

Summer Reading Assignment

Honors English 1

Required Reading: *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck (about 100 pages)

Welcome to Righetti High School and the ninth grade Honors English class! This class is designed to challenge you and prepare you for continuing in the Honors and AP English program at Righetti. The expectations are set high, but you will be given the tools to be successful as long as you are willing to put in the work and take on the challenge. You will complete five literary units and be responsible for reading two independent novels over the course of the year. Being prepared for class discussions and willing to share your ideas is essential to this class.

As you see above, summer reading is a prerequisite for the class. You will need to read a short novel, *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, and take thorough notes while you read. See the following pages for an explanation about why you need to complete the summer homework before school starts and the note format I would like you to use. **You will turn in these notes at the end of the first week of school.** Your notes can be handwritten or typed and include information about major characters, plot, themes, symbolism, and your thoughts. These notes should be more than a simple summary. I expect about a page of notes per chapter, so six pages of notes total since the standard paperback copy has six chapters. I want to know what you are thinking as you read.

You can access an online copy of the novel by [clicking here](#) (or Googling “Of Mice and Men pdf”) or you can purchase the novel on your own. You should be able to check out a paper copy from the RHS library when school starts if you would like a paper copy at that point, but do not wait until then to read the novel.

We will devote the first few weeks of school to activities and discussions focused on the novel. At the completion of those activities you will take a comprehension test on the novel and write an essay focused on one of the themes in the novel. Completion of the notes, activities, test, and essay are required to continue in the class.

If you have any questions about the assignment or the class, please email me at wgill@smjuhsd.org.

I am looking forward to meeting you! I hope you enjoy your summer and *Of Mice and Men*.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Witny Gill

Reasons to Complete the Summer Homework

There are multiple reasons why you should complete the summer homework before school starts. Here are some of the reasons:

- Your grade in the class
 - The summer homework assignment is worth 30 points (5 points per chapter/page of notes)
 - This is a large number of points at the beginning of the semester
 - If you do not turn in the summer homework assignment, your grade will be low (probably a C or lower)
 - If you do not do the summer homework assignment, it will make it nearly impossible to get a good grade on the essay and the test
 - This will probably drop your grade down to a D or an F
- It will be nearly impossible to participate in class for the first few weeks
 - We will be dedicating the first few weeks of class to discussing aspects of the novel
 - You will be lost and confused during these discussions
 - The end of the novel will be spoiled for you
 - The essay and test will be unnecessarily difficult
- If you do not do the assignment, you will not be living up to my expectations for an Honors student
 - I have very high expectations for my Honors students
 - If you do not do the assignment, you are starting off on the wrong foot as my student
 - You will have to rush to read the novel to get caught up

I want to remind you that you **chose** to sign up for Honors English 1 instead of taking College Prep English 1. This means that you **chose** to challenge yourself. This is the first challenge of the class. Please set yourself up for success.

The next page has the note format and directions for the homework assignment as you read *Of Mice and Men*. Again, if you have any questions about the assignment or the class, email me at wgill@smjuhsd.org.

Note Format

Directions: Complete this note chart for each chapter. You need about a page of notes per chapter. You are required to do six pages of notes total since the standard paperback copy has six chapters.

Chapter

Characters: Write down characters that are introduced and important information about them. This includes new information about characters that had already been introduced.	Themes: Write down a message or lesson that can be learned about life from this chapter. Themes are more than one word. Ex. Friends always take care of each other.	Symbols: Write down anything that you think represents or stands for something else or has a deeper meaning than the literal thing. Ex. the pond at the beginning symbolizes safety and sanctuary	Thoughts: Write down at least one prediction, question, or connection you can make between the chapter and anything else.
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Plot Summary: Write down major plot points for each chapter. Bullet point notes are fine. This should end up being a detailed summary of the chapter and should be at least half a page.