

## 11th Grade (Honors) American Literature

Instructor- Evan Muldoon

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White House High School

Honors American Literature is a class designed to examine American culture, history and society through a literary lens. Students will be required to read complex texts with understanding, find major literary themes, generate their own opinions and complete tasks using higher order thinking. To aid in this process, students will be required to complete several books as their summer reading. Signing up for this course indicates that the student intends on following through with the summer reading assignment and the assignments that will follow in the first several weeks of class.

**Summer Reading Selections-** (Hard copies of the books are recommended)

“The Jungle” by Upton Sinclair

“The Things They Carried” by Tim O’Brien

**In Class Reading Selections-**

“East of Eden” by John Steinbeck

“The Great Gatsby” by F. Scott Fitzgerald (School will provide copies)

Students will have these assignments completed by the FIRST day of class. Students will be assessed on these books through discussion and timed essays such as those they will see on the TNReady test.

**Students should focus their reading on the following:**

Critical Reading- Talk to the book (Write in it)

- Create a system where you are interacting with the book
- Question it, comment in it, underline key phrases, words, quotes

Be prepared to discuss the following literary devices

- point of view
- setting
- tone
- imagery
- irony
- symbol
- theme

If you have any questions, please contact me by email.

Dear Parent or Guardian:

All students in Honors English III will be reading the American classic novels *East of Eden* by John Steinbeck, *The Things they Carried* by Tim O'Brien and *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair this semester and over the course of their summer reading. All three of these books are considered American Classics and are widely read as part of many high schools English curriculum but they do contain some vulgar language and some adult themes.

The reasons these books have been selected as part of the Honors English III curriculum are 1.) they are particularly well written books with a lexile level appropriate for honors students in the 11th grade 2.) it raises political, social, and human issues that are important and relevant 3.) we, in the English department and the administration, feel that Juniors and Seniors in high school are mature enough to deal with mature subject matter in its proper context and understand the purpose of its use.

If you'd like to review a copy of the novels, please contact me by e-mail or telephone as soon as possible. If you do not want your son/daughter to read these novels, please communicate this on the permission slip below. Students who do not read *East of Eden*, *The Things they Carried* or *The Jungle* will read different books from the time period and work independently.

Sincerely,  
Evan Muldoon  
English III Teacher  
evan.muldoon@sumnerschools.org

(Please detach and return)

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\_\_\_\_\_ My child \_\_\_\_\_ **HAS my permission** to read the novel *East of Eden, The Things they Carried & The Jungle*

\_\_\_\_\_ My child \_\_\_\_\_ **DOES NOT HAVE my permission** to read the novel *East of Eden, The Things they Carried & The Jungle*

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_