

Paulsboro Junior High School

Academic English Courses Acknowledgement of Summer Reading Requirements

I have received a copy of the Academic English Summer Reading Requirements. I fully understand that the summer reading work is due the first week of school. I also fully understand that if the work is not submitted I will receive a grade of "zero" and will not be given the opportunity to make this work up, thus significantly impacting my first marking period grade. I agree to these terms and accept admission into this class.

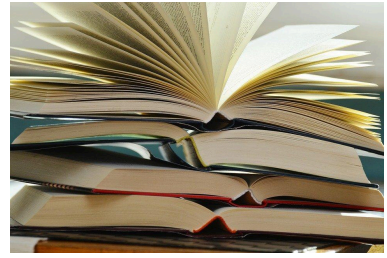
Student Signature: _____

Student Name (please print): _____

Parent Signature: _____

Dear Academic English Student:

Welcome to the Honors English classes at Paulsboro Junior High School. This is an excellent opportunity to challenge yourself intellectually. This class will require more reading, writing, and critical thinking than the traditional or college prep English class. Therefore, it is vital that you keep track of your assignments and organize your time wisely throughout the school year. Your success in this class will better prepare you for the rigors of college and for the demands of the workplace.



Contained herein you will find your summer reading requirements. The summer reading program is an important feature of the honors class, and your commitment to this reading will largely set the tone for the year. *All work is due the first week of school!*

Again, congratulations on your academic accomplishments. We hope you have a challenging and successful year at Paulsboro Junior High School.

~ The Paulsboro Junior/ Senior High School English Department

Honors 8th Grade Language Arts Literacy

2025 Summer Reading List

PART 1: (The reading and essay are due on the first day of school.)

Everyone must read...

1. [*A Long Walk to Water*](#) by Linda Sue Park

“A Long Walk to Water begins as two stories, told in alternating sections, about two eleven-year-olds in Sudan, a girl in 2008 and a boy in 1985. The girl, Nya, is fetching water from a pond that is two hours’ walk from her home: she makes two trips to the pond every day. The boy, Salva, becomes one of the “lost boys” of Sudan, refugees who cover the African continent on foot as they search for their families and for a safe place to stay.

Enduring every hardship from loneliness to attack by armed rebels to contact with killer lions and crocodiles, Salva is a survivor, and his story goes on to intersect with Nya’s in an astonishing and moving way. Includes an afterword by author Linda Sue Park and the real-life Salva Dut, on whom the novel is based, and who went on to found Water for South Sudan.”

Option 1: Character Compare and Contrast Essay

Font: Times New Roman

Font Size: 12

Paragraphs: 5

Text Evidence / Citation: At least one piece of text evidence per body paragraph

OR

Option 2: Character Development Essay

Font: Times New Roman

Font Size: 12

Paragraphs: 5

Text Evidence / Citation: At least one piece of text evidence per body paragraph

Brief Essay Option Overview

Option 1: Character Compare and Contrast Essay

Essay Prompt: Compare and contrast the characters Nya and Salva.

- How are they similar in their personalities, challenges, and growth throughout the novel?
- How are their lives and circumstances different?
- What lessons do they each learn, and how do they handle hardship?

Guiding Questions:

- What motivates each character?
- What obstacles do they face?
- How do their experiences shape who they become?

OR

Option 2: Character Development Essay

Essay Prompt: Choose either Nya or Salva and write a character analysis essay.

- How does the character grow or change throughout the story?
- What events or challenges help shape the character's development?
- What important traits or values does the character show?

Guiding Questions:

- What does the character care about most?
- How does the character react in difficult situations?
- What does the character learn by the end of the novel?

Option 1: Character Compare and Contrast Essay Outline

Essay Topic: Compare and contrast Nya and Salva.

Thesis Statement Formula:

Claim + **because** + **Similarities Between Nya and Salva** + **Differences in Their Lives and Challenges** + **Lessons Learned and Character Growth**

Paragraph 1: Introduction

- Briefly introduce A Long Walk to Water and its dual narrative structure.
- Introduce Nya and Salva as the two main characters.
- End with a thesis statement that mentions one main similarity and one difference between them.

Paragraph 2: Similarities Between Nya and Salva

- Discuss key traits they share (e.g., perseverance, strength).
- Use evidence from the text to support your point (quote or paraphrase).
- Explain how these shared traits are important in the story.

Paragraph 3: Differences in Their Lives and Challenges

- Describe how their settings, time periods, and challenges are different.
- Use specific examples (e.g., Nya's daily walks vs. Salva's refugee journey).
- Analyze how these differences affect their lives and choices.

Paragraph 4: Lessons Learned and Character Growth

- Explain how each character changes or grows by the end of the book.
- What does each character learn?
- Use textual evidence to support your claims.

Paragraph 5: Conclusion

- Restate your thesis in a new way.
- Summarize the key similarities and differences.
- End with a reflection on what readers can learn from both characters.

Option 2: Character Development Essay Outline

Essay Topic: Analyze how Nya or Salva grows and changes throughout the novel.

