

# NHS Honors American Literature & Composition

SUMMER READING 2021 (encouraged but optional)

## ***Assignment***

American literature is particularly fascinated by the concept of *voice* and how to find it, develop it, and distinguish it. Over the summer, lend your voice to a chosen work of American literature by creating your own audiobook and sharing it via YouTube.

## ***Weight***

1 summative grade; full 25 points = "Completely meets expectations." "Completely" is not a high bar. In other words, this is an excellent opportunity to start the year with a high score in the summative category.

## ***Parameters (5 points)***

- Author and setting must be American
- Acceptable genres include novels, poetry anthologies, memoirs, etc.
- Must be new to you (not something taught in another class)
- Must be literary in nature (think "artistic," or concerned with the craft and style of its writing).
- Must be a recognized work of literature (i.e., something generally regarded as making a serious contribution to the body of American literature); see lists of classics or award-winners for examples
- Must be an adult work: No YA or children's literature
- Audiobook must be at least 2 hours long (check existing versions on Audible for a sense of how long it will be)

## ***Voice (5 points)***

Must demonstrate understanding of the work's narrative voice(s), including those of its characters. To hear what good narration sounds like, listen to some audiobook samples on Audible.

## ***Fluency (5 points)***

Must demonstrate careful preparation. Do not try to make your audiobook perfect, or you will never finish it. Missteps here and there are fine. However, if you are frequently stumbling over words and syntax -- or speaking distractingly quickly, slowly, loudly, or quietly -- it will impact your score.

## ***Audio quality (5 points)***

Does not need to be professionally produced, but needs to be clear and free of chronic distractions.

## ***Written statement (5 points)***

Must explain a) why you believe this to be an important American work, b) why you chose it, *personally*, and c) what you tried to do with your narration of it. (250 words minimum)

## ***Sharing***

You may record your audio files however you like, but must upload them to YouTube either as one video or as a playlist of videos. Unless your chosen work is public domain, do not make your audiobook "Public." You will receive instructions about how to share your completed audiobook in the fall.