

## English 11 Honors Summer Project 2015

Dear Student,

Welcome to the English 11 Honors course! At Nazareth Area High School, the honors program focuses on analysis of literature, critical thinking skills, and a sophisticated level of writing. Students analyze literature on a higher level, compose various written selections, and produce skill-based projects. The English 11 Honors course utilizes the *Springboard Grade 11* workbook in conjunction with several supplemental novels. Throughout the course, students explore the American Dream through both past and present fiction and nonfiction texts.

To prepare for the course, you will complete two projects. The first will function as an introduction to our first unit which focuses on newspaper editorials and satire. The second will provide an opportunity for independent reading and sharing your reading with your classmates.

The written portions of the summer assignment are **due on the first full school day**, whether you are in the fall or spring class. First semester students may turn in their projects during the first class meeting; second semester students should drop off their projects to Mr. Sterner in room 353 or Mrs. Jameson in room 349. The assignments will count as the first major grade of the semester, and it will count for approximately 10% of your first quarter grade.

The English department has students submit all major writing assignments, including summer work, to Turnitin.com. Please save your written assignments electronically (consider using the computer hard drive and a flash drive). If you don't have an electronic copy saved someplace safe, you will have to re-type your essay! Instructions on uploading the assignment will be provided once school starts.

We have created a Schoology group for the summer work. You can join this group by using the access code 2S3TX-GS6JN. This group will have all summer work documents in the resources folder, and you can post any questions you have as a group update. We will be able to see any questions that have been asked, and we can respond to them publicly so everyone in the class can see the answers we have given. We will also try to check our e-mail each week and respond as quickly as we are able. Don't hesitate to ask for help early in the summer! If you wait until just prior to the school year, we may miss your e-mail because we will be preparing for our courses. Although it will be hard to take a break from your exciting summer, try to be disciplined and avoid procrastination. Good luck!

See you in the fall,

Mr. Sterner and Mrs. Jameson

**Summer Assignment**  
**Part One: Independent Novel - Read & Book Talk**

**Assignment**

Over the summer, **acquire, read, and enjoy one book of your choice.** It can be fiction or nonfiction, from any time period or genre, but it should be a single full-length prose selection, not a collection of stories or poems.

There are two restrictions on your choice: 1) It must be high-school or adult reading level, 2) It must not be a book that you have read in the past (for a class or otherwise) or one that you are reading for any other class for summer work. Ask your family, friends, teachers, or librarians for recommendations, or see the attached list for suggestions. Before committing to a book, make sure its content is such that your parents are comfortable with.

When you decide on a book to read, submit the title as a group update on the Schoology group page. Each book can only be used once, so it's your responsibility to check the list to make sure your book hasn't already been claimed by someone else; you may have to scroll down a bit to see all the posts. Requests are first-come, first-served so the earlier you make your decision, the better chance you have of being able to use that one. **Post your book choice to Schoology by July 1<sup>st</sup>.** One of us will confirm that your book is an acceptable choice, or contact you about changes if necessary.

As you read, you will want to take brief notes (about one page) on the plot, characters, themes, symbols, and personal reactions to the book. These notes should be **neatly handwritten and bullet-pointed**, not a print out from Sparknotes. See attached sample. These notes will be turned in on the first day of school in August.

When you begin English class, each student will present a **5 minute Book Talk** to the class on an assigned date during the first marking period of the course. A Book Talk is like a semi-formal promotional "trailer" for the book to share it with your classmates. It should include the title and author, why you picked this book, a brief description of major characters & setting, a plot summary that includes significant details but does not give away the ending, consideration of theme, your reaction to the book, and a recommendation of who might enjoy this book. You must also have a hard copy of the book with you on the day you give the book talk (if you read it on an electronic device, you can bring that device to show the class the book cover on it). Your teacher will demonstrate a book talk at the beginning of class.

**Grading**

Part One will be graded out of 20 points. Please see the attached rubric for more specifics on grading.

**Due Date**

Students must hand in the notes on the first day of school in August. You must bring your paper to Mr. Sterner in room 353 or Mrs. Jameson in room 349. The Book Talk presentation date will be assigned when your English class starts.

