



Dear Gaston Day School Community,

We invite students, parents, and faculty members to participate in the Gaston Day Upper School Summer Reading Program. The summer reading program is optional for upper school students.

This summer, we have selected the memoir *Educated* by Tara Westover. Middle School English teacher Dr. Rachel High recommended the book, noting, "Education has the power to transform lives and generate favorable outcomes, as exemplified in the memoir *Educated* by Tara Westover. Although reading about Tara's journey was emotionally intense at times, it provided me with a broader understanding of the numerous obstacles people encounter to obtain a proper education. This experience helped me appreciate my own educational opportunities and kept me rooting for Tara throughout her journey."

Please note that the book contains mature content and themes, including descriptions of violence. Readers will meet in small groups early next fall to discuss the book. There will not be an assessment, but there will be snacks!

Advanced Placement students will still have required reading, and they will lead our small-group discussions. Here are the summer reading assignments for AP students:

AP Language and Composition (Eleventh Grade): [📖 2023 AP Lang Summer Reading](#)

AP Literature and Composition (Twelfth Grade): [📖 2023 AP Literature Summer Reading](#)

If you have any questions, please contact English Department Chair Erin Lekavich, elekavich@gastonday.org.

Happy reading!

Sincerely,

Erin S. Lekavich
English Department Chair
elekavich@gastonday.org

AP Language and Composition Summer Reading

AP Language and Composition is a course unlike other English courses students have taken before. It focuses on nonfiction for its material and the craft of the argument for its writing. As such, we will be reading, viewing, and listening to texts that offer perspectives on all aspects of American life. Our first unit focuses on topics relating to the body.

Over the summer students will read *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot and *Educated* by Tara Westover. *The Immortal Life* follows the author's quest to discover the identity and life story of Henrietta Lacks, a poor black woman from the mid-twentieth century from whom scientists discovered the first line of immortal cells. In *Educated*, Tara Westover recounts her unusual upbringing and educational path, sharing the lessons she learns along the way.

Reading:

Read *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot and *Educated* by Tara Westover and **complete the annotations assignment** as outlined in this document.

Writing:

Using *The Immortal Life* and *Educated*, answer **one** of the following questions in 750-1,000 words, typed.

Questions (choose one):

- What threatens the body? What should be done or not done in response to these threats?
- Do you define your body? Does your body define you?
- What is physical beauty? Does it matter?
- What is the line between health and vanity?
- Who has rights over a body? What is the extent of those rights? Who decides?
- What holds more value: formal or informal education?
- How did past trauma affect the behavior and/or choices of some characters in our books?
- Looking back over both books, what did you learn about family, forgiveness, education, and/or trauma?

This is meant to be a personal, opinion-based response. It does NOT need an intro, thesis, body paragraphs, conclusion, etc., though it should be organized, proofread, and offer the maturity and depth of critical thinking required of an AP student.

Annotation Assignment:

In addition to reading, you must annotate *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* and *Educated* (write directly in your books) and present your books for a grade.

Annotating is a very useful exercise. It can help you navigate the books during discussions, study for tests and quizzes, find passages for essays, and, most importantly, better understand the texts as you read.

Requirements:

- Every CHAPTER should have a summary (see below).
- Every PAGE should have one additional annotation (see below).
- You must WRITE WORDS IN THE BOOK for an annotation/summary to count. Underlining or highlighting by itself does not count.

Summaries:

- Write a brief summary at the beginning or end of each chapter after you've read it explaining what happens in that chapter.
- Include key characters and events.

Additional Annotations:

Here are some options for what to annotate:

- Circle words that are unfamiliar then write their definitions in the margin (after you have looked up their meanings).
- Underline or bracket [] passages that are interesting to you or seem important. Then, in the margin write a brief note on why you think that passage is important.
- Ask questions. If something confuses you or you feel like there is information about an event, character, scene, etc. that you should know more about, write your question in the margin.
- Make predictions. Do you think you know what might happen? Does something seem like it may be important later? Do you think this scene might foreshadow something later? Write your prediction in the margin.
- Clarify. If you figure something out or have an epiphany while reading but fear you may forget it later, write down a brief summary of the passage or your ideas in the margin.

