

Summer Reading Assignment for Form VII English 2017

- Select one of the three Independent Reading Projects from the list below. Note that you are required to select two of the three listed works for any given project.
- Early in the first quarter there will be two evaluations of your summer reading.
Evaluation One: A short typed essay in response to the **essay prompt**.
Evaluation Two: An in-class written test over the **questions to consider**.

Independent Reading Project for English III: American Literature

Project One: GREAT AMERICAN NOVELLA (Choose two of the three novellas)

Ernest Hemingway *Old Man and the Sea*

John Steinbeck *Of Mice and Men*

Saul Bellow *Seize the Day*

Project Two: HARLEM RENAISSANCE (Choose two of the three works)

W.E.B. Dubois *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches*

Langston Hughes *Selected Poems (READ AT LEAST THREE POEMS FROM EACH SECTION)*

Zora Neale Hurston *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Project Three: AMERICAN DRAMA (Choose two of the three plays)

Tennessee Williams *The Glass Menagerie*

Arthur Miller *The Crucible*

August Wilson *Fences*

Independent Reading Project for English III—American Literature

Essay

The **essay prompt** will serve as the basis for a typed essay to be written at the beginning of the first quarter over two of the three works listed under the project heading. Essay instructions will be given upon your return to school.

Test

As you read you should take notes in response to the “Questions to Consider.” These questions will serve as the basis for a test to be given early in the first quarter over two of the three works.

I. Great American Novella

Essay Prompt: In what respect might these works be regarded as tragedies?

Questions to Consider. Take notes on the following:

What power or social status does the protagonist possess?

What role do authority figures play and to what extent are they responsible for the protagonist's downfall?

What step is taken by the protagonist that sets the course for catastrophe?

In what respect does the nobility or dignity of the protagonist emerge by way of their response to tragic circumstances?

How does the style of narration influence the reader's response to the characters and their actions?

II. Harlem Renaissance

Essay Prompt: What aspects of black culture are celebrated in these works? According to these works, what is needed for black Americans to improve their status, freedom, and opportunity in America?

Questions to Consider. Take notes on the following:

How do these authors characterize the experience of black people in America since the end of the Civil War?

What are their hopes and dreams?

What difficulties do they face?

How are black individuals characterized?

Are they described as belonging to types?

Are there villains and heroes?

What is the particular genius of those described?

What is the relationship between men and women like?

What role does will, knowledge, and imagination play in changing the fortunes of black characters in the works?

What is the response of the authors or characters to the ancestral past? What is the response to the more recent past of slavery? How do they respond to the idea of being an American?

III. American Drama

Essay Prompt: How do these dramas explore the limited perspective people have of others? Which limits can be overcome and which cannot?

Questions to Consider. Take notes on the following:

What kind of play are you reading? Is it a satire? An allegory? A work of social realism?

How do characters understand each other? What are their prejudices? How do they gain insight into one another's character?

What societal conditions or cultural conventions affect characters' ability to understand one another and see each other in a true light?