**Summer Assignment**  
**Part Two: Editorial Reading and Response**

**Assignment**

An editorial is an opinion-piece from a newspaper or magazine (either on the publication's website or its print version). Editorials are usually about current events, but they do more than just report the news; instead they offer an opinion about a relevant news-item, and are usually persuasive in nature. Editorials can usually be found grouped together in a paper or website, usually under the heading "Editorial," "Opinion," or "Op-Ed." These sections also sometimes contain "Letters to the Editor" which are shorter than Editorial articles; you should *not* choose a Letter to the Editor for this project.

Over the summer, you will **find 4 editorials on 4 different topics of your choosing from major news organizations**. If you have any doubts about whether or not something is an editorial, you can post the question to the Schoology group and one of us will respond as soon as we can. See the list below for good places to find editorials.

We have provided you with a list of publications that regularly publish editorial articles to help you locate them. All editorials will be dated, and the four editorials you find should be **ones that were published during 4 different weeks of this summer**. You should find these as the summer progresses, not wait until the last week of August. You should also choose your own unique editorials that are of interest to you, rather than default to the same editorials as your friends. **Please print/cut out a copy of each Editorial you find.**

For each of the four editorials you find, you must **fill out the attached note-taker**. See attached sample. These must be typed and submitted to turnitin.com; an electronic copy of this form is on Schoology for your convenience.

**Grading**

For part two, each note-taker graded out of 20 points. Please see the attached rubric for more specifics on grading.

**Due Date**

Students must hand in copies of the four editorials and note-takers on the first day of school in August. You must bring your paper to Mr. Sterner in room 353 or Mrs. Jameson in room 349. The note-takers must also be submitted to turnitin.com.

\* You can find Editorials in these and other publications, either online or in print. Some may require a subscription to read articles. If that's the case, choose a different site; you don't need to pay for editorials, as there are plenty to go around! *The Express Times, The Morning Call, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Chicago Tribune, The Miami Herald, The Los Angeles Times, The Guardian, Time, Newsweek, The New Republic, National Review, The Economist, The New Yorker, Atlantic Monthly, Harper's, Vanity Fair, Salon.com, Slate.com*

**Summer Assignment  
Rubrics**

**Part 1: Independent Novel Read & Book Talk (20 points)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Book choice is appropriate and student submitted choice for approval by July 1<sup>st</sup> (2 pts.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Notes turned in on time, thorough, and appropriate (4 pts.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Content of Book Talk is thorough and matches the guidelines on the assignment page (10 pts.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Presentation of Book Talk (4 pts.)
  - Has the book with them on presentation day
  - Ready to present on assigned day
  - Speaks fluently and clearly without reading from notes
  - Can answer any questions that a classmate or teacher has about the book.

\_\_\_\_\_ / 20

**Part 2: Editorial Reading and Response (80 points)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Following instructions: 4 Editorials on 4 different topics, from 4 different weeks this summer, with print-outs of editorials included with note-takers (20 pts.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Content of note-takers accurate and thoroughly developed (60 pts. total)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Editorial Note-Taker #1 (15 pts.)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Editorial Note-Taker #2 (15 pts.)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Editorial Note-Taker #3 (15 pts.)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Editorial Note-Taker #4 (15 pts.)

\_\_\_\_\_ / 80

**Summer Assignment Total: \_\_\_\_\_ / 100**

# \*\* Novel Notes Sheet Sample \*\*

Mrs.  
Jameson

Beloved by Toni Morrison

Characters:

Setting: Cincinnati  
approx. 1865

Sethe - runaway slave

Paul D - runaway slave, from Sethe's past

Baby Suggs - Sethe's mother in law

Denver - Sethe's teenage daughter

Beloved - Sethe's dead daughter, now mysteriously an adult

Plot: told using flashback, non-linear

- Present day, house has a ghost

- Paul D shows up; soon after, Beloved shows up

- Beloved was name of Sethe's daughter who died as a baby

- Sethe begins to confront old memories

- Beloved begins to take control of Sethe's life

- Through flashback, we find out what happened to Beloved as a baby, which is the whole point of the novel

