

ACA Summer Reading Initiative - 2026

· High School, Grades 9-12 ·

Rationale:

Summer reading provides all students the opportunity to enjoy books in a relaxed and leisurely setting while developing a lifelong love of reading. At American Christian Academy, we encourage all students and their families to engage in reading together this summer by exploring books of all kinds for both information and enjoyment.

Research has shown that students who read during the summer months retain more learning and move into the new school year more prepared than those students who do not engage in reading. In fact, numerous studies have shown that reading over the summer prevents “summer reading loss,” which can be a cumulative loss affecting a student's reading comprehension throughout their academic career. This is due in part to the fact that children do not easily “catch up” on their lost reading skills in the fall, especially when classes begin with an assumption of appropriate, grade-level reading skills. By the end of 6th grade, children who lose reading skills over the summer are potentially two years behind their classmates! For this reason, it is important that all students continue to pursue this essential academic skill.

Who Participates in Summer Reading?

- **Currently Enrolled Students** – All currently enrolled ACA students are required to participate in the Summer Reading Initiative.
 - **AP Students** – Juniors enrolled in AP Language or seniors enrolled in AP Literature also have a summer reading assignment. This assignment differs from the one outlined below and CAN BE FOUND ON THE ACA WEBSITE. If you have any questions about the AP English summer reading assignments, please contact Mrs. Tucker (stephanie.tucker@acacademy.com) for further AP Language information or Mrs. Buckner (stefanie.buckner@acacademy.com) for AP Literature information.
 - **Dual Enrollment / Online English Students** – It is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED that dual credit and online students participate in the same summer reading assignments as their peers. While students who remain in dual credit/online English classes will not be assessed, students who transfer from dual credit/online English classes to a regular English classroom will be held to the same summer reading expectations and due dates as their peers. Reading along with your peers will ensure that you are prepared in the event of a needed classroom change.
- **New Students** – New students are also required to participate in the ACA Summer Reading Initiative, though the assignment may be modified depending on the date of enrollment at ACA. Once you have registered, please reach out immediately to your English teacher to determine the scope of your summer reading assignment.

Summer Assignment Overview:

1. Students entering grades 9-12 are required to **READ** one assigned novel, which differs based on the grade a student will be entering in the upcoming school year. The list of grade-level assignments can be found below.
2. While reading their assigned novel, students must also **ANNOTATE**. An annotation guide is provided at the end of this document. Please read and follow the guidelines CAREFULLY, as students WILL be graded based on their adherence to the instructions!
3. In addition to annotations, students are required to **COMPLETE** the Summer Reading Study Guide. This will be submitted on the first day of school. The study guide is provided at the end of this document.

Summer Reading Assessments:

At the start of the upcoming school year, students will be assessed in their English classes on the summer reading assignments. They will receive the following grades:

1. Annotation of required novel, graded and entered as a quiz grade.
 - Students are required to annotate a novel that **has no previous annotations in it**. It is **highly recommended** that students purchase a new copy of their assigned book.
 - **Students must provide at least one meaningful annotation for each page of the book.**
2. Completed Summer Reading Study Guide, graded and entered as a quiz grade.
3. Multiple-Choice Test on required summer reading, entered as a 100-point test grade.
4. In-Class Essay on the required summer reading, entered as a 100-point test grade.

Assigned Novels:

Required novels differ based on grade level. Students should identify their required novel in the chart below based on the grade level they will be ENTERING in the upcoming school year.

If you are ENTERING...	...your REQUIRED summer novel is:
9 th Grade – Regular & Honors	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> by Lorraine Hansberry
10 th Grade – Regular & Honors	<i>Lord of the Flies</i> by William Golding
11 th Grade	<i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> by Mark Twain
12 th Grade	<i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i> by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
11 th /12 th Grade AP English	Your assignment can be found on the ACA website.

Please review the above information with your student and encourage him or her to begin reading early in the summer. Procrastination can often be the biggest challenge of a summer reading assignment, leading to unnecessary stress on students and parents alike! However, as there will be multiple test grades based on the required summer novel, we also encourage students to review their novels for a few days before the start of the new school year. This way, the information and ideas are fresh in mind.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Tucker (stephanie.tucker@acacademy.com), as clarifying questions now will prevent any issues in the fall. We hope that you and your child enjoy this opportunity to explore new authors and titles, and that through this, students and parents alike develop a greater love for literature.

Happy reading!

- ACA English Department

Summer Assignment: Active Reading and Annotating

What is Active Reading?

Active reading is a style of reading that requires students to be more engaged with the material at hand. By participating in deeper engagement, students are able to pull more from a text and create deeper connections to it.

What Does Active Reading Look Like?

For this assignment, active reading means ANNOTATING, or interacting with a text through margin notes. Think of these margin notes as having a “conversation” with the text. You can deliberately engage the author by asking questions, stopping to argue, offering a compliment, or seeking to clarify an important issue. This helps a reader engage in a deeper reading, which also develops a lasting understanding of the text.

Annotation Procedures:

1. **Your book MAY NOT have previous annotations already written in it.**
2. You **MUST** annotate in pen, and it **MUST** be legible!
3. As you read, interact with the text. Underline important information and quotes that stand out to you, **and then add written comments explaining WHY those passages struck you as important.**
 - a. Ask questions – make predictions – write reactions – have a conversation with the book.
 - b. **BE WARNED! Highlighting, underlining, or circling BY ITSELF is NOT enough! You must add quality commentary for an annotation to earn credit!**

Ways to Annotate:

- Discuss what you think is significant about the book title or chapter titles.
- Define unfamiliar words or slang.
- Re-write, paraphrase, or summarize a particularly difficult passage or moment.
- Make connections to other parts of the book: predict outcomes, suggest endings, etc.
- Ask questions directly to the author or characters. Identify answers if they occur on later pages!
- Make connections to other texts you have read or seen. This could be movies, comic books/graphic novels, news events, other books, stories, plays, songs, poems, etc.
- Draw a picture when a visual connection is appropriate.
- Make meaningful connections to your own life experiences.
- Identify the author's perspective on a subject; discuss YOUR perspective on it, as well!
- Explain the historical context or traditions/social customs that are used in the passage.
- Offer an analysis or interpretation of what is happening in the text.
- Point out and discuss literary techniques that the author is using, like symbols, metaphors, etc.
- Identify important conflicts, and note how they shape the story.
- Identify themes, or discuss the way a specific scene affects the theme.

Name: _____

Summer Reading Study Guide

***You must complete a study guide for your summer reading novel. The study guide must be completed by the first day of school and brought with you to your English class. All study guide responses should be completed on this handout.**

1. Title and Author of Novel:
2. Setting (place and time):
3. Provide a characterization of the protagonist in at least four complete sentences:
4. Write three quotes from the novel that characterize the protagonist (include the page numbers):
5. Provide a characterization of the antagonist in at least four complete sentences:
6. Write three quotes from the novel that characterize the antagonist (include the page numbers):

