

West Monroe High School  
Gifted/Pre-AP English II (10<sup>th</sup> grade)  
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English II Honors (10th)  
(Honors teacher TBD)

### **Summer Reading 2020-21**

Welcome to 10<sup>th</sup> grade Gifted/Pre-AP English. I am looking forward to an awesome year of learning together! Please read this summer reading packet immediately. You may email me if you have any questions about summer reading not covered in this packet. (English II Honors students will also complete this summer reading assignment and may email me with any questions regarding it. Your English II Honors teacher will determine how this book is incorporated into your first 9 weeks studies and inform you this fall.)

You have elected to take gifted or Pre-AP English II. This class is designed to give you a strong foundation, not only for Advanced Placement English, but also for college, the ACT, and the SAT. The curriculum for this class includes weekly vocabulary, rigorous reading, analytical writing, class discussions, and yes, homework. You are expected to complete all assignments and to come to class prepared to participate. With this preparation comes summer reading. If you are dismayed by any of this, please remember that this level of English II is optional.

You are to choose 1 of the following two books *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover or *Outliers: The Story of Success* by Malcolm Gladwell. You only have to read one of them, but you must read it closely and perhaps even reread it. I advise you to read (or reread) the book in late July or early August so that it will be fresh on your mind when school begins, but do not wait until the last minute!

#### **About *Educated*:**

Tara Westover is an American author living in the UK. Born in Idaho to a father opposed to public education, she never attended school. She spent her days working in her father's junkyard or stewing herbs for her mother, a self-taught herbalist and midwife. She was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom, and after that first taste, she pursued learning for a decade. She graduated magna cum laude from Brigham Young University in 2008 and was subsequently awarded a Gates Cambridge Scholarship. She earned an MPhil from Trinity College, Cambridge in 2009, and in 2010 was a visiting fellow at Harvard University. She returned to Cambridge, where she was awarded a PhD in history in 2014.

As of May 2020, *Educated* has spent 114 weeks on *The New York Times* Non-Fiction Best Seller list. It won a 2019 Alex Award and was shortlisted for the 2019 PEN/Jean Stein Book Award.

A **memoir** is a true account about a subject of which the author has intimate or personal knowledge. You can think of it as a kind of biography/autobiography, but it is usually more narrow in focus. Rather than recounting an entire life story, a memoir might be shaping a theme or focusing on one aspect of the author's life or one feature of a historical event.

About ***Outliers***:

In this stunning new book, Malcolm Gladwell takes us on an intellectual journey through the world of "outliers"--the best and the brightest, the most famous and the most successful. He asks the question: what makes high-achievers different?

His answer is that we pay too much attention to what successful people are like, and too little attention to where they are from: that is, their culture, their family, their generation, and the idiosyncratic experiences of their upbringing. Along the way he explains the secrets of software billionaires, what it takes to be a great soccer player, why Asians are good at math, and what made the Beatles the greatest rock band.

Brilliant and entertaining, *Outliers* is a landmark work that will simultaneously delight and illuminate.

Note: You might want to do a little of your own research on the books to inform your decision. You may email me if you need help deciding.

**Why read the actual book when you could read an online summary of it or watch the movie?**

- Reading books of literary merit provides many benefits including expanding vocabulary; broadening knowledge of history, culture, geography; improving critical/analytical thinking skills - all thereby making you a better reader and writer.
- Reading someone else's summary of *Educated* or *Outliers* robs you of all of those benefits. You miss out on the author's language, the vicarious experience, specific details, and the effects that literary moves, such as creating surprise, have on you as a reader.
- You need practice reading the kind of language these authors use, and you need to experience the events of the book firsthand. We will analyze the rhetorical choices of the author, and you will be unprepared if you haven't read the book.
- Be warned. I feel so strongly about this that I designed your reading check quiz to test you on details only in the book and not included in online synopses. Do not expect to pass this 100 point test if you do not read the actual book.

**Your Assignment** (This is my first impression of you as a student. Impress me!)

1. Read the actual book. Have a positive attitude! Try to appreciate the story and the language. (You may want to annotate as you read so your first impressions are fresh. Or you may want to read once to enjoy the story, and then go back through it to annotate. I tend to do a combination of the two. ☺)
2. I recommend that you annotate your book. As you read, underline or highlight important words or passages, and make notes about them in the margin.
3. Keep a response journal. As you read, select the five quotes to which you really had an emotional response, and record them in a response journal. See the attached response journal instructions and example. **Response journal – 50 point grade.**
4. You will have a reading check test the first week of school. This is to hold you accountable for reading the actual book. This will not test you on deeper meanings such as symbolism, but this WILL test that you read the actual book by testing you on details NOT included in online summaries, and this will test that you have a surface level comprehension of the events of the story. If you closely read the actual book, you will be fine. **Reading Check Quiz – 100 point grade.**
5. The several weeks of school will include our study of your book. We will deeply analyze it. We will compare and contrast it to other texts. Then we will transfer the skills we developed through this study to new texts, and we will build upon these skills. If you do not read the actual book before the first week of school, you will be lost, your first 9 weeks grade will be severely, negatively affected, and the references we make for the rest of the year will be lost on you. On the flip side, if you complete your assignment, you do your future self a huge favor! Your first 9 weeks grade will be positively affected, and you will have a strong foundation on which to build knowledge the rest of the year.

**Response Journal (50 points)**

Keep a journal of FIVE meaningful quotes to which you will respond. The responses must be deep and specific, not vague or general. Please write at least 3-5 sentences for each response. Write “Quote” on the left side and “Response” on the other. Write the entire quotation; do NOT use ellipses. Provide page numbers for each entry. Your response to the text can be to pose a question about it, analyze it, connect it to yourself, interpret it, react emotionally to it, agree/disagree with it or a combination of these. Explain/elaborate on your response. Please make sure your work is your own. There is no reason two students should have all the same quotes and certainly not the same responses. You may type in Times New Roman 12 point font or write by hand neatly in black ink.

The following is an example of a response journal entry for *To Kill a Mockingbird*. You will follow this format for *Educated* or *Outliers*.

Response Journal by: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book: *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

Quote	Response
<p>“When enough years had gone by to enable us to look back on them, we sometimes discussed the events leading to his accident. I maintain that the Ewells started it all, but Jem, who was four years my senior, said it started long before that. He said it began the summer Dill came to us, when Dill first gave us the idea of making Boo Radly come out.” (Lee 3).</p>	<p>Scout is being mysterious about how Jem broke his arm. Maybe Lee does this on the first page to create suspense and encourage the reader to continue reading. It does make me curious. How did Jem have this accident? And how can the events leading to a broken arm start so far back before the accident itself? This means that everything Scout tells me from here forward is somehow connected and building toward this accident, even if it seems unrelated.</p>

Please see that your response does not have to be some deep literary analysis, but it can simply be how a quote makes you feel or what prediction you make based on it.