- Denver must save her mother from what is "haunting" her

Theme: Slavery & its physical & mental scars after freedom

: Family / community are important resources for coping w/ traumatic memories

: Memory is important tool for dealing with history

Recommend: for mature readers, able to deal w/ unsettling details of slavery, as well as abstract nature of unrealistic plot elements / flashback

<p><b>Editorial Title:</b></p>	<p><b>Editorial Author:</b></p>
<p><b>Topic:</b></p>	<p><b>Publication Source &amp; Date:</b></p>
<p><b>What is the author’s stance on the topic? What is he/she trying to persuade the reader to believe or do? Be specific and detailed; usually editorials have a viewpoint that is explicitly stated somewhere, but also has nuance that the reader must infer.</b></p> <p>Directions and clarification are highlighted in the electronic document; delete this info when you fill in your response!</p>	<p><b>What reasons and evidence does the author give to back up his/her viewpoint? Be specific and detailed.</b></p>
<p><b>Critically evaluate the author’s argument. Is he/she being fair by conceding and refuting the opposing viewpoint? Is he/she using blatantly biased language? What are some flaws in his/her reasoning, or particularly powerful points?</b></p>	<p><b>What is your personal viewpoint on the issue and/or the author’s stance? Be specific and detailed. You can agree with a premise but question the reasoning. You can also agree and disagree at the same time with specific explanations of why.</b></p>

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## Sample Editorial

### **In Colorado, empty gun dorm ends a message** by Leonard Pitts Jr. December 07, 2012

Young people are not exactly renowned for their judgment.

We are, after all, talking about an age group that has to be told it is a bad idea to text while doing 70. Or drink alcohol till it spews from your nostrils. Or wear a T-shirt and flip-flops to interview for the office job.

So no, judgment is not their forte. Yet even they have enough sense to steer clear of the gun dorm.

You haven't heard about the gun dorm? Well, back in August, the University of Colorado announced it was segregating students with valid concealed-carry permits in dorms of their own on its campuses in Boulder and Colorado Springs. This, after the state Supreme Court upheld a lower court ruling that struck down the school's ban on people bringing guns on campus. So now, a student 21 years or older who has a permit may be armed in the dorm or even in class, though not, for some reason, at a school event requiring a ticket.

Recently, the Denver Post decided to count the number of young gunslingers who wanted to live among their own. How many kids had rushed to take advantage of this opportunity?

Let's just say there is not a waiting list. The Post reports the number of kids who opted for the gun dorm is zero. A big, fat goose egg.

The paper speculated on a few reasons for this: maybe there are not enough students with carry permits who live on campus; maybe students with such permits find it more convenient just to sneak their guns into the old dorm.

OK. But isn't it also possible at least some of this preference for unleaded dorms reflects a happy outbreak of simple sanity? Is it too much to hope at least some students recognize -- as the court did not -- that an environment full of immature judgment, poor impulse control, overactive hormones, sexual rivalries, drug use and binge drinking is perhaps, not the best place to introduce weapons of mass destruction?

One keeps thinking that surely there has to be some middle ground that balances the rights of responsible adults to own firearms, with the need of a society to ensure that people who ought not have access to them are denied. But we will never get there so long as the debate is dominated by the sort of extremism Colorado exemplifies.

As has happened with conservatism generally, the gun rights movement has lurched hard to the right in recent years, has alienated reason, ostracized compromise and fetishized guns and gun ownership to a point that seems psychologically unhealthy.

What was once a campaign to ensure the right of people to bear arms has mutated into a campaign to ensure guns at all times for everybody everywhere and to smack down those who would seek to ban them, even from places where banning them makes obvious sense.

In Georgia, for instance, they've been arguing over whether or not to allow guns in churches.

In Arizona, Georgia, Tennessee and Virginia, you can bring a gun into a bar.

And now, in Colorado, where a deranged man shot up a movie theater in July, and two disaffected teenagers broke the nation's heart with a 1999 massacre at their high school, they say it's OK to bring guns into the dorm.

An armed citizenry will help deter crime, goes the "thinking." As if we were all living on the set of some old TV western.

