



EST. 1946

THE KING'S
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

June 2026

Dear Senior parents/guardians and students,

On the following pages you will find instructions for AP Literature and English 4 summer reading. Please read through the instructions carefully.

Instructions

Each class will have unique reading requirements. Each class must:

1. Annotate the required book in detail, according to the King's annotation instructions for all grades.
2. Be prepared to write about the required text(s) and choice text(s) on the first day of school.
3. Not rely on Sparknotes or Cliffnotes or other means of short-cutting these texts.
4. Review the lists below for details about required texts for your class.

Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition

- Purchase and Annotate (see attached instructions) *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald.
- Select one novel or play to read from the [AP Literature Titles](#) list linked to this document.
 - Our texts for the year include: Frankenstein, Wuthering Heights, The Merchant of Venice, Crime and Punishment and Macbeth. Do *not* select these for summer reading.
 - Complete **one** journal entry on this work (see Journal Response Template 2026 below). *Please note: these titles are chosen by College Board, so please choose a work that does not conflict with the TKCS mission and statement of faith.*

Note: ideas, notes, and annotations will be used on the first day of school.

English 4: College Prep and Honors

- Purchase and Annotate (see attached instructions) *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens. Although an unabridged copy is preferred, some abridged versions are acceptable, such as the [Puffin Classic edition available on Amazon](#).
- Complete **one** journal entry on this required read (see Journal Response Template 2026 below).
- **Note:** ideas, notes, and annotations will be used on the first day of school.

Journal Response Template 2026

This entry should be typed in proper MLA format. **These documents should be printed, stapled, and brought to class on the first day of school.**



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Your Name:

Title and Author:

Summary: Summarize important aspects of the novel in a minimum of five sentences. Use main points only. Avoid using your personal opinions. Plagiarized summaries will receive a "0" grade.

Two Favorite Quotes: Use the following format to indicate two of your favorite or important or powerful sentences that appear in this section of the novel. Write them out in full with page number citations. Add two sentences explaining why these quotes stood out to you and why they matter to the novel.

Page(s): _____ Quote:

Explanation:

Page(s): _____ Quote:

Explanation:

Personal Connection: Respond in 3-4 thoughtful sentences that describe how one element of this book connects to another text, a historical event, or a current event.

Literary Response: Read the questions below. **Literary Response:** Referring to one of the attached essential questions for literature, identify your selection and write out a thoughtful response to the question set, using evidence from the book to support your statements. Use brief, direct quotes or paraphrases from your choice novel as evidence.



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Essential Questions for Literature

Choose one of the numbered sets of questions below in order to complete the Literary Response section of your journal entry. Your response must be 3-5 sentences, regardless of how many bullet points there are.

1. The American Dream (Can be used for an American text only)

- What is the American Dream, and to what extent is it achievable for the characters?
- In what ways does the American Dream mean different things for different characters?
- What is the perspective of the nature, culture, or region of this work in regard to the American Dream, and what factors create those perceptions?

2. Decisions, Actions, and Consequences

- What is the relationship between decisions and consequences for one or more of the characters?
- How do the decisions and actions of the characters reveal their personalities?
- How do decisions, actions, and consequences vary depending on the different perspectives of the people involved?

3. Conflict and Change

- How does conflict lead to change for the characters?
- What problem-solving strategies do the characters use to manage conflict and change?
- How does a character's point of view affect the way he or she deals with conflict?
- What personal qualities help a character to deal with conflict and change?

4. Constructing Identities

- How do one or more characters form and shape their identities? How do they define who they are?
- How does what others think about a character affect how he or she thinks about himself or herself?
- In a culture where we are bombarded with other people trying to define us, how do we make decisions for ourselves?

5. The Human Condition

- In the face of adversity, what causes some characters to prevail while others fail?

6. Culture: Values, Beliefs, and Rituals

- How does family play a role in shaping one or more characters' values and beliefs?
- To what extent do belief systems shape and/ or reflect culture and society?
- When a person's individual choices are in direct conflict with his or her family or society, what are the consequences?
- What role or purpose does religion/ spirituality serve in the culture of this work?



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7. Social Justice

- How does power or the lack of power affect individuals in this work?
- How are prejudice and bias created? How do characters overcome these creations?
- How do labeling and stereotyping influence how characters look at and understand the world?
- What are the causes and consequences of prejudice and injustice? How does an individual's response to them reveal his or her true character and his or her morals?

8. Chaos and Order

- What is the importance of civilization and what factors support or destroy its fabric?
- What are the politics and consequences of war, and how do these vary based on an individual or cultural perspective?

9. Utopia and Dystopia

- What are the ideals (i.e. freedom, responsibility, justice, community, etc.) that should be honored in a utopian (perfect) society? To what degree are these ideals followed by the character(s)?

10. Freedom and Responsibility

- What is the relationship between freedom and responsibility in this novel?
- What sacrifices do the characters make for freedom?

