



May 2019

Dear Parents:

Your student has requested **Pre-AP English I at Brazoswood High School** for the upcoming school year. The purpose of this course is to offer promising students challenging work that will prepare them for Advanced Placement courses.

In the Brazosport Independent School District, Advanced Placement English courses are offered to eleventh and twelfth grade students. Upon successful completion of coursework, students may take AP examinations administered each year in May, and if successful, they will be awarded college English credit accepted by most universities. The Pre-AP courses offered in grades 7-11 develop reading, writing, and thinking skills necessary for success in AP courses. Reading selections for these courses represent concepts and/or reading selections frequently cited on Advanced Placement examinations.

Brazosport ISD is assigning summer reading in these courses to begin the year with a common dialogue, to expose students to high-quality authors and texts, to inspire critical thinking, and to maintain the standard of an advanced curriculum.

Your student is required to read **ONE** of the following books. Books may be checked out from your child's current English Language Arts teacher, obtained through the public library, or purchased independently. (Some of these books may contain mature language and content. Parents, please assist your child in selecting a book that you find appropriate.)

1. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston
2. *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding
3. *Animal Farm* by Ray Bradbury
4. *Catch 22* by Joseph Heller
5. *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko
6. *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller
7. *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen
8. *The Turn of the Screw* by Henry James
9. *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan
10. *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens

Please encourage your child to complete this reading assignment in order to ensure a successful beginning of the school year.

Thank you for your cooperation and continuing interest in your student's education.

Sincerely,

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# Book Review Blog

Title:

Author:

Genre:

**Summary Paragraph:** A three or four sentence paragraph which explains the ENTIRE novel using as much description and detail as you can manage. To encourage your writing style, you may not use semicolons or colons in this paragraph. This is often the most difficult section of the approach paper to write. It will take some time to condense the happenings of the novel/play into these few sentences which all start in a different way.

**Character Descriptions:** Choose three or four main characters in your novel or play. By each of these character's name, list four or five words which describe the character distinctly. This is a good time to think about vivid vocabulary adjectives and to check the dictionary and thesaurus for ideas. If you use a particular word to describe one character, you may not use that same word to describe another character.

**Key Passage:** Choose the most important passage in the novel/play (in your opinion). Type it up word-for-word in the blog. Make sure to identify the speakers. Identify chapter and page.

**Key Passage Explanation/Analysis:** In a fully-developed paragraph, explain why your chosen passage is important to understanding the novel/play. In your explanation, make sure you integrate quotes (actual words or phrases) from the key passage as well as analysis to strengthen your explanation. Often, this selected passage will offer clues to the novel/play's themes. Explain any mentioned or inferred themes connected to the key passage.

**Discussion/Essay Question:** Write one question that a teacher might ask you about the novel or play either in class or for an essay. This question should be thought-provoking and almost always take more than one line to type because they ask readers to combine more than one idea. Just *writing* these types of questions helps you to anticipate what questions might be asked of you in class discussion or on

a test and encourages you to think more insightfully about the book or play.

Examples:

\*Compare and contrast Gatsby's social class with that of Tom and Daisy Buchanan. How does geography contribute to the definition of social class in *The Great Gatsby*?

\*The novel contains hints, early on, that Hester is descended from an impoverished but formerly noble family in England: "She saw again her native village, in Old England, and her paternal home: a decayed house of gray stone, with a poverty-stricken aspect, but retaining a half obliterated shield of arms over the portal, in token of antique gentility." There is a suggestion, toward the end, that Pearl may have returned to these roots by marrying into a wealthy European family, possibly nobility. What role, more generally, does class play in the novel?

\*What is the lesson Scrooge learns when the ghost shows him the Cratchit family after Tim's death? Why is this lesson needed when Scrooge's attitude has already changed so much?

\* *To Kill a Mockingbird* deals with the issue of racial equality, but Harper Lee also includes the strong story line of Boo Radley. How does the Tom Robinson trial combine with the Boo Radley story thread to make a novel that speaks powerfully of more than just racial equality?

\*What do Jem and Scout finally understand about their father: what he stands for in their own lives and in the lives of many of the townspeople?

