

# Pre-AP Sophomore English Summer Reading Assignment

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## Welcome to our Pre-AP Sophomore English course at Skyview High School!

This assignment is not only designed to help you prepare for the upcoming school year, but for college and your eventual AP exam, where skills developed through critical reading are essential. Only the well-read student can respond knowledgeably and intelligently to the open essay questions on the AP exam, which is why summer reading is vital to your success, as is the need for continuous brain exercise during the summer months.

In this packet, you will find the instructional requirements and materials for your summer assignment. **This assignment is due on the first day of school.** Remember to pace yourself accordingly during the summer break. We recognize last-minute work when we see it.

The summer assignment for Pre-AP English not only indicates your willingness to work hard, but it also measures your commitment to the course. ***Pre-AP English is for students who love to read and explore literature.*** If reading is not something you enjoy, this may not be the course for you. A Pre-AP student is expected to put exceptional effort into all readings and assignments.

### THE ASSIGNMENT:

1. Select ONE of the following texts and purchase a personal copy\*

- *A Thousand Splendid Suns*—Khaled Hosseini
- *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*—Katherine Boo
- *The House of the Spirits*—Isabel Allende
- *Half of a Yellow Sun*—Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

2. Read and thoroughly annotate your selected novel.

- The AP philosophy is that a piece of literature is never really fully read until it has been annotated using critical reading strategies.
- You will annotate inside the novel; instructions on how to annotate are attached.

3. As you read, complete double-entry “dialectical” journal entries on the sheets provided.

4. **Bring your annotated novel and your completed journal packet to class on the first day of school.**

On the first day of school, you will be completing an in-class essay, in which you will be required to analyze and clearly express your interpretations of the novel. This assessment will help us to identify your writing ability, as well as existing close reading and critical thinking skills.

***No exceptions will be made regarding the taking of this exam. Please be ready on the first day of class.***

We will use your summer reading to inform our work and assignments for the first couple weeks of school. Your knowledge of this book is tantamount to your early success in the class!

An electronic copy of this assignment is located online in the AP Information tab on Skyview’s webpage:  
[http://skyview.vansd.org/AP\\_Information/index.html](http://skyview.vansd.org/AP_Information/index.html).

*\*If you have any questions or concerns about this assignment, or may have difficulty purchasing your own copy of the book, please see Mrs. Wales and/or Mr. Wyley in the 900 office before the end of the school year.*

**Happy reading! See you Fall 2017!**  
**Skyview High School English Department**

## How and Why to Annotate a Book

by Nick Otten - Clayton High School, Clayton, MO

**Note-Taking vs. Annotation** Most serious readers take notes of some kind when they are carefully considering a text, but many readers are too casual about their note-taking. Later they realize they have taken notes that are incomplete or too random, and then they laboriously start over, **re-notating** an earlier reading. Others take notes only when cramming for a test, which is often merely "better than nothing." Students can easily improve the depth of their reading and extend their understanding over long periods of time by developing a systematic form of annotating. Such a system is not necessarily difficult and can be completely personal and exceptionally useful. First, what is the difference between **annotating** and "taking notes"? For some people, the difference is nonexistent or negligible, but in this instance I am referring to a way of making notes directly onto a text such as a book, a handout, or another type of publication. The advantage of having one annotated text instead of a set of note papers **plus** a text should be clear enough: all the information is together and inseparable, with notes very close to the text for easier understanding, and with fewer pieces to keep organized. What the reader gets from annotating is a deeper initial reading and an understanding of the text that lasts. You can deliberately engage the author in conversation and questions, maybe stopping to argue, pay a compliment, or clarify an important issue—much like having a teacher or storyteller with you in the room. If and when you come back to the book, that initial interchange is recorded for you, making an excellent and entirely personal study tool. Below are instructions adapted from a handout that I have used for years with my high school honors students as well as graduate students.

**Criteria for Successful Annotation** Using your annotated copy of the book six weeks after your first reading, you can recall the key information in the book with reasonable thoroughness in a 15- to 30-minute review of your notes and the text.

