



SMITHTOWN

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

English 8 Honors Summer Assignment 2026

Due Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Choose *one* NEW book to read independently that contains a heroic protagonist (for instance: *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton, *The Princess Bride* by William Goldman, *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, etc). This book should be your choice and a title that your parents/guardians support. If you need help choosing a book, The Smithtown Library can help guide your selection. Just make sure to tell them you are looking for a title based on the hero's journey and that the book is appropriate for a school assignment. **Do not choose *The Alchemist* or *Fahrenheit 451*** for this assignment.

Quarter one will focus on the hero's journey in class. It is advised that you read up on this literary archetype and try to make connections to it as you read your summer novel. *A hero's journey consists of a character receiving a call to adventure, leaving home, being tested, achieving a goal and gaining insight, and returning home.*

Please read and follow the directions below to complete the double-entry journal assignment as you read your book. Complete this while reading. Do not try to do it all at the end!

DIRECTIONS:

The **left side** of your table must contain **8-10 of the most striking or significant** quotations from throughout the work with page numbers noted. Should you wish to refer to a particularly large selection, you may paraphrase it.

The **right side** of your table must comment on different aspects of the book. Your right side can respond to questions such as:

- What strikes you about this? Why is this passage impactful? How does it develop a character or plot line?
- What was your first thought when you read this? And then? And then?
- How does this passage connect to heroism? Does it fit with your own definition of heroism or negate it?
- Do you think one person's hero is another person's villain? Is this present in your book? How?
- How does the protagonist deal with the conflict they face? How does the way he or she deals with conflict reveal heroic traits?
- Are there risks to heroism? What kind of risks does your character take to become a hero? How is this present in your book?
- What else have you read/heard/experienced that connects with this author's ideas?
- Which do you think takes more courage: leaving behind a comfortable situation where you have a set place in the world or staying true to your roots in a totally new environment? How is this present in your book?
- Can everyday people be "heroic" under everyday circumstances? Why or why not? Use your book to explain.
- People can be seen as both heroes and villains, depending on one's perspective. Is this true of anyone in your book? How?

- Do heroes have responsibilities? To what or to whom? Explain using your book.
- Does something confuse you or lead to further questions?
- What literary device or figurative language does the author use in this passage? Explain the significance.

Using the template below, type out your responses (or print out and hand write) and have the completed assignment prepared by the end of the *second week of school*. This assignment is meant to help you analyze the text – similar to textual annotation **AND** prepare you so that you are *able to talk and write about* your selected passages in class. Make sure to bookmark or place a post it note on passages you choose so that you can refer back to them. **Please avoid summarizing; go for analyzing!**

Continue on to the next page for the notes sheet.

