

Summer Reading Assignment
CP English IV
2024-25

Choose one of the two following works to read over the summer.

Directions: complete the questions listed below in well developed paragraphs, and detailed examples (**quotations and page numbers where possible**). **Bring the completed responses with you to your first English class.** The responses are the basis for your first in-class essay or analytical paper. In addition to the “writer’s response” answers, complete one of the college essay prompts listed at the bottom of this document.

The Nickel Boys is a 2019 novel by American novelist [Colson Whitehead](#). It is based on the historic [Dozier School](#), a reform school in Florida that operated for 111 years and was revealed as highly abusive. A university investigation found numerous unmarked graves for unrecorded deaths and a history into the late 20th century of emotional and physical abuse of students. [TIME](#) named it one of best books of the decade. *The Nickel Boys* won the [2020 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction](#).

Or

The Samurai’s Garden-is a 1996 novel by Gail Tsukiyama, the daughter of a Chinese mother and a Japanese father. Her tale uses the Japanese invasion of China during the late 1930s as a somber backdrop for this extraordinary story.

A 20-year-old Chinese painter named Stephen is sent to his family's summer home in a Japanese coastal village to recover from a bout with tuberculosis. Here he is cared for by Matsu, a reticent housekeeper and a master gardener. Over the course of a remarkable year, Stephen learns Matsu's secret and gains not only physical strength, but also profound spiritual insight.

Matsu is a samurai of the soul, a man devoted to doing good and finding beauty in a cruel and arbitrary world, and Stephen is a noble student, learning to appreciate Matsu's generous and nurturing way of life and to love Matsu's soulmate, gentle Sachi, a woman afflicted with leprosy. uses the Japanese invasion of China during the late 1930s as a somber backdrop for this extraordinary story.

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Questions for Analysis for either work (Do not combine responses for the two works. Choose one and stick with it.):

\Directions: answer the following questions in complete sentences. Include direct quotations and page numbers from the text. Remember, the answers you provide will be the basis of your first major paper for the course. **All responses must be typed. No handwritten work will be accepted.**

1. List three (3) major characters of the literary work, and in well developed paragraphs give an example of what the character learns by the end of the work.
 2. Pretend that you are one of the major characters in the literary work. Write a monologue (one person talking) of the character telling his/her most unique experience.
 3. Compare or contrast two of the characters in the chosen work with any two characters studied from works in your sophomore or junior English classes.
 4. Pick a social or political issue. Compose a speech (100-150 words) to be given on that topic by one of the major characters in the work read. Be sure the contents reflect the character's personality. Possible issues are political corruption, prejudice, drug addiction, family communications, poverty, or disillusionment with society.
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College Essay Writing

Follow the directions and have the completed essay with you the first full day of class. Please don't fret if you don't feel the essay is near perfect or if it's not fully polished to send. That's what we and your college counselors are here for; we just want you to have a good essay as a first draft.

Instructions. The essay demonstrates your ability to write clearly and concisely on a selected topic and helps you distinguish yourself in your own voice. **What do you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores?** Choose the option that best helps you answer that question and write an essay of no more than 650 words, using the prompt to inspire and structure your response. **Remember: 650 words is your limit, not your goal.** Use the full range if you need it, but don't feel obligated to do so. (The application won't accept a response shorter than 250 words.)

2024-2025 Common Application Essay Prompts:

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.