



June 2011

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

Each year students at East Hartford High School take honors and advanced placement classes in order to challenge themselves above and beyond the regular curriculum. The rigor of these courses is meant to prepare students to attend a four-year college or university. Curriculum-based summer reading is one way in which these courses help to provide students with a rich experience that will prepare them for college and beyond.

Students enrolled in the following courses will be expected to read specified books and complete specific writing assignments *prior* to the first day of school.

- Honors English I
- Honors English II
- Honors English III
- Advanced Placement Language and Composition
- Honors English IV
- Advanced Placement Literature and Composition

It is the expectation that all summer reading assignments for honors or advanced placement courses will be turned in on the first day of school and will follow all directions as listed on the assignment for the course. Specifics on how the assignment will be counted in the course are listed on each course's assignment sheet.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the honors or advanced placement summer reading assignments, please don't hesitate to contact me at the information listed below. If I cannot answer your question, I will certainly direct you to the teacher who can.

Happy Reading!

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## Honors English I

Students entering East Hartford High School as honors students in our ninth grade program will be required to read the novel *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* by Mitch Albom. In addition to reading the book, students will need to bring a typed and double-spaced set of Type 3 responses to the following questions with them on the first day of school:

1. What is your initial reaction to this novel? Comment on the characters, the conflict(s) presented, the theme of the novel, and any other thoughts or ideas that you deem relevant.
  - Interpretation is perceptive and richly supported with examples from the text. (10 points)
  - Ideas are developed in relationship to their purpose of the essay. (5 points)
  - Complete sentences, standard English usage (5 points)
2. Choose one character from the novel and trace his or her development from beginning to end. In what ways did the development of this character contribute to your overall understanding of this novel?
  - Initial understanding of the text is developed through character analysis. (10 points)
  - Ideas are developed in relationship to their purpose of the essay. (5 points)
  - Complete sentences, standard English usage (5 points)
3. What does this novel say about people in general (human nature)? Provide at least two specific references from the text with detailed explanations to support your claims.
  - Perceptive associations/connections between the text, other texts, and/or outside experiences; supports these connections with examples from the text (10 points)
  - Ideas are developed in relationship to their purpose of the essay. (5 points)
  - Complete sentences, standard English usage (5 points)
4. What specific, relevant connections can you make to this novel? Your connections must go beyond that of superficial thoughts (I have a dog and so does he) to deeper connections. You may make connections between this novel and other works of literature, movies, plays, works of art, etc.
  - Perceptive associations/connections between the text, other texts, and/or outside experiences; supports these connections with examples from the text (10 points)
  - Ideas are developed in relationship to their purpose of the essay. (5 points)
  - Complete sentences, standard English usage (5 points)
5. Evaluate this novel for its literary merit. To do this, you will need to comment on the author's craft, word choice, development of characters, plot, theme, or any other literary device that helps you to answer the question "is this good literature"? Opinions weaken your argument; so do not use them in this question.
  - Perceptive judgments about the literary quality of the text; supports these judgments with examples from the text, other texts, and/or outside experiences (10 points)
  - Ideas are developed in relationship to their purpose of the essay. (5 points)
  - Complete sentences, standard English usage (5 points)

Each response counts as 20 points toward the entire 100-point test-grade assignment. FCAs for each question are listed under the question. Each question should be answered in approximately 250 words. All responses should be typed and double spaced in Times New Roman or Arial 12 point font ONLY. The student's first and last name should appear at the top right hand side of the first page of each question. The FCAs should appear at the top left hand side of the page (a sample format is included in this packet). Questions must be numbered. DO NOT RE-TYPE the question on the page!



## Honors English II

Students entering East Hartford High School as honors students in our tenth grade program will be required to read the novel *Snow in August* by Pete Hamill. In addition to reading the book, students will need to bring a typed and double-spaced set of Type 3 responses to their choice of TWO (2) of following questions with them on the first day of school.

1. *Snow in August* starts like a modern-day fairy tale with the phrase “Once upon a cold and luminous morning, in an urban hamlet of tenements, factories, and trolley cars on the western slopes of the borough of Brooklyn, a boy named Michael Devlin woke in the dark.” In what ways does the author use fairy tale elements throughout the novel? Why do you think he does this? Provide specific textual references to support your claims.
2. Heroes and villains, both real and imaginary, are a significant part of Michael’s life. What does he learn about heroism in the course of the novel? Does his hero worship help or hinder him? Do you think heroes are necessary in our lives? Do you think children today have fewer or more heroes available to them than Michael does in 1946? Support your claims with specific references from the text.
3. One of Michael’s greatest worries in *Snow in August* is whether or not to tell the police about Frankie McCarthy beating up Mr. G. Michael’s mother says informers are “the scum of God’s sweet earth,” but Rabbi Hirsch tells him “You keep quiet about some crime, it’s just as bad as the crime.” Do you agree with Kate Devlin (Michael’s mother) or Rabbi Hirsch? Why? With whom do you think the author agrees? Support your claims with specific references from the text.
4. Over the course of *Snow in August*, Michael learns Yiddish and Rabbi Hirsch learns English. Both of them are fascinated by the power of words, and ultimately, Michael draws on their power to create the Golem. What does this suggest about the power of language? Do words still have this power today? Provide specific textual references to support your claims.
5. The progress of Jackie Robinson’s first season with the Brooklyn Dodgers is a recurring motif in the novel. Why do Michael and the Rabbi follow his story so feverishly? What do they learn from it? Support your claims with specific references from the text.

