

Entering 9th Grade:

- *Teach Girls Bravery Not Perfection* A TED Talk by Reshma Saujani  
Transcript of TED Talk of *Teach Girls Bravery Not Perfection* by Reshma Saujani
- Can Art Amend History?* A TED Talk by Titus Kaphar  
Transcript of *Can Art Amend History?* by Titus Kaphar
- Arrangement in Black and White* , a short story by Dorothy Parker
- Say Yes*, a short story by Tobias Wolff
- Trifles*, a one act play by Susan Glaspell
- Marginalia*, a poem by Billy Collins

Dear 9th grade students,

I am looking forward to our work together next year. I have met several of you already and get the strong sense that you are a thoughtful and intellectually curious and creative group. I hope to honor that curiosity and creativity right from the start, so, above, are your summer reading assignments. I think you will find this eminently “do-able,” interesting, and worthy of conversation.

All texts above should be read by your return to school. I do not think there is merit in getting this reading done fast at the beginning of the summer because by September you will have little in depth recollection of what you read. Rather, I would suggest that you assess the length of these texts in relationship to your comfort level with digesting them and make a schedule for completion from there that will see you completing them without stress over the summer.

I ask that in all cases you peruse a hard copy versus a digital copy of the material. In other words, print all texts to read them. This even goes for TED talks. Before watching them, print their transcripts so that you can follow along.

The reason why I want you to work from hard copies is that in each instance, I want you to annotate the text. To annotate is to take notes in the margins of a text- as I am sure you already know.

I am not grading the substance of your annotations, but I will give you a completion and effort grade on them. That means that as long as you attempt to annotate *in good faith*, you will get full credit for this portion of the summer work. Though I am only grading for completion, I will nonetheless, provide some pointers on annotating below to give you some direction in this regard.

Use any regimen you want for annotating. Do you wish to read and then go back and annotate it, or do you prefer to annotate as you go along?

I suggest reading the works several times (not necessarily on the same day) and making annotations during all of those readings as more and more thoughts come to you. For the TED talks, please watch them at least three times, and read the transcript at least three times as well.

During the first week of school you will be asked to hand in your annotations from all texts for a completion grade, and you will have a brief objective quiz (nothing analytical) to ensure you have done the reading.

After we discuss these texts in class and annotate them together in more detail, an analytical quiz will follow.

You should feel free to email me ([cjames@brownschool.org](mailto:cjames@brownschool.org)) with questions over the summer. Looking forward to meeting you all!

Fondly,  
Dr. James

## Annotating Tips

- 1) All unknown vocabulary (If you leave a word undefined, that is fine as long as you know its meaning.)
- 2) Text summaries (a few bullet points at the beginning of the text so that you can quickly remember what happens in that text ).
- 3) Allusions (This is if the text references ideas or concepts outside the text from history, culture, etc that you need to know to get the meaning). Look them up and make notes in the margins as to what the allusions mean. Allusions are everywhere in the poem *Marginalia* by Billy Collins
- 4) Elements of fiction (characters, symbol, setting, theme, motif, imagery, use of diction- don't sweat terms with which you are not familiar-just give it a shot)
- 5) Avoid annotations which are personal revelations like "This is funny" or insert them but know they don't contribute to annotations for class :)
- 6) Annotate with the idea in mind that you want to be able to use your notes to reference material quickly in class discussions.
- 7) Avoid excessive underlining and highlighting. Use these tools sparingly and only to point out where the text is about which you are writing in the margin. Remember, if you highlight or underline, you need to have written words too to suggest why you underlined or highlighted a passage.