Thesis Statement Formula:

Claim + because + Who They Were at the Beginning, + Key Challenges or Events That Shaped Them, + Who They Become by the End

Paragraph 1: Introduction

- Introduce the character you selected (Nya or Salva).
- Briefly summarize their situation at the start of the novel.
- End with a thesis statement explaining how this character grows or changes.

Paragraph 2: Starting Point – Who They Were at the Beginning

- Describe the character at the beginning of the story.
- What challenges do they face early on?
- Use evidence to describe their mindset or fears.

Paragraph 3: Key Challenges or Events That Shaped Them

- Focus on one or two important events that helped them grow.
- Use quotes or examples from the text.
- Explain how they reacted and what they learned.

Paragraph 4: Who They Become by the End

- Describe the character's personality, choices, or accomplishments at the end.
- What makes them stronger or wiser?
- Use evidence to show this growth.

Paragraph 5: Conclusion

- Restate the main idea of your essay.
- Summarize how the character changed and what they learned.
- End with a thoughtful statement about the importance of growth through hardship.

PART 2: (The reading of the second novel and mini-project are also due on the first day of school.)

While reading the novel...

Take notes on what you read. You can do this in a notebook, on a piece of paper, or typed. A graphic organizer has been provided for your convenience.

Advice: Take notes by chapters.

Complete the “Choice Novel Assignment: Mini-Project” (Select ONE)

Novel Options (Pick ONE)

1. [*Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*](#) by Rick Riordan
2. [*The Chocolate War*](#) by Robert Cormier
3. [*A Wrinkle in Time*](#) by Madeleine L'Engle

★ *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief By Rick Riordan*

Twelve-year-old Percy Jackson is on the most dangerous quest of his life. With the help of a satyr and a daughter of Athena, Percy must journey across the United States to catch a thief who has stolen the original weapon of mass destruction — Zeus’ master bolt. Along the way, he must face a host of mythological enemies determined to stop him. Most of all, he must come to terms with a father he has never known, and an Oracle that has warned him of betrayal by a friend.

★ *The Chocolate War By Robert Cormier*

Jerry Renault ponders the question on the poster in his locker: Do I dare disturb the universe? Refusing to sell chocolates in the annual Trinity school fund-raiser may not seem like a radical thing to do. But when Jerry challenges a secret school society called The Vigils, his defiant act turns into an all-out war. Now the only question is: Who will survive? First published in 1974, Robert Cormier's groundbreaking novel, an unflinching portrait of corruption and cruelty, has become a modern classic.

★ *A Wrinkle in Time By Madeleine L'Engle*

It was a dark and stormy night; Meg Murry, her small brother Charles Wallace, and her mother had come down to the kitchen for a midnight snack when they were upset by the arrival of a most disturbing stranger.

“Wild nights are my glory,” the unearthly stranger told them. “I just got caught in a downdraft and blown off course. Let me sit down for a moment, and then I’ll be on my way. Speaking of ways, by the way, there is such a thing as a tesseract.”

A tesseract (in case the reader doesn't know) is a wrinkle in time. To tell more would rob the reader of the enjoyment of Miss L'Engle's unusual book. *A Wrinkle in Time*, winner of the Newbery Medal in 1963, is the story of the adventures in space and time of Meg, Charles Wallace, and Calvin O'Keefe (athlete, student, and one of the most popular boys in high school). They are in search of Meg's father, a scientist who disappeared while engaged in secret work for the government on the tesseract problem.

A Wrinkle in Time is the winner of the 1963 Newbery Medal.

While reading the novel...

Take notes on what you read using the model below. You can do this in a notebook, on a piece of paper, or typed. Advice: Take notes by chapters.

[illegible]

Choice Novel Assignment: Mini-Project (Pick ONE)

Mini Project #1 – Figurative Language: Imagery

Find **examples of imagery** that describe people and/or places in the story. Create a poster that includes the following:

- ★ Six examples of imagery describing people and/or places
 - ★ Textual evidence for each example, with proper citation
 - (Example: Six people = Six quotes with citations)
 - ★ A drawing to illustrate each example and show what the text is describing
 - ★ The poster must be well-organized, colorful, and visually engaging!
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Mini Project #2 – Timeline Poster

Create a **timeline of the main events** from your novel, presented on a poster.

- ★ Include at least one main event per chapter (e.g., 12 chapters = 12 events).
 - ★ Summarize each event in your own words and provide textual evidence / proper citation.
 - ★ Sentences must be neat, complete, and clearly written.
 - ★ Your poster must be well-organized, colorful, and visually engaging.
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Mini Project #3 –Character Sketch Poster

Create a visual representation of the **protagonist** from your novel.

Your poster should include the following components:

- ★ A list of the protagonist's key character traits, each supported by textual evidence from the novel.
- ★ A one-paragraph summary (**at least eight complete sentences**) that describes the character's personality in your own words. Be sure to include textual evidence that reflects the character's actions, words, thoughts, and feelings.
- ★ All sentences must be neat, complete, and written in your own words.
- ★ Your poster should be well-organized, colorful, and thoughtfully presented!