

9/10 Honors English Summer 2025 Assignment

To prepare for your 2025-2026 9/10 Honors English course, you will read two texts this summer. You are not required to purchase the books, though you may find it easier to make notes in your own copy.

- *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck (ISBN 978-0-14-017737-4)
- *All the Pretty Horses* by Cormac McCarthy (ISBN 978-0-679-74439-9)

Either in your copy or on paper listing the page number next to each comment/observation, annotate your text (see below for more information on annotating). You should not consult any outside sources (including online summaries, LitCharts, etc.); the skills you are practicing depend on developing your own understanding from the text itself.

*As you read each text, consider what motivates the main characters and how they change over the course of the works. How do their experiences represent universal truths (messages that apply to many people)?

On the first day of classes, August 7, you will be expected to have your copy of both texts either annotated or accompanied by your notes. As you read, you should also be compiling a list of important quotations from each work; simply write the phrase/sentence in quotation marks and follow it with the in-text citation, like this one for a quotation from page 72 of the text (72). (Check out the Purdue Online Writing Lab or OWL for more information on MLA style.) Make a separate list for each text, and bring these on the first day of school as well.

During the first three weeks of school, you will have two essay tests over these texts; more information will be provided when school begins. You will be able to have a list of handwritten quotations from each work to use when writing these essays, so begin working on them as you read to save yourself time in August.

Annotation Suggestions from the HIES Upper School English Department

Annotation is the process of adding notes, comments, or highlights directly to a text as you read. It helps readers interact with the material by identifying important ideas, asking questions, and making connections. Annotation is important because it deepens understanding, supports memory, and prepares students for thoughtful discussions and analysis. This annotation guide is designed to help students actively engage with their summer reading texts, whether fiction or nonfiction. By using the strategies outlined here, such as marking important ideas, asking questions, making connections, and tracking key points, students will better understand and remember what they read. Thoughtful annotation supports deeper comprehension, critical thinking, and meaningful classroom discussions when school resumes.

1. Mark Important Ideas

- Highlight or underline key points, main arguments, or important events.
- In fiction, focus on plot twists, themes, or character development.

2. Ask Questions

- Write questions in the margins about things you don't understand or are curious about.
 - Example: "Why did the character react this way?" or "What evidence supports this claim?"

3. Make Connections

- Connect the text to your own life, other texts, or current events.
 - Example: "This reminds me of ____ because ____."

4. Note Author's Craft

- In fiction: Note figurative language, imagery, symbolism, or tone.

5. Summarize Key Points

- Briefly summarize sections or chapters in the margins.
- This helps you track the main ideas as you read.

6. Identify Vocabulary

- Circle or highlight unfamiliar words.
- Write definitions or synonyms in the margins after looking them up.

7. React and Reflect

- Record your thoughts, feelings, or opinions.
 - Example: "I agree with this," or "This surprised me because..."

8. Track Characters or Arguments

- In fiction: Jot down character traits or relationships.