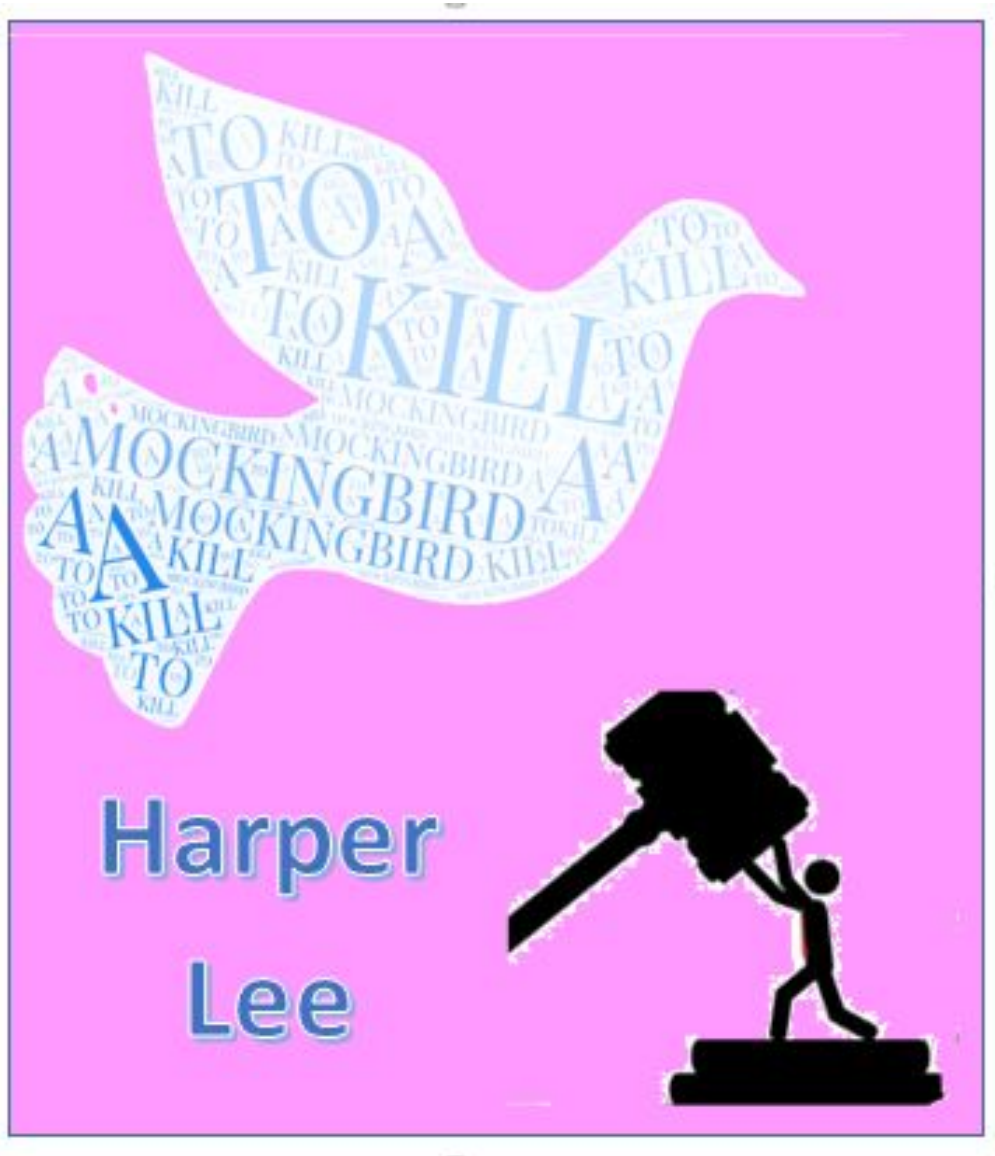
\*Discuss the three different views of Tom Robinson's trial and its outcome as seen by Atticus, Jem and Scout, and the townspeople.

THEN - you need to give a detailed, analytical response to your question including text evidence to support your assertions.

Recommendation: Tell others if you would recommend the book. Explain why you would or would not recommend this book to others. Be specific so your readers really understand what you liked or disliked about the book. Finally give the book a rating from 1 star (terrible) to 5 stars (terrific).

Finally, create your own, original book jacket for this novel or play. You may create this with art supplies or electronically. It should be the cover page of your printed project and at the beginning of your Doc. If your art is NOT electronic, you will need to take a picture and upload it to your Doc.

