

English 10 Summer Reading

Mask of the Deer Woman by Laurie L. Dove (2025)

&

The Water Dancer by Ta'Nehehi Coates (2019)

Read BOTH novels carefully, but you get to decide how you do that. You must purchase/acquire your own books/access to text. Here are your options:

1. Having your own new or used print copy that you can annotate (highly encouraged)
2. Have your own print copy of the book that you listen to on audiobook *as you read* (not required but an excellent idea)
3. Have a library copy you cannot annotate (not ideal)
4. Have a kindle/eprint copy that you can highlight (not ideal)
5. Listen to the books on audiobook only (not recommended—see Option 1)

In-Class Essay:

The first day of class, August 12th, is a Seabury Day, and we will spend that day discussing both books.

When will I write the essay? You will write an in-class essay on either Thursday, August 13th or Friday, August 14th, depending on your class section of English 10.

Will I know ahead of time which book the essay will focus on? No.

Will I receive the essay question ahead of time? No.

What may I bring with me? You may bring printed notes, handwritten notes, and your copy of the book, physical or ecopy.

Do I need my computer? Not if you are using a physical copy of the book. Essays will be handwritten & Dr. Eicher will provide paper and extra writing instruments.

Be Curious:

You can absolutely read both of these books without any supporting materials. To understand them more deeply, and to have a stronger grasp of history and current cultural issues, you should explore.

Topics to Explore for *Mask of the Deer Woman*:

- History of how "reservations" were created and how they were populated
- What are Native American "nations" and how they are defined
- How law enforcement works on Native American lands
- How many Native American women/girls go missing each year & how many are found
- What are the benefits to living "on reservation" vs. off?
- What is the quality of life (housing, electricity, running water, medical care, schools, roads) on US reservations?
- Native Americans' current access to voting sites

Topics to Explore for *The Water Dancer*:

- Read the US Constitution ("Slavery and the US Constitution" on Wikipedia is a good place to START doing further reading after reading the Constitution itself)
- Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 (again, Wikipedia is a good STARTING point)
- The Underground Railroad: origins, terminology, effectiveness, links to Lawrence, Kansas
- Read or watch video biographies of Harriet Tubman
- Learn about the plantation system in the US South prior to 1860
- Missouri Compromise of 1820
- Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854
- Bleeding Kansas (as linked to Missouri Compromise & Ks-Neb Act)