### Why Annotate?

- Annotate any text that you must know well, in detail, and from which you might need to produce evidence that supports your knowledge or reading, such as a book on which you will be tested.
- Don't assume that you must annotate when you read for pleasure; if you're relaxing with a book, well, relax. Still, some people—let's call them "not-abnormal"—actually annotate for pleasure.

Don't annotate other people's property, which is almost always selfish, often destructive, rude, and possibly illegal. For a book that doesn't belong to you, use sticky notes for your comments, removing them before you return the text. Don't annotate your own book if it has intrinsic value as an art object or a rarity. Consider doing what teachers do: buy an inexpensive copy of the text for class.

### Tools: Highlighter, Pencil, and Your Own Text

**1. Yellow Highlighter** A yellow highlighter allows you to mark exactly what you are interested in. Equally important, the yellow line emphasizes without interfering. Before highlighters, I drew lines under important spots in texts, but underlining is laborious and often distracting. Highlighters in blue and pink and fluorescent colors are even more distracting. The idea is to see the important text more clearly, not give your eyes a psychedelic exercise. While you read, highlight whatever seems to be key information. At first, you will probably highlight too little or too much; with experience, you will choose more effectively which material to highlight.

**2. Pencil** A pencil is better than a pen because you can make changes. Even geniuses make mistakes, temporary comments, and incomplete notes. While you read, use marginalia—marginal notes—to mark key material. Marginalia can include check marks, question marks, stars, arrows, brackets, and written words and phrases. Create your own system for marking what is important, interesting, quotable, questionable, and so forth.

**3. Your Text** Inside the front cover of your book, keep an orderly, legible list of "key information" with page references. Key information in a novel might include themes; passages that relate to the book's title; characters' names; significant quotes; important scenes, passages, and chapters; and maybe key definitions or vocabulary. Remember that key information will vary according to genre and the reader's purpose, so make your own good plan.

Also, as you read, section by section, chapter by chapter, **complete the following:**

- At the end of each chapter or section, **briefly** summarize the material on the final page (or on the first page of the chapter if not enough room).
- Title each chapter or section as soon as you finish it, especially if the text does not provide headings for chapters or sections.
- Make a list of vocabulary words on a back page or the inside back cover. Possible ideas for lists include the author's special jargon and new, unknown, or otherwise interesting words.

Just how useful can annotating be? A good example is in William Gilbert's *De Magnete, Magneticisque Corporibus, et de Magno Magnete Tellure* (On the Magnet, Magnetic Bodies, and the Great Magnet the Earth), one of the seminal works of the Renaissance, published in the year 1600. Gilbert was the personal physician of Queen Elizabeth I and has been called the father of experimental science in England. Robert B. Downs, in *Famous Books Since 1492*, writes that in *De Magnete*, Gilbert annotated the text prior to publication by putting stars of varying sizes in the margins to indicate the relative importance of the discoveries described. Gilbert also included in the original edition a glossary of new scientific terms that he invented. Okay, a self-annotated book on magnetism by a celebrity doctor from the time of Shakespeare, with variable-size stars in the margins and a list (in the back) of his own new vocabulary words that changed science as we know it—that's useful!

**Note from Skyview's English Department**

Annotating your books will be part of our practice this upcoming year, and a significant commitment to using critical reading strategies is expected from Pre-AP students. Please see the rubric below for information about how annotations are evaluated. We're looking, specifically, for you to use the six attached "Critical Reading" strategies while annotating your texts.

	<b>4 - Exemplary</b>	<b>3 - Satisfactory</b>	<b>2 - Emerging</b>	<b>1 - Undeveloped</b>
<b>Variety &amp; Appropriateness</b>	Student utilizes 4 or more of the thinking strategies, choosing those best suited to all portions of the text	Student utilizes at least 3 of the thinking strategies, choosing those best suited to most portions of the text	Student utilizes at least 2 of the thinking strategies, choosing those that are appropriate for some portions of the text	Student's notes are all one type of thinking, are not appropriate for the text, or do not adequately address the text
<b>Quality</b>	All notes demonstrate that student is trying to comprehend, analyze, and think critically about what he/she reads	Some notes demonstrate that student is trying to comprehend, analyze, or think critically about what he/she reads	Few notes demonstrate that student is trying to comprehend, analyze, and think critically about what he/she reads	Student wrote notes because it was required, but he/she did not use them to help understand the reading OR did not provide adequate notes

**Annotation Guidelines & Examples**

On the next page, you'll find our expectations for the types of notes you'll take in your texts, along with an example of successful annotation from a former Pre-AP student. Note that not all types of annotation may be appropriate for the section of text you're reading and analyzing...switch between critical reading strategies to use only those that are relevant.