# Sample Book Review Blog



**Title:** *To Kill a Mockingbird*

**Author:** Harper Lee

**Genre:** Fiction

**Summary Paragraph: *To Kill a Mockingbird*** by Harper Lee is the story of three years in the childhood of Scout and her older brother Jem. As an adult narrator, Scout recalls a series of loosely connected episodes which occur in Maycomb, Alabama, in the 1930s, a time of racial segregation and extreme prejudice. Weaving two strands of narrative, Lee presents Boo Radley, the mysterious and reclusive neighbor whom the children find both intriguing and frightening, with the trial of Tom Robinson, a hardworking, innocent black man who is being defended by Scout and Jem's just and courageous father, Atticus Finch. The two strands of narrative tie together in the end when Boo Radley emerges from his seclusion to save Scout and Jem from a cowardly attack on them by Bob Ewell, who vowed vengeance on Atticus after the trial. (4 sentences)

**Character Descriptions:**

**Scout Finch:** strong-willed, intelligent, tomboyish, loyal, quick-tempered

**Jem Finch:** thoughtful, steadfast, imaginative, maturing

**Atticus Finch:** just, courageous, insightful, determined

**Boo Radley:** reclusive, lonely, simple, protective

**Key Passage:**

**From Chapter 3, page 30:**

Atticus: "First of all," he said. "if you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you'll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."

**Key Passage Explanation/Analysis:**

Atticus' entire philosophy of life seems to be summed up in his words to Scout. To be an objective and just community member, one must be able to "climb into" another person's "skin" and "walk around in it" or be able to see issues from another person's perspective. Atticus offers these words to Scout after her first day of formal schooling in the first grade when she is upset that the teacher doesn't understand her efforts to explain Walter Cunningham's financial situation. These words from Atticus begin her first lessons in life. Through the course of the novel, Atticus will show the children his compassion for people different from their family, his attempts to "climb into someone's skin and walk around in it" when he defends an innocent black man, Tom Robinson, against a town's wishes, and when he instructs the children to be respectful and compassionate toward Boo Radley, a neighborhood recluse. One of the main themes of the novel is understanding and accepting people different from oneself.

**Discussion/Essay Question:**

What do Jem and Scout finally understand about their father: what he stands for in their own lives and in the lives of many of the townspeople?

In seeing their father defend Tom Robinson, as well as interact with Robinson's community and treating them with respect, juxtaposing the attitude of the bulk of the town, Atticus comes to stand as a lesson of not only tolerance, but also courage for both his children as well as his community. As Jem is facing a scary situation handling the addiction and death of Ms. DuBois, his both loved and hated neighbor, his father tells him, "I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes you do( Lee 112)." Atticus shows us this value again as he tells his children that he must defend Tom Robinson even though there is no way he will win based on the values of their community. Scout exemplifies learning this lesson at the end of the novel as she takes Boo Radley's hand and brings him in as an active member of their home instead of the voyer he has been throughout their lives as she takes the adult role escorting the child home in the dark, "I would lead him through our house, but I would never lead him home...but if Miss Stephanie Crawford was watching from her upstairs window, she would see Arthur Radley escorting me down the sidewalk, as any gentleman would do (Lee 372)."

**Recommendation:**

I would definitely recommend *To Kill a Mockingbird*. I like how it helps me to understand the depth of the inequalities before integration; how differently people were treated based on the color of their skin as well as the amount of money in their bank account. What I really like, though, is the way the novel teaches its readers about perspective and how to see things from all points of view and then treat people accordingly. The naivete of the child narrator helps, as well, to see the atrocities of Maycomb through innocent eyes versus a biased narrator. I would give this book 5 stars!



**Disclaimer: This should all be original work from you. Copying or copying and then altering words, phrases, paragraphs, and/or entries from online sources or friends is considered plagiarism and will result in a 0.**

**Per the BISD District Guidelines: Students who are enrolled in AP and Pre-AP courses are responsible for maintaining the academic integrity of BISD by completing all assigned work without engaging in cheating, fraud, plagiarism, or prohibitive electronic assistance. A documented finding of academic dishonesty shall result in academic and disciplinary consequences as outlined in the BISD Academic Grading Regulation.**