AP English Literature & Composition

Required texts:

1. ***Educated* by Tara Westover (part of Upper School Summer Reading Program; AP students will help lead discussions)**
2. ***Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë**

ISBN-10: 0141439556

ISBN-13: 978-0141439556

Note: You must use the above edition for *Wuthering Heights* in order to have all the correct materials, including important prefaces and endnotes.

Wuthering Heights is widely regarded as one of the great novels of Victorian literature. The AP English Literature course requires a variety of literature from different time periods, and the novel exposes students to the diction and syntax of the nineteenth century. Additionally, *Wuthering Heights* provides AP Literature students with the opportunity to explore and discuss Victorian society.

AP Lit. Summer Work Instructions

Instructions: Utilize the following bullet pointed suggestions as well as the annotation information (below) to take notes on the text. If you need to take notes in addition to those in your book, you may write them on sticky notes or in a notebook. You will be required to show proof of these notes. Notes may NOT be electronic. When you return to school, you will be responsible for participating in class discussion, answering questions using detailed support from the texts, completing a test, and writing a paper. Plan accordingly in your note taking.

- Characters, their relationships, their motivations
- Plot points
- Narrative voice/point of view
- Settings
- Tone: pay careful attention to how the narrator shapes the reader's perception of characters and events
- Syntax and diction

Major Works Assignment (for *Wuthering Heights*)

(Due day of test for all major works)

Make notecards containing the following information:

Card #1

- Front: title, author, date of publication, biographical/historical notes (given in class or as part of reading)
- Back: summary of novel

Card # 2

- List of main/important supporting characters with brief descriptions

Card # 3

- 10 significant details for potential support in an essay

Card #4

- 6-8 significant quotes, along with page numbers and who said (if applicable) the quote (if desired, include brief context).

Note: Yes, you may use more than 4 notecards; they may be whatever size you'd like.

You may NOT complete these works with the assistance of alumni, classmates, or online resources.

Annotation Assignment (for both books)

In addition to reading, you must annotate your text (write directly in your book) and present your books for note-checks at the beginning of the year and for a grade. Every chapter should have a summary (see below) and a minimum of two additional notations per page (see below); however, you may find your reading more enjoyable and coherent if you just get into the habit of making these marks while you read rather than worrying about the assignment.

Why annotate? Annotations should help you engage with the text. They will help you remember important details as you read and later when you prepare for an assessment.

Every reader develops his/her own unique style for annotation and feel free to explore with what works for you, but here are some notes and marks you may make:

1. Write a brief summary at the end of each chapter after you've read it explaining in a few phrases what occurred in the chapter. This will make finding an important scene for your paper much easier.
2. Circle words that are unfamiliar then write their definitions in the margin (after you have looked up their meanings).
3. Underline or bracket [] passages that are interesting to you or seem important. Then, in the margin write a brief note on why you think that passage is important.

Writing in the margin is always helpful. Think of it like you are having a conversation with the book you are reading. Here are some helpful things you can write in the margin:

1. Ask questions. If something confuses you or you feel like there is information about an event, character, scene, etc. that you should know more about, write your question in the margin.
2. Make predictions. Do you think you know what might happen? Does something seem like it may be important later? Do you think this scene might foreshadow something later? Write your prediction in the margin.
3. Clarify. If you figure something out or have an epiphany while reading but fear you may forget it later, write down a brief summary of the passage or your ideas in the margin.
4. Remember, it is helpful to underline a passage that relates to your note in the margin and to write your note close to the underlined portion.

General reminders: Use a pen, NOT a highlighter. Underlining passages is not enough; after underlining something, write a note in the margin explaining why you underlined it. This may be tedious at first, but once you get the hang of it, you will find annotation improves comprehension and memory as well as serving as an excellent study aid for quizzes, tests, and papers. Good luck!

A note on reading and cheating: As a general rule, it's okay to look up words, historical background of the setting, and the author's biographical information because those are facts. If you look up a literary work, you will find opinions. All literary analysis is based upon opinion. Your goal is to learn how to form and support your own opinions, not mimic someone else's. If you voice an opinion in a paper, in class discussion, or on a test/quiz that does not appear to be your own, it may be considered an Honor Code violation. This includes "refreshing" your memory using SparkNotes or other study guides. You will be instructed on how to best review for assessments. If you have any questions about this policy, please ask your instructor.