FCAs (The FCAs remain the same for each response.)

- Sufficient, relevant, and rich details that specifically support the response to the question (30 points)
- Clear thesis statement, body paragraphs, and conclusion (15 points)
- Complete sentences, standard English usage (5 points)

Each response counts as 50 points toward the entire 100-point test-grade assignment. FCAs for the questions are listed above. Each question should be answered in approximately 500 words. All responses should be typed and double spaced in Times New Roman or Arial 12 point font ONLY. The student’s first and last name should appear at the top right hand side of the first page of each question. The FCAs should appear at the top left hand side of the page (a sample format is included in this packet). Questions must be numbered. DO NOT RE-TYPE the question on the page!



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### Honors English III

Students entering East Hartford High School as honors students in our eleventh grade program will be required to complete the following: The Honors American Literature summer project is designed to engage students in thematic reading (and writing) of a text which focuses on the elements of the curriculum surrounding social standards versus individual pursuits (the "American Dream" versus the common man) and national versus global perspectives.

In this course, you will be expected to be constructing theses from themes consistently while reading. This course will be heavily focused on intense reading (both in amount and in difficulty) and on your individual ability to extract meaning from the texts and, subsequently, construct meaningful analytical essays. As a gauge for how you will perform in this class initially, it is helpful for both you and us to see an example of your individual strengths in these areas.

Over the summer, you will be required to obtain and read Saul Bellow's *Henderson the Rain King*. You should take copious notes while reading in order to develop a strong, individualized thesis. Remember, a thesis is a distilled statement, which reasonable and academic people could argue. It is something insightful and meaningful. A thesis is not a fact; it is something, which must be meticulously proved. This is the function your essay must serve. Remember that all essays must have textual support; meaning well integrated quotes from the text which are properly cited.

All essays must be typed, with 12-point Times New Roman font, default margins, and double-spacing. Your heading should follow the MLA style (student's name, teacher's name, title of course, due date) in descending order on the top left of the first page. Your essay must include an original title, which should be both witty and applicable to your thesis. Your paper must end somewhere on the fifth page. Writing less than five pages will deem the assignment incomplete and writing more than five pages will deem the assignment excessive. Either error will result in failure to complete the required assignment. This particular essay is considered a Type 5 assignment.

This should go without saying (or writing), but plagiarism will cause you to be immediately removed from the honors level. Plagiarism is citing anyone else's words or ideas as your own. One of the biggest dangers today for plagiarism is Internet sites. We strongly encourage you to avoid secondary reading concerning this novel. If you do read about the text, however, you are then required to cite that information in proper bibliographical form, even if the information you read is not directly used in your paper. Failure to do so can very easily result in your expulsion from the course and cause subsequent academic action.

See Mrs. Eckler (English Department Head) with any questions before the end of the year so that she may direct you to the appropriate person to answer your questions. We will not be able to respond to questions about the assignment over the summer. This paper is due the first day of school at the very beginning of your class period. This paper will need to be submitted to be in the form of a hard copy on the first day of school, but will also need to be submitted for grading on turnitin.com. We will review how to do this on the first day of class next year, so the electronic submission will follow the hard copy submission.

The next page contains the rubric that will be used for this essay. Your summer assignment will be graded according to this rubric. This will be counted as an essay grade in your first quarter average.



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## Honors English IV

Students entering East Hartford High School as honors students in our twelfth grade program will be required to read the novel *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer. You will be required to write a 5-6 page essay in which you compare the internal and external voyages of Oskar. In doing so, you must answer the following questions:

- Is there any difference between what he is looking for and what he actually finds?
- Does the book end in a satisfactory way?
- How does Oskar change throughout the novel?
- What does he learn?
- How does he grow?

Be sure to provide specific evidence and quotes from the novel that are cited according to MLA guidelines. Your essay should include a thesis, introduction, and conclusion.

All essays must be typed, with 12-point Times New Roman font, default margins, and double-spacing. Your heading should follow the MLA style (student's name, teacher's name, title of course, due date) in descending order on the top left of the first page. Your essay must include an original title, which should be both witty and applicable to your topic. Your paper must end somewhere on the fifth page. This particular essay is considered a Type 5 assignment.

