

HONORS LITERATURE & COMPOSITION IV (12TH GRADE)

Please read **one memoir or biography** of **your choice** over the summer. You should choose to read about someone who genuinely interests you. This could be:

- Someone you admire
- Someone who has succeeded in a field you are interested in after high school
- Someone who shares your background, culture, or values
- Someone who has a completely different background, culture, or values
- Someone whose story you simply want to understand better

Book Choice Inspiration

- If you're interested in *sports or perseverance*: Consider a book like *Shoe Dog* by Phil Knight, the underdog journey of the founder of Nike.
- If you're on the *Culinary Arts pathway* or really love *food*: Consider a book like *Yes, Chef* by Marcus Samuelsson, a celebrity chef who went from Ethiopia to Sweden to Harlem.
- If you want stories of *overcoming adversity*: Consider a book like *Educated* by Tara Westover, who escaped a survivalist family to earn a PhD from Cambridge.
- If you want to explore *culture, heritage, or identity*: Consider a book like *Crying in H Mart* by Michelle Zauner, who reflects on Korean-American identity, grief, and family; *The Distance Between Us* by Reyna Grande, who went from an undocumented girl to a popular actress; or *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson, a memoir in verse about growing up Black in America.
- Apply this logic to any interest you have.

Important Note for Parents/Guardians: Please research accordingly before your student selects their book. You may wish to use resources such as *Good Reads Reviews* and *Common Sense Media* to ensure that you and your student are comfortable with the material in this book.

What Do I Do? Read attentively and enjoy your book. The goal is to read the story of a life while also experiencing this nonfiction genre. While you read, you should also think about your *own* story—who you are, where you've come from, and where you want to go. This will help you as we dive into college essays, career exploration, and building your identity as a writer and thinker. **Annotating is strongly recommended** and will help you on your assessments in the first weeks of the semester!

Tips for Annotation: If you own the book, write in it. If you borrow the book, use sticky notes (make sure you keep track of page numbers). As you read, use annotations to identify and label examples of the following:

- **Personal Reflection:** Mark any moments that connect with your own experiences, values, or questions about the future. Ask yourself: What does this person's story teach me about myself?
- **Inspiration & Insight:** Highlight passages that offer advice for life, learning, careers, resilience, or anything else. Ask yourself: What can I learn from how this person handles challenges or makes decisions?
- **Identity & Growth:** Trace how the author changes over time -- what sparks growth? What holds them back? Ask yourself: How does this person's background shape who they become?
- **Connections to Your Goals:** Note any moments that relate to your own college, career, or creative interests. Ask yourself: What qualities does this person have that I want to develop? How might my path look different -- or similar?