

Honors English III
American Literature and Composition
Mrs. Powell
Summer Reading Assignment
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Hello and welcome to Honors English III. I hope this year went well and that you recover quickly. You are about to embark on a literary journey that will not only help you explore the diversity and tradition of American writing, but will also help you hone your analytical skills. As part of this course, you must complete this summer reading assignment which will be due on the first day of school. We will use this assignment as the foundation for a project and for an essay we will work on in the opening weeks of school. If you have any questions about the memoirs or about the assignment, please email me. Please do not read a memoir you have already read as you will want to cover as much ground as possible. One other note- please do not wait until the last minute to do this assignment as procrastinating may ruin the book for you, and you may end up approaching the year with resentment. Savor. Have an amazing summer and see you in August. bp

I] The following nonfiction books are contemporary American memoirs. Please read at least one (1) from the selection below. Some of the memoirs contain course language and sensitive subject matter. If you or your parents deem any book from the list objectionable, please select a different book.

- *A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail*- Bill Bryson
- *On Writing*- Stephen King
- *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*- Maya Angelou
- *Growing Up*- Russell Baker
- *A Hole in My Life* – Jack Gantos
- *Three Cups of Tea*- Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin
- *The Glass Castle: A Memoir*- Jeanette Walls
- *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*- Malcolm X and Alex Haley
- *Into Thin Air*- Jon Krakauer
- *An American Childhood*- Dillard

Assignments are on the back.

II] Take frequent and copious marginal notes on all of the following, A through E. (If you do not buy your book, or if you think this method is too messy, please use sticky notes or keep a reading log noting specific page numbers). Please have all of these notes with you when you walk into class that first day. They will be important for our discussions, your project, and for the in-class essay you will be writing.

- A.) What is especially “American” about the characters, or setting, conflicts, themes...Use this site cc.yosu.edu/~satingle/dominant_american_values.htm to generate some ideas, but by all means, come up with your own ideas of “American” characteristics...
- B.) Examples of the social/moral issues, cultural values, and historical context. How they are similar and different from your own. Please look further into aspects of the society, culture, and history which particularly interest you.
- C.) What events moved you? Angered you? Intrigued you? I want you to note how you are personally affected by the people and the events in the book. Can you relate to any of the characters or the events? How and why?
- D.) Take a good look at the writing itself. This is something we will be doing a great deal of next year. Just take note of what you notice about the writing. Don't worry about what to call it- Just look at devices such as sentence structure, word choice, images...We will make sense of it all later.
- E.) Take note of at least ten significant quotes and explain their significance to you and to the themes.