11. Good and Evil in the World

- What is the function of the characters' will in relationship to good and evil as they are presented in the text?
- How do the different cultures in the text shape the definitions of good and evil?

12. Heroes and Sheroes

- How do the attributes of a hero change and/ or remain the same over time?
- When does a character's positive personality trait become a tragic flaw?
- What is the role of a hero or "she-roe" (female hero, coined by Maya Angelou) in a culture?
- How do various cultures reward or recognize their heroes and/ or sheroes?

13. Language and Literature

- How is a character's understanding of culture and society constructed through and by language?
- How is language used to manipulate people in this novel?
- How does language influence the way characters think, act, and perceive the world?
- How does the author use the resources of language to impact an audience?
- What universal themes emerge in this work that are of interest or concern to all cultures and societies?



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15. Love and Sacrifice

- What are the boundaries of love and sacrifice, and where does one draw the line between them?
- What are the factors that move individuals, communities, or nations to great sacrifice, and what are the consequences?

16. Nature in the Balance

- What are the responsibilities of the individual and/ or society in regard to the health of the environment?
- How do different world views lead to different views toward nature?
- How does nature inspire a character in this work?

17. Our View of Ourselves and the World

- How does the main character know what he or she knows?
- How does what the character knows about the world shape the way he or she views himself?
- How do personal experiences shape one or more characters' view of others?
- What does it mean to be an insider or an outsider?
- What does it mean to "grow up"? What turning points determine our individual pathways to adulthood in this novel?
- Are things fated to happen no matter what, or does a character believe his or her actions can change the course of his or her life?

18. The Pursuit of Happiness

- What is happiness and what is the degree of the importance of happiness to the main character?
- Why does happiness seem so elusive for one or more characters in this work?
- How much does a culture or society shape a character's understanding or concept of happiness?

19. Relationships and Community

- What are the elements that build a strong friendship in this work?
- What do the characters learn from different generations?
- How is conflict an inevitable part of relationships in this work?
- What personal qualities help or hinder the formation of relationships for one or more characters?
- How are characters transformed through their relationships with others?
- In this novel, what are the individual's responsibilities to the community and the community's responsibility to the individual?



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Annotations (for Required Text)

Annotating a text is NOT simply underlining or highlighting important sentences. It means MAKING NOTES to yourself. The purpose is to help digest the information you are reading. One of the most common complaints about annotating is that it slows down the reading process. That is the point! Slow down so you can really process the information. By taking the time to underline, question, predict, etc, as you read, you understand the text on a much deeper level! If you annotate texts as you read, you cannot help but pay attention to what you are reading. Also, it will be easier to find the important information if it is marked. Once you get in the habit of annotating, reading will become a much more **meaningful** and **memorable** experience.

Where should I start?

As you read, view the text as if it were a person talking to you. If you are confused, stop and write a question in the margins about what confuses you. If you passionately agree with a statement (or disagree), tell the author how you feel by writing your opinion next to the passage. Use the margins and white space to make your notes.

What should I mark ?

Characterization: What are the characters' key traits? How do you know this? As you read, look for clues in the characters' actions, words, thoughts, and other details. Does the character grow and change? How? MARK IT! Highlight key quotes that identify characters.

Figurative Language: Look for examples of imagery, simile, metaphor, personification, symbolism, allusion, hyperbole or any other type of figurative language you notice.

Setting: What do you learn about the time, the place, the culture and the atmosphere?

Plot events: Identify elements of plot including the inciting force, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution.

Make connections: If there are words, phrases, or ideas that connect, draw an arrow to physically connect the two ideas. If a particular part reminds you of something, make note of it next to the passage.

New Vocabulary: Circle new words and define them.

It's often helpful to use symbols or colored highlighters to mark each of these items; if you do, make a key that identifies your symbols/color code, and use it as a bookmark or copy it into the front cover of your book.

Attached is an example of a well-annotated page.

Taken from "How to Mark a Book" by Peter Stephens, *Slowreads.com*



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- = Characterization
- = Setting
- = Plot
- = Theme
- = Figurative Language / Conflict

joana

The wandering boy found a deserted barn a ways off the road. We decided to settle there for the night. We had been walking for days and both strength and morale waned. The bombs had set nerves on edge. I moved from body to body, treating blisters, wounds, frostbite. But I had no treatment for what plagued people the most.

Is she a nurse?

Fear.

Germany had invaded Russia in 1941. For the past four years, the two countries had committed unspeakable atrocities, not only against each other, but against innocent civilians in their path. Stories had been whispered by those we passed on the road. Hitler was exterminating millions of Jews and had an expanding list of undesirables who were being killed or imprisoned. Stalin was destroying the people of Poland, Ukraine, and the Baltics.

The brutality was shocking. Disgraceful acts of inhumanity. No one wanted to fall into the hands of the enemy. But it was growing harder to distinguish who the enemy was. An old German man had pulled me aside a few days earlier.

"Do you have any poison? People are asking for it," he said.

"I will not administer poison," I replied.

desperation

stipulative with