Below are the critical reading strategies your annotation should follow.

Below is an example of a former student's annotated text.

## Writing in the Margins: Six Strategies at a Glance

This table provides six strategies that help readers understand texts. While making connections, clarifying information, or doing other work defined on this page, write down your thoughts in the margins of the text, on sticky notes, or in your Cornell notes.

### Visualize

Visualize what the author is saying and draw an illustration in the margin. Visualizing what authors say will help you clarify complex concepts and ideas.

When visualizing, ask:

- What does this look like?
- How can I draw this concept/idea?
- What visual and/or symbol best represents this idea?

### Clarify

Clarify complex ideas presented in the text. Readers clarify ideas through a process of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Pausing to clarify ideas will increase your understanding of the ideas in the text.

In order to clarify information, you might:

- define key terms
- reread sections of the text
- analyze or connect ideas in the text
- paraphrase or summarize ideas

### Respond

Respond to ideas in the text as you read. Your responses can be personal or analytical in nature. Thoughtful responses will increase engagement and comprehension.

Readers will often respond to:

- interesting ideas
- emotional arguments
- provocative statements
- author's claims
- facts, data, and other support

### Summarize

Briefly summarize paragraphs or sections of a text. Summarizing is a good way to keep track of essential information while gaining control of lengthier passages.

Summaries will:

- state what the paragraph is about
- describe what the author is doing
- account for key terms and/or ideas

### Connect

Make connections within the reading to your own life and to the world. Making connections will improve your comprehension of the text.

While reading, you might ask:

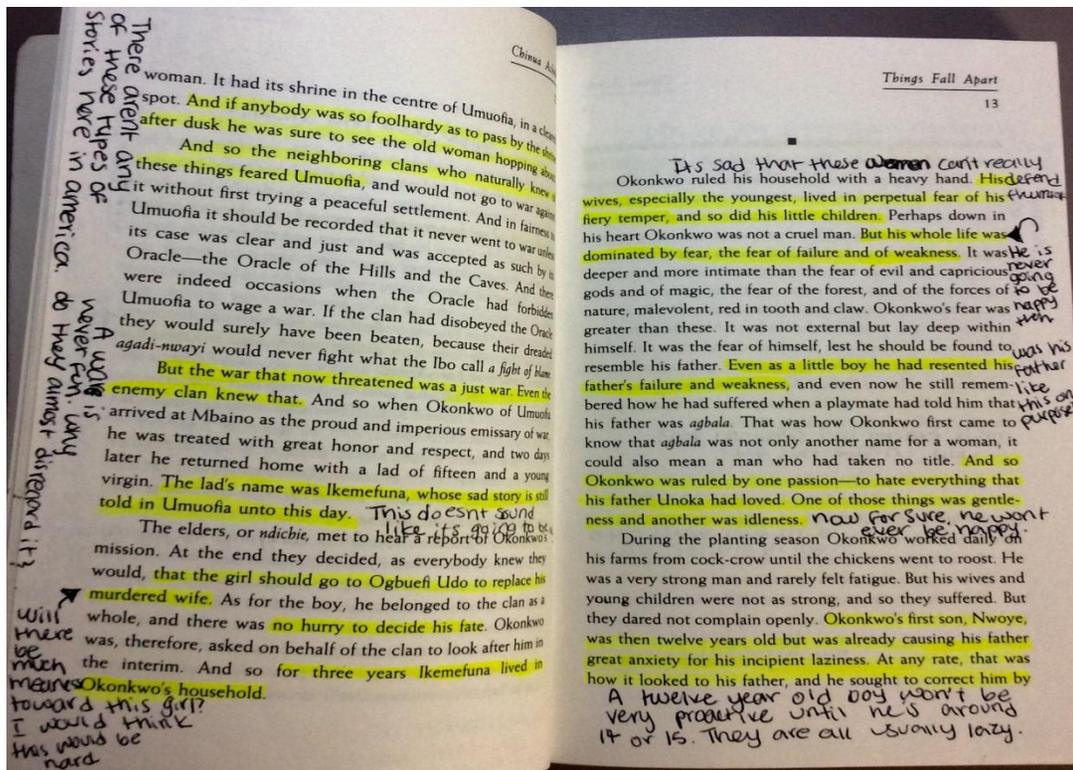
- How does this relate to me?
- How does this idea relate to other ideas in the text?
- How does this relate to the world?

