

# West Seneca West Senior High School

3330 Seneca St.

West Seneca, NY 14224

June 2026

Dear English 11 Honors Students and Parents/Guardians:

Summer reading is part of West Senior's English curriculum. Reading books during the summer helps develop lifelong reading habits. Also, it assists students in preparing for the New York State Regents Exam and the Advanced Placement Exam.

Students should choose one of the two titles listed below to read for English 11 Honors. I highly recommend purchasing the book so students can annotate the text as they read. Alternatively, both are available thru the public library in multiple formats (ebook, audio & physical copies). I encourage students to reach out to me ([jskotnicki@wscschools.org](mailto:jskotnicki@wscschools.org)) or Ms. Knaze ([lknaze@wscschools.org](mailto:lknaze@wscschools.org)) if they need assistance utilizing these resources. Students will need to use their book to complete the *Honors Program Summer Reading Journal*.

Students should read the text and complete the *Honors Program Summer Reading Journal* by the end of August. Students will turn in their journals by **the second day of English class (9/8 & 9/9)**. This assignment and additional classwork on the book will be assessed in the first marking period.

## **English 11 Honors with Mrs. Skotnicki**

Read *There There* by Tommy Orange, *Hearts Unbroken* by Cynthia Leitich Smith, *The Only Good Indians* by Stephen Graham Jones, or *Sisters of the Lost Nation* by Nick Medina and keep a reading journal according to the directions on the *Honors Program Summer Reading Journal* criteria.

If students have any questions about the Enriched summer reading requirement or journal, they are encouraged to email me this summer for clarification at [jskotnicki@wscschools.org](mailto:jskotnicki@wscschools.org).

Sincerely,

Mrs. Skotnicki

## Honors Program Summer Reading Journal Criteria

Complete the following for *There There* by Tommy Orange, *Hearts Unbroken* by Cynthia Leitich Smith, *The Only Good Indians* by Stephen Graham Jones, or *Sisters of the Lost Nation* by Nick Medina (English 11 Honors):

As you read, complete journal entries according to the directions below. The number of entries should reflect complexity and length of the text you are analyzing for class; you should have **at least 10 entries of 100 words each or more**. Be sure your entries cover the full scope of the novel. **Do not consult online resources, AI, or other literature guides for assistance.**

### Directions:

- In the textual evidence column, you will write exact quotes using ellipses ( . . . ) for long passages and enclosing text in quotation marks. Document page number (chapter number if using an ebook), speaker, and any other information necessary for recall.
- In the commentary column, you will record your thoughts and reactions using the reading strategies listed below. Each entry must be labeled according to the strategy used, i.e. (P) for a prediction you are making or (LT) for identification of a literary term and its use.
- **Your textual evidence should be collected evenly throughout the book**, reflecting consistent journal-keeping effort. The accompanying commentary must demonstrate use of all reading strategies and insight, a focus on details, and the beginning of analysis.

### Examples of Journal Entries:

TEXTUAL EVIDENCE	COMMENTARY
<p>1. “I know I fib a good deal. After all, a woman’s charm is fifty percent illusion, but when a thing is important I tell the truth, and this is the truth: I haven’t cheated my sister or you or anyone else as long as I have lived.” (sc. 2, p. 41) <i>Blanche to Stanley when he questions her about losing Belle Reve</i></p>	<p>Blanche begins by owning up to “fibbing,” which suggests that her intentions are harmless. However, fibbing is a euphemism for lying, a word with much darker connotations. If Blanche is a liar, should we trust her assertion that she has never “cheated [her] sister or you or anyone else?” The word “illusion” seems consistent with Blanche’s character. She is secretive about her age and concerned about how she looks, as if she is trying to be someone she is not. How much did these illusions cost, and upon whose backs was the expense borne? Could illusion be part of the theme of the play? (DS) (LT) (Q)</p>
<p>2. Stage notes description of “inhuman voices like cries from a jungle” and “shadows and lurid reflections” and a prostitute “rolling” (stealing from) a drunkard until a police officer breaks it up (128) <b>or</b> (Scene 10).</p>	<p>Williams’ choice to describe the street noise as “inhuman cries” and reflections as “lurid” seems purposefully contrary to the soft light and illusion created by Blanche. By alternating Stanley’s advance with Blanche’s anxious calls to the operator, Williams builds the tension leading up to this scene, which is further reinforced by the parallel scene at the back of the room. This parallel scene of struggle might serve as foreshadowing for what is about to happen between Blanche and Stanley. Does Blanche see this scene played out, or is it only for the eyes of the audience? Who do each of the players in the parallel scene represent? (DS) (LT) (Q)</p>

### Reading Strategies:

**(C) CONNECT:** Relate to a quote, description, character, setting, etc. by connecting it to your own life, another text, or to the larger world.

**(P) PREDICT:** Anticipate what might happen in the story based on details and plot.

**(Q) QUESTION:** Address any confusion by posing a question about a quote, passage, character, etc. – Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

**(CL) CLARIFY:** Answer questions you raised earlier to aid your understanding of the plot, a character's motivation, etc. Confirm that earlier predictions you made were true or comment on how the story took a different course than anticipated.

**(DS) DETERMINE SIGNIFICANCE:** Explain why you think the line, passage, or description is important. How is it connected to other events? What does it reveal about the theme?

**(LT) LITERARY TERM:** Consider techniques, such as symbols and allusions, the author uses to reveal themes. How does the author use diction and dialogue to reveal character? What is the author's tone?