



Dear Elyria Catholic Parents and Guardians,

The following letter is to inform you about the requirements for summer reading for the 2025-2026 school year. Please note that your student is being held to high expectations regarding summer reading. If possible, take time to sit down with your student and make sure they understand what will be expected of them when they return to school on August 26, 2025.

Although we recognize that all students will not go to college or university after graduating, it is our goal to meet students where they are and build their skills in reading, writing, and critical thinking over the course of their high school experience so that if they do choose to attend college or university, they are prepared to succeed in that environment.

We have carefully chosen the books for each grade level that encompass the skills and themes that will be covered during the year in each respective class. We are asking your student to select ONE of these books to read in its entirety. The introduction of student choice is a purposeful move designed to help students re-learn how to enjoy reading and incorporate student voices into our classrooms from day one of the school year. Students are also being asked to annotate (make physical notes in the book) their books and come to school ready to turn that book in to their teacher as part of their summer reading assessment. Research shows that students who engage with the text in real time (as they read) are far more likely to understand not only surface level ideas, but also deeper concepts presented in the text. This essential college skill is one that we want students in all grade levels to attain and build upon during their four years at EC for obvious reasons.

Please see the attached pages that detail what your student needs to read this summer, how they will be assessed on their reading, and resources to help them successfully navigate their assignment – including how to complete annotations for students who are unfamiliar with this technique.

Finally, we humbly ask that you take time over the summer to have a conversation with your students about these requirements, and encourage them to set time aside each week to read small portions of the book rather than attempting to read the whole book during the few days before school begins. Please also encourage them to reach out to their teachers through the email addresses listed below for help on anything they may need. A final note: we are aware that many students like to use **audiobooks** to help them read. Please help your students understand that this is a good technique, but only if they are following along in the book and making annotations so that they remain engaged. Otherwise, students are doing themselves a disservice as an audiobook alone does not help students understand a text deeply.

We are working hard in our classrooms to help your students re-establish strong reading habits and skills, and we ask for your support in this endeavor. Thank you for all you do. We look forward to seeing your students in August.

Sincerely,

The Elyria Catholic English Department

FAQs

Where should I get a book for my student?

You can order any of the books online on websites such as Amazon.com or visit a bookstore. Buying a gently used book at Half Price Books is a great way to save money too. You may not borrow a book from your local library because you will not be able to write directly into the book for annotation purposes.

How do I annotate?

So how do you annotate? The best thing to do is **respond to the text and write down your responses** while you are reading. This will mean that you start and stop reading multiple times, but that is encouraged. Remember, you are engaging in a conversation with the writer, and all conversations involve a back and forth conversation. When you are reading for English class, your goal is to process how/what/why this information is important and relevant to you. Annotations should bring your voice into the conversation.

When should I stop and make a note/annotate in my book?

This is really entirely up to you. Some ideas are as follows:

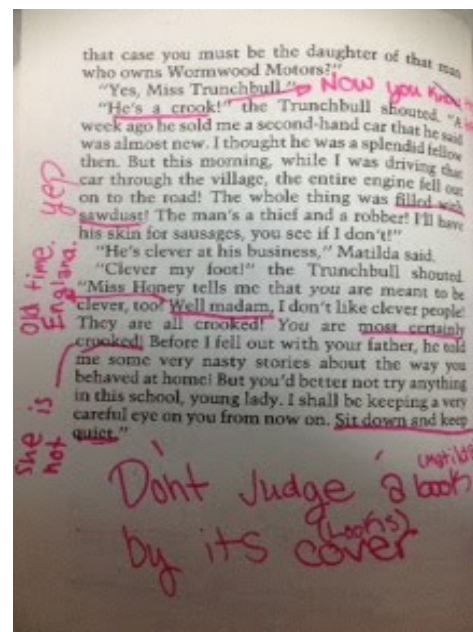
Annotations are personal, meaning they should represent **YOUR understanding of the book**. Therefore, each person's annotations will be unique. Please feel free to use your "own language" as you make notes...you do not need to write long sentences in the small spaces in your book.

- Shoot for 2-3 annotations/notes per page.
- Ask questions, make comments, and react to what is happening in the book.
- Use symbols
 - For example: question marks for something confusing, exclamation points for exciting plot points, boxes around important quotes, etc.
- Summarize an important paragraph by writing a short phrase in the margins
 - Example: "main char. meets new char."
- As you read, look for examples literary devices:
 - characterization, theme, symbolism, conflict, irony, flashback, foreshadowing, etc. (Google the definitions if you are unfamiliar)

Here is an example of what an annotated page of reading might look like. Google "sample annotated book page" for more examples.

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****Remember, annotations will show your teacher what you've learned, understood, and questioned in the book. Your teacher cannot read your mind. Annotations are a means of putting your thoughts onto paper.**



SUMMER READING EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

- **General Expectations:** Students will have 2-3 options of books to pick from. Students are expected to pick ONE book, read it in its entirety and annotate the chapters indicated for each book title in the charts below.
 - The physical copy of your book will be COLLECTED and GRADED for your annotations.
 - Students must purchase the book, or rent it from the library and use sticky notes to annotate
 - See the section above for advice on how and what to annotate. Please also feel free to email the teacher if you need help with your annotation or understanding your text.
- **Honors students:** must read the assigned book listed under the HONORS section of this document.
- **A Note About Summer Reading Assessment:** please note that your student will be given a skill-based test within the first week of school. This test will not be on plot, settings or characters like a “traditional” summer reading test, but will rather ask students to apply their knowledge of a deeper concept like theme to the text itself. Therefore, it is very important that you encourage your student to read the book in its entirety and if possible, assist them in their understanding of the text as a whole. Please encourage them to reach out to their teacher for assistance if they are struggling, or feel free to contact Assistant Principal of Academics, Beth Adkins adkins@elyriacatholic.com if teachers cannot be reached over the summer.