### Question

Question both the ideas in the text and your own understanding of the text. Asking good questions while reading will help you become a more critical reader.

While reading, you might ask:

- What is the author saying here?
- What is the author doing?
- What do I understand so far?
- What is the purpose of this section?
- What do I agree/disagree with?



## Double-Entry “Dialectical Journal” Instructions

Alongside your annotated text, you will also be required to complete **15 entries** in a double-entry journal. Each journal’s content should follow the requirements below. Remember that the intention of the assignment is to help you learn and practice effective note taking and close reading.

### Format & Content

In your left hand column, record quotes from the text that seem significant. They might make you think a little deeper, for example, and require further analysis.

In your right hand column, write a response to this particular section of the text. These written explanations should be reflections or reactions toward material that “jumps out” at you while reading – for instance, moments that make you confused, raise questions in your mind, or provide a new interpretation. Each response should include at least 3-5 sentences per entry.

### Guidelines

1. Write a minimum of 15 entries
2. Always record book titles, authors and, where applicable, chapter titles, act numbers, and/or scenes.
3. Always put quotation marks around the author’s words.
4. Record page numbers in parentheses ( ) following the quotes/note.
5. Take notes in an organized and sequential manner...don’t jump between chapters or go out of order.
6. Match responses to notes. Design your note taking so it is obvious which quote/note corresponds to your response.
7. Don’t “phone it in” with surface-level or rushed interpretations. Slow down, and take time to really analyze the material you’ve selected.

### Model Dialectical Journal

Quote/Passage (include page numbers!)	Reader Response (3-5 sentence minimum per entry)
“A few miles south of Soledad, the Salinas River drops in close to the hillside bank and runs deep and green” (1).	Soledad is a Spanish word that means solitude. This could be an example of foreshadowing? Without knowing about the characters, I’m guessing that some of them are going to face solitude or loneliness during the story.
“Behind him walked his opposite, a huge man, shapeless of face, with large, pale eyes, with wide sloping shoulders; and he walked heavily, dragging his feet a little, the way a bear drags his paws” (2).	Contrasting the two men is an example of juxtaposition. I predict that these two men are opposite in more than just their outside appearance. The short one seems quick and smart, but the second man seems unhealthy, like when it describes him as “shapeless” or “dragging his feet.” Are these our main characters?

### Double-Entry Journal Scoring Rubric

4 - Exemplary	3 - Satisfactory	2 - Emerging	1 - Undeveloped
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insightful, discerning, perceptive interpretation</li> <li>• Makes connections with the passage – globally and personally</li> <li>• Takes risks in interpretation</li> <li>• Challenges the passage by asking questions, forming answers</li> <li>• Shows evidence of close, thoughtful reading. Explores multiple possibilities of meaning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thoughtful, plausible interpretation of the passage</li> <li>• Makes connections with and between passages</li> <li>• Rarely takes risks with interpretations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plausible but literal, superficial interpretation of the passage</li> <li>• Minimal connections with the passage</li> <li>• Little tolerance for difficulties</li> <li>• Questions may represent frustration with the passage but don’t further interpretation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offers partial or reductive interpretation for the passage. Responds to individual words/phrases only</li> <li>• Few or no connections with the passage</li> <li>• Seldom asks questions about the passage</li> <li>• Does not appear to engage in reading as a process</li> </ul>

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