

# *Vernon Township High School*

## **English Department**

### **Honors Program**

### **Summer 2019**

Dear Student:

Welcome to English II Honors!!!! This summer, honors students will read Harper Lee's classic novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the contemporary novel *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely, and view one of the listed options to examine the concept of racial inequality, peaceful protest, and the justice system in America.

Most of the materials will be supplied, but it is highly recommended that you, as an honors student, purchase your own copies of these works, enabling you to highlight and annotate relevant and pertinent passages and information. Active reading (keeping a journal or other notes) of these works is encouraged and will add to your analysis and postings. I will allow you to use your handwritten notes or journal on your summer reading test.

Attached to this letter is the summer reading assignment and a calendar of due dates. As you finish each novel, you will log on to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) (**class ID 21138483/ enrollment password: Bray**) and post responses to your reading (postings will be entered on the discussion board forum). Each response will answer a question posed in the forum and also included in this packet. Please keep all postings between 250-350 words. If you have any questions, please email me at [mbray@vtsd.com](mailto:mbray@vtsd.com) I will be checking my email daily and available to help with the website or other difficulties.

Welcome again to English II Honors. It will be a year that will be both challenging and rewarding. As with all learning, please keep in mind that the keys to success will be your willingness to read and analyze the works of literature in our curriculum and the degree of effort you put forth during the school year.

Have an enjoyable and "well-read" summer!

*Marc D. Bray*

Mr. Marc Bray  
English II Honors Instructor  
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## English II Honors – Summer Reading Assignment – M. Bray

Justice and Race in America

([mbray@vtsd.com](mailto:mbray@vtsd.com))

You MUST be registered on Turnitin.com!

To add a new class:

1. Sign in to Turnitin.com
2. Click “add a new class” button
3. Enter class # **21138483**
4. Password is- Bray
5. Register for Remind 101 – (See Attached)
6. Register for Google Classroom: Class code: **eeyjlg**

Works:

### Required Novels:

- Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- All American Boys by Brendan Kiely and Jason Reynolds

### \*Viewing of ONE of the following:

- Netflix Series “Dear White People” (Season 1: Chapters 1 and 6, Season 2: Chapters 2 &8)  
[TV-MA – may contain some language and sexual content]
  - OR
- “Blackish” [TV-PG] available on HULU: episodes: Season 2: Episode 16 (Hope), Episode 21 (The Johnson Show), Season 3: Episode 16 (One Angry Man), episode 19 (Richard Youngsta), and Season 4, episode 1 (Juneteenth)
  - OR
- Crash (Movie) – [Rated R for language and violence] available on Amazon Prime
  - OR
- 42 (movie) – [Rated PG-13] available on Netflix and at the public library on DVD

\*be mindful of ratings information when choosing what you watch

## **The Summer paper assignment**

*Author James Baldwin said, “The paradox of education is that as one begins to become conscious, one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated.”*

### ***Is there (Racial) Equality in America?***

Some would say that since the civil rights acts of the 1960s America has achieved racial equality? Others, like Brown University Professor Glenn Loury, would say, “the formal equality of American laws (e.g. criminal laws, voting rights and laws that govern public education) are illusory since they in practice discriminate against non-white people and since they do not rectify racial injustices (that fly in the face of equality).”

Harper Lee argued, “The one place where a man ought to get a square deal is in a courtroom, be he any color of the rainbow, but people have a way of carrying their resentments right into a jury box.”

Bernice King (MLK’s daughter and modern activist) tweeted, “Nonviolence, as my father embraced it, is not passive. It acts, strategizes, speaks truth to power, confronts injustice, works for justice & cultivates heart & systemic change. It also believes ‘True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice.’”

In our society, many people are content to hide in darkness without acknowledging the systematic injustices, particularly in the justice system that unfold before us every day. Literature has always served as a vehicle to enlighten people by addressing the best and worst of humanity.

In a 5-7 page paper, address how the three assigned works address the issue of racial bias in American institutions, bringing to light an issue that many Americans have chosen to “hide in darkness” from or claim “is no longer an issue.” Also, address the importance of, and the continued need for peaceful and purposeful protest like the ones displayed in the show/movie and the two novels.

*You must have an introduction with background information on the topic, a strong thesis making a defined claim and supporting it from all three text as well as contemporary examples and scholarly articles.*

## Total Requirements:

- 5-7 pages, double-space, Times New Roman
- Minimum of 6 sources\
  - Three Primary sources
  - 2 scholarly sources on racial injustice in America and in American literature from JSTOR - *Enter through* <http://vthsmmediacenter.weebly.com/>
  - 1 contemporary example from a viable news outlet (print/over 25 year history – example NY Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post etc... [not CNN or MSNBC or Fox News or other cable news outlets]
    - Check out this link  
<https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/topics/race>

Precise MLA formatting (use : <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/> as your guide)

- Submitted to turnitin.com by **August 29<sup>th</sup>**

## **Summer Reading Schedule**

### **Post # 1 – Due on or before July 5<sup>h</sup>**

**Read:** *To Kill A Mockingbird – Part I*

In the story Atticus states “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 see it through no matter what.” Describe a time you witness a true display of courage and compare your reaction to Scout’s reaction to Atticus courageous act of stopping the rabid dog.

### **Post # 2 – Due on or before July 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Read:** *To Kill a Mockingbird – Part II*

The book the African American community treats Atticus like a hero despite the fact that he lost the case. How can you achieve victory in defeat? Describe a time in your life when failing/losing was actually the best thing that could happen to you. What did you gain from it? Connect your lesson to the lesson that Scout and Jem took away from the verdict.

### **Post # 3: Due on or before August 2<sup>nd</sup>:**

**Viewing: (See various options)**

While this is only one viewpoint on racial relations in America, I wanted you to see it and consider your own role in the struggle for racial justice in America. How have you contributed both positively and negatively to the fight on going fight for equality in your life? (I know that this is a loaded question, but it is important that we consider personal experiences and how they contribute to a greater cause)

### **Post # 4: Due on or before August 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**Read:** *All American Boys*

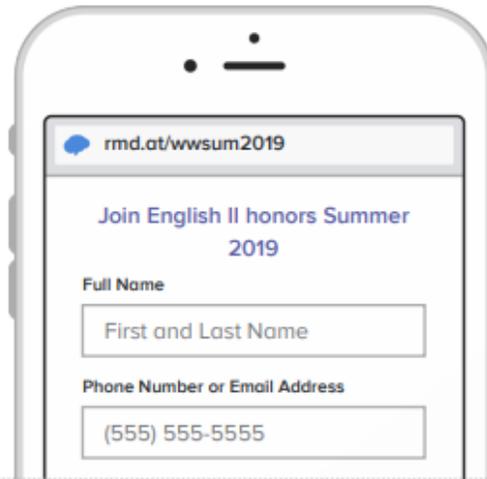
How is *All American Boys* a statement, or a response, to some of the racial injustice featured in the media today? What is the message that you think the authors are trying to convey through this novel? Do you think this book is an accurate reflection on society today?

**A** If you have a smartphone, get push notifications.

On your iPhone or Android phone, open your web browser and go to the following link:

[rmd.at/wsum2019](http://rmd.at/wsum2019)

Follow the instructions to sign up for Remind. You'll be prompted to download the mobile app.



**B** If you don't have a smartphone, get text notifications.

Text the message @wsum2019 to the number 81010.

If you're having trouble with 81010, try texting @wsum2019 to (973) 846-4802.

*\* Standard text message rates apply.*

