

Summer Reading
English 12 - Pulsinelli

Reading Assignments:

White Teeth, Zadie Smith

The House of the Spirits, Isabel Allende

Read carefully and critically, spreading your work across the summer break. If you have previously read any of the material, you should reread it. I advise you to take notes (observations, comments, favorite passages, questions, and so forth) that you may return to later. In addition to keeping the basic plot and names straight, you should pay special attention to the development of character and themes. You are welcome to get the books wherever you like, and any editions or translations will do. Paper or electronic versions are fine for summer reading. You may not use any summaries or artificial intelligence to complete the reading.

Writing Assignments:

For all of these, do one for *each book*. So you'll have two for #1, two for #2, etc. Label everything clearly, and use MLA formatting (so all the indicated lengths are double-spaced).

You may not use any ideas other than your own (online or otherwise), including artificial intelligence, to complete these writing assignments.

1. Choose a secondary character from the book whose story or development resonated with you personally. Explain how this character's journey, actions, or perspective deepened your understanding of what you found to be one of the novel's central themes. Be sure to support your analysis with specific moments from the text and be sure to connect those moments to your own specific, unique observations about the world. One chunky paragraph (~½ page) each.
2. Choose one small quote/passage from the book which resonated with you personally. Explain how this quote deepened your understanding of what you found to be one of the novel's central themes. I should see an engagement with the details of the quote, not just vague generalities. Be sure to connect those details to your own specific, unique observations about the world. One chunky paragraph (~½ page) each.
3. Choose a passage of roughly one page from anywhere in the book in which you see clever writing and literary device work. Identify the passage (no need to type it out) and what you believe is its main idea or purpose. Then, point out the literary features that the author uses to make her point. Basically, this prompt is the most like a typical English essay. I should see at least a few specific observations from the passage, including literary device terminology. One chunky paragraph or a bit more (~½ to 1 page) per book.

4. Write a typed page from the perspective of a character from the book (ie. you are pretending to be that character). Imagine that the character has been transported through time and space to a typical day at Bishop Seabury and is creating an inner monologue about what they see and how they feel about the school. Write that inner monologue. Be creative, but also prove to me that you know the character in question and understand their motivation, values, and style of speaking. Have fun with it, but make sure that it's more than just surface silliness- I should see some deeper, thoughtful ideas. Write 1-1½ pages per book, and this one should have paragraph organization (as opposed to the others, which are one paragraph each).

*Keep in mind also that after we spend a few days discussing the summer reading, you will write a longer analytical essay; the topic will be discussed in class beforehand.