Ninth Grade Honors English: Summer Reading Assignment 2026

Welcome to high school and the ninth grade Honors English course. In order to prepare you for the rigor and expectations of an honors literature course at the high school level, this summer reading assignment is designed to help you explore a complex work of literature, practice annotation, and familiarize yourself with literary terms that you will need to know for the entirety of your high school career. Please complete the following assignment over the summer. Summer work is due on Thursday, August 6, 2026, the second day of class.

Animal Farm by George Orwell. There will be a reading comprehension test over the novel on the second day of class.

Read and annotate this novel. If annotation is new to you, here are some expectations and guidelines:

1. **Vocabulary:** Mark, look up, and define any unknown words you come across in your reading. Orwell uses fairly accessible diction, but you may need to take the time and effort to learn words you are not familiar with.
2. Annotate for potential **themes**. As you read, mark passages and/or ideas where you sense that the author might be trying to share a lesson with you.
3. **Character** questions/development. Are there strong direct descriptions of character? Does a character do or say something that surprises, puzzles or otherwise catches your attention? Mark it.
4. Mark vivid **figurative language**. Some examples are imagery, metaphors, personification, and similes.
5. Finally (the most difficult). Read closely for **tone**, the speaker's attitude toward the subject. What diction (word choice) is the speaker using to reveal his attitude about characters, events, etc. in the novel? Is the speaker pleased, angry, sarcastic, bored, didactic, or something else?

On a separate sheet of paper, define the following literary terms. These terms will also be on the test on the second day of class. You must know the definitions as well as be able to apply them to literary works (you should be able to recognize examples of them).

simile	metaphor	imagery	personification
allusion	allegory	paradox	theme
indirect characterization		direct characterization	
diction			

You will receive three grades for your summer work: annotations, definitions, and the test on the second day of school.

I look forward to working with you next year. I will check my email over the summer if you have questions.

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