- ❖ **Look at online sources for current citation rules or any other usage questions. DO NOT GUESS. Purdue Writing Lab is a very good source.**

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html

- **Skip two spaces between each part of the response and provide the headings 'Biography' and 'Prompt'**



SUMMER READING HONORS *American Literature*

WHEN analyzing the novels, **you must include use of SYMBOLISM** (It is abundant in all works) Need at least one outside critical source..like Bloom, for example.

ORGANIZE logically; do not shift **focus** within a paragraph. **Do not repeat the same point over and over. Do not bring up a new point at the end of a paragraph or in the last paragraph.**

PROVIDE TRANSITIONS between paragraphs or whenever necessary for clarity. Look up lists of transitions. **Do not use the same one over and over.**

AGAIN:

With *Catcher*, **work from the premise that Allie's death activates Holden's trauma and journey.**

With *Gatsby*, do not depict Gatsby and Daisy's love as typical. Daisy is truly **a religion for Gatsby.** **Make sure to specifically address to what EXACTLY he is devoted; WHAT does green light symbolize?**



SUMMER READING HONORS **American Literature**

SCORING: Read carefully:

**Biography: 20 pts **cite frequently/ do not use Biography.com.
Do not begin _____ was born...Do not end with: 'will live on forever
through their works'**



SUMMER READING HONORS *American Literature*

Prompt: 65 pts (includes variety of SS,, strong verbs, overall sophistication, strong points with clear support and development, use of text and outside source support. Inclusion of symbolism, variety and overall sophistication.

Grammar/organization: 20 pts. make sure works cited and in text citations agree; careless errors, spacing, agreement, RO, FRG, titles of novels, magazines, newspapers in italics, correct punctuation, verb tense *do not forget to include the novels you are examining on works cited page .

Overall effort/following directions: 15pts

TOTAL POINTS= 120

Paper setup: Cover page with your name, date, block and Summer Reading Paper centered in the middle. There is no number assigned to this page.

+

For all other pages: First and last name and page number. Do not repeat headings which consume too much space. Page 1 should begin with your first body paragraph.

Turnitin and other information will be forthcoming.

- **Bring these books to class the second day of classes.**

GOOD LUCK. Do not wait until the last minute. This is worth 120 points. I look forward to meeting you and to discussing these remarkable novels.



SUMMER READING HONORS **American Literature**

****You will be given turnitin information once classes begin. Your paper will be due August 23 (B day). This means you will have one more weekend before it is to be turned in the following week. Submit to Google Classroom on a Google Doc. by 8:00 a.m., August 23. Again, must be a google doc. No pdf doc.**

Please come to see me if you have any questions or you can email me over the summer, but do not wait until the last minute.