But this is not "Bonanza." This is a nation where shell casings crunch underfoot, children and the mentally ill have guns, and there have been, according to the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, 60 mass shootings just since the attack on Gabrielle Giffords in 2011. You do not solve a problem of too many guns in the wrong hands with a policy of guns at all times for everybody, everywhere.

Maybe that's the message of the empty gun dorm. And that suggests pretty good judgment after all.

<p><b>Editorial Title:</b> “Empty Colorado ‘Gun Dorms’ a Symbol of Sanity”</p>	<p><b>Editorial Author:</b> Leonard Pitts</p>
<p><b>Topic:</b> Reaction to Colorado University’s offer of dorms specifically for firearms enthusiasts.</p>	<p><b>Publication Source &amp; Date:</b> The Express-Times, 12/7/12</p>
<p><b>What is the author’s stance on the topic? What is he/she trying to persuade the audience to believe or do?</b></p> <p>Pitts is recounting how Colorado University has recently offered a dorm-living situation specifically for students who wish to live in the same building as other firearms enthusiasts. In this instance, no one signed up for the dorm, and Pitts is acknowledging what he believes is the “good judgment” shown by students who chose not to live there. Pitts is criticizing states like Colorado that he believes take gun freedoms to the extreme. He wants the audience to believe that extremely loose gun laws are a bad idea, and to show that many people seem to agree with him, as evidenced by these students’ desire to not live in the “gun dorms.” Ultimately, Pitts believes that there should be a balance between freedom and rights of responsible citizens and keeping weapons away from criminals; however, he insists that we will never find such balance “so long as the debate is dominated by the sort of extremism Colorado exemplifies.”</p>	<p><b>What reasons and evidence does the author give to back up his/her viewpoint?</b> Be specific and detailed.</p> <p>Pitts begins by addressing the stereotypical bad-judgment of young people, but quickly acknowledges their “good judgment” in choosing not to live in the proposed dorm. He explains that no one wanted to live there and believes that this is evidence of a “happy outbreak of simple sanity.” He reasons that most people recognize that a building filled with “poor impulse control, overactive hormones, sexual rivalries, drug use, and binge drinking” is not a good environment to bring firearms. He proceeds to explain his belief that the gun-rights movement has become more extreme in recent years, providing examples of places where firearms are allowed in churches and bars, while contrasting references to the Columbine and movie theatre mass shootings in Colorado. He concludes that “You do not solve a problem of too many guns in the wrong hands with a policy of guns at all times for everyone everywhere.”</p>
<p><b>Critically evaluate the author’s argument. Is he/she being fair by conceding and refuting the opposing viewpoint? Is he/she using blatantly biased language? What are some flaws in his/her reasoning, or particularly powerful points?</b></p> <p>I believe Pitts is being very biased in both tone and evidence. His tone is demeaning people of the opposing viewpoint; for example, when he says, “Let’s just say there is not a waiting list,” he is sarcastically implying that this should have been an obvious outcome. Additionally, the use of the movie theatre and Columbine examples are manipulative in the way they’re juxtaposed with other states’ laws; they are meant to tug on the reader’s heartstrings in a place where logic is scarce, since those shootings have nothing to do with the issue at hand. He also brings up the television Western <i>Bonanza</i> in an attempt to paint the U.S. as a place where lawless shootouts in the streets would be the result of greater gun freedoms. These language choices show his bias, which makes him seem like a less reasonable and thoughtful person; someone with the opposing viewpoint feels alienated and automatically inclined to disagree with him.</p>	<p><b>What is your personal viewpoint on the issue and/or the author’s stance?</b></p> <p>I agree with Pitts’ ultimate assertion that there needs to be a balance between freedom and safety. I also agree that he makes valid points about “gun dorms” being a bad idea that many recognize; the evidence about why firearms would be a bad idea in the chaotic and hormonal environment of a dorm is perfectly logical to me.</p> <p>However, I disagree with the way he’s presenting his argument and the way he presents his opposition as extremists, without giving considerable thought to valid points and reasoning they may have. He also does not provide any alternatives on what that supposed “balance” could look like, which would make his argument more persuasive. His harsh tone makes for attention-grabbing rhetoric, but ultimately I’m unconvinced due to his lack of actual evidence or solution to the problem.</p>