This should go without saying (or writing), but plagiarism will cause you to be immediately removed from the honors level. Plagiarism is citing anyone else's words or ideas as your own. One of the biggest dangers today for plagiarism is Internet sites. We strongly encourage you to avoid secondary reading concerning this novel. If you do read about the text, however, you are then required to cite that information in proper bibliographical form, even if the information you read is not directly used in your paper. Failure to do so can very easily result in your expulsion from the course and cause subsequent academic action.

See Mrs. Eckler (English Department Head) with any questions before the end of the year so that she may direct you to the appropriate person to answer your questions. We will not be able to respond to questions about the assignment over the summer. This paper is due the first day of school at the very beginning of your class period. This paper will need to be submitted to be in the form of a hard copy on the first day of school, but will also need to be submitted for grading on turnitin.com. We will review how to do this on the first day of class next year, so the electronic submission will follow the hard copy submission.

The next page contains the rubric that will be used for this essay. Your summer assignment will be graded according to this rubric. This will be counted as an essay grade in your first quarter average.



## Advanced Placement Language and Composition

Over the summer, you are to complete the following assignments. All work must be handed in on the first day of school and must be typed. No late work will be accepted.

You will be required to read the following two books:

- *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson
- *Nickel and Dimed* by Barbara Ehrenreich

For each book you will be asked to do the following:

**Part I: Dialectical Journal:** As you read, you must keep a dialectical journal. Each dialectical journal should include no fewer than fifteen typed entries. (HINT: These dialectical journals will help you a great deal on the first day of school.)

*What is a Dialectical Journal?* A dialectic journal is another name for a double-entry journal or a reader-response journal. A dialectical journal is a journal that records a dialogue, or conversation, between the ideas in the text (the words that you are reading) and the ideas of the reader (the person who is doing the reading). This is what you must do in your journal—keep a dialogue with yourself. Write down your thoughts, questions, insights, and ideas while you read. The important part is that you, the reader, are reading something and then responding to it with your feelings and ideas!

An additional note on the dialectic journal: use this assignment to demonstrate your understanding of literary analysis, literature, and literary terms. I expect you to explore the texts, providing smart observations about how they work through literary analysis, explaining the intricacies of their characters and themes, mining the authors' use of literary techniques, and discussing how we are to consider these books in a cultural or historical context. I expect you not only to make connections within the texts, based on theme, imagery, character, narrative structure, and other literary devices, but also to connect these things both to American culture and to other novels you've read.

Do not use incidents in these books as springboards to a discussion or recollection of events in your own personal narrative. This is NOT a summary of what you read. The purpose of this assignment is to determine how well you understand the author's craft.

Your journal will use a two-entry form:

- In the LEFT COLUMN, write down parts of paragraphs from our books and articles, quotes, or notes from class that you think are interesting or important.
- In the RIGHT COLUMN, write down YOUR OWN thoughts, commentary, and questions about the stuff in the LEFT COLUMN.
- See the example of Dialectic Journal format in this packet

**Part II: Controversial Issue:** For each book, you will identify a specific \*controversial issue. Next, you will find an article or political cartoon in a newspaper, which addresses that controversial issue.

**The article you choose/the controversial issue you choose should directly connect to the book and the notes you take in your dialectical journal. On the first day of school you will be writing an essay where you will synthesize the information you acquired from the book, and the article.**



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\*We will discuss examples of acceptable and related controversial issues at our meeting

Once you have read and annotated that article or political cartoon, you will briefly discuss what you read.

In your typed discussion should include the following:

- A brief summary
- Discussion of SOAPSTone
  - Subject
  - Occasion
  - Audience
  - Speaker
  - Tone
- Your opinion of the article and its content

The rubric for your journal (Type 5) and your Controversial Issue (Type 5) are also included in this packet.



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## Advanced Placement Literature and Composition

*This assignment also applies to all UConn ECE students.*

Read Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* and Jonathan Safran Foer's *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*.

Both of these novels have characters who take voyages of external and/or internal discovery. Compose an essay between 1,500 and 2,000 words (4-5 pages) in which you compare and contrast the internal and external voyages of Pip and Oskar. Is there any difference between what they are looking for and what they actually find? How do they change throughout the novels? What do they learn? How do they grow?

Essay specifics:

- Use appropriately MLA-cited quotations from the novel.
- Type your essay in size 12 Times New Roman font.
- Double space your essay and use the default margins in Microsoft Word.
- All assignments must contain an MLA style heading in the upper left hand corner of the first page in addition to an accurate word count.
- The rubric with which you will be graded is detailed later on in this packet.
- This paper will need to be submitted to be in the form of a hard copy on the first day of school, but will also need to be submitted for grading on [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com). We will review how to do this on the first day of class next year, so the electronic submission will follow the hard copy submission.

This assignment is due on the first day of class. Plagiarism in any form will result in an automatic zero and possible expulsion from the course.