

AMERICAN STUDIES SUMMER READING 2025

Hello American Studies Students!

In class this upcoming school year, we will be reading, discussing, and studying a wide variety of American literature. The goal of this summer's reading is to expose you to various works of fiction and non-fiction in order to learn more about America through literature. If you have questions, please email Mrs. Sica at psica@bishopbrady.edu.

Happy Reading!

The Bishop Brady English Department

Note to Parents, Families, and Guardians: Our 2025 Summer Reading suggestions include some titles containing mature themes and content. Thus, we encourage parents and guardians to take an active role in helping individual students choose those books that are the best for them. Several websites, including Common Sense Media and Amazon.com, offer reviews to help parents and students make the best selection.

The Assignment: You will read two books (1 fiction and 1 non-fiction) from the list below.

- **For the fiction book**, you will create a visual project independently this summer. It is **due August 28, 2025**, and will be presented during the first two weeks of school. If you opt for a digital project, make sure it is visually and aesthetically appealing, as well as thorough. Please do not write summaries on slides. Annotating is suggested for your book but not required.
- **For the non-fiction book**, you will complete a timed write during the first two weeks of school. Annotating is suggested for your book but not required.
 - ➔ **Fiction Novel:** You will complete a visual project (see suggestions on p. 3 of this document) for your Fiction choice which should represent the overall message of the novel. It should also convey any deeper meaning you see in the work. The goal here is to capture the essence of the book in a unique, creative way. You will present the project to the class during the first two weeks of school. **Your project is DUE Thursday, AUGUST 28, 2025, at the start of class.**
 - ➔ **Non-Fiction** - For your non-fiction selection, you will respond to a writing prompt. The prompt will be provided during class ***WITHIN THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF SCHOOL*** and you will complete the assignment in that class. You will not be writing a summary. Expect a question on purpose, symbolism, point of view, etc. It will be graded. See the rubric below. You will be able to use and reference your book while writing your essay which is why annotating would be beneficial.

<u>Fiction (project)</u>	<u>Non-Fiction (Timed Write)</u>
<i>The Sun Also Rises</i> - Ernest Hemingway <i>The Call of the Wild</i> - Jack London <i>The Color Purple</i> - Alice Walker <i>Not if I See You First</i> - Eric Lindstrom <i>The Downstairs Girl</i> - Stacey Lee	<i>Rocket Boys (The Coalwood Series #1)</i> --Homer H. Hickam <i>Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania</i> -- Erik Larson <i>The Emerald Mile</i> -- Kevin Fedarko <i>Dreams From My Father</i> -- Barack Obama <i>Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption</i> -- Brian Stephenson

Fiction Novel: Visual Project Ideas

1. **Scrapbook.** Think about all the kinds of mementos you would put in a scrapbook if you had one. Then create a scrapbook for your character, cutting out pictures from magazines or drawing the mementos he or she would have in a scrapbook. Include at least ten mementoes.
2. **Re-write and illustrate the story as a picture book** for young children. Include both images and words. Your story should be at least twenty pages in length.
3. **Word collage.** Write the title of the book in the center of a sheet of paper. Then look through magazines for words, phrases, and sentences that illustrate or tell something about your book. As you look, think in terms of the theme, setting, plot line, as well as characters. Work to get **fifty** such words, phrases, or sentences so the whole sheet of paper will be covered with no visible blank space. The visual impact of the collage should tell a potential reader a lot about the book.
4. **Create a character's room.** We learn a lot about people by what they keep in their closets, what they have on their walls, what they select to put in a room. Select a character you know well and create a living room, bedroom, kitchen, or some other room that would mean a lot to the character. Draw it or write about it, making sure to include an explanation of why you designed the room as you did.
5. **Create a mobile from items related to the story.** Select 10 items that represent people, places, events, or other parts of the book and hang them from a hanger using string or yarn. Write a key that explains each object and why you chose it.
6. **Create a diorama of a scene from the book.** Create a scene from the book in a shoebox or other box paying attention to detail and nuance. Write a description of what the scene shows; this should be at least one, detailed paragraph.
7. **Create an illustrated timeline** showing the important events in this book. Your timeline should include at least twenty events from throughout the entire novel. While digital timelines are appealing, please create a physical project.
8. **Invent a game** (sport, board, word, logic, or other) inspired by the book. Your game should include the board(s), pieces, rules, etc.
9. **Create a playlist of at least twelve songs** and explain how each song relates to either the characters, settings or themes of your book. Be sure to include the song title, the artist, and a written explanation of least 3-5 sentences per song.

Summer Reading One-Point Rubric

Areas of Concern	Criteria for Success	Areas of Excellence
	Originality and Inference <i>Student makes thoughtful, imaginative, and well-supported inferences about characters, author intent, and narrative possibilities.</i>	
	Detail and Interpretation <i>Student provides rich, specific detail and demonstrates deep understanding of the text's themes, characters, and possible interpretations.</i>	
	Accuracy and Textual Support <i>Student's claims are accurate and well-supported by clear, relevant textual evidence.</i>	
	Artistic Presentation <i>Visual elements show creativity, thoughtfulness, and a high degree of effort which corresponds to the themes or ideas of the text.</i>	
	Oral Presentation <i>Student presents clearly, confidently, and with enthusiasm, maintaining good eye contact and demonstrating internalized knowledge of the material.</i>	
Overall Score: _____/100		

PLAGIARISM STATEMENT:

I certify that this assignment/report is my own work, based on my personal study and/or research and that I have acknowledged all material and sources used in its preparation, whether they be books, articles, reports, lecture notes, and any other kind of document, electronic or personal communication. I also certify that this assignment/report has not previously been submitted for assessment in any other course. _____