

English 11, American Literature
Summer Reading Assignment
House Made of Dawn

The instructors of American Literature have selected N. Scott Momaday's novel, *House Made of Dawn*, as the summer reading text. You will be required to engage in a close reading of this novel in preparation for the first day of school, 2017.

You may be wondering, "What exactly is close reading?" It involves getting to know the text through annotation; you will read as a scholar, critically and purposefully, with a pen or pencil in hand, marking passages and making notations about whatever you feel is striking or significant. To annotate effectively, you should identify and consider important literary choices the author makes beyond who does what when, but rather look for techniques that help us to think about why the author tells the story in the way she or he does including devices such as imagery, metaphor, symbol, irony, diction, and tone, all of which illuminate the author's style and purpose.

This activity, which you may feel slows down your pace, helps you process the literary significance of the story and creates a practical referencing tool. When you return in the fall, your annotations will help refresh your memory to write an essay or to prepare for a Socratic seminar.

Consider the following themes, often associated with American literature, to help guide you in your close reading. Among your annotations and notes, be sure to select at least one passage that addresses each of the following six themes:

1. Frontier
2. Fear and Moral Struggle
3. Identity: Individual within Community
4. Journey
5. Initiation and Self-Discovery
6. Conformity and Rebellion

As a guide for your reading, pay attention to Momaday's complex narrative perspective that uses multiple shifting narrators; look at his use of setting, both physical and temporal; consider how he depicts Native American culture or the clash of cultures between Native Americans and Anglos; and reflect on the role of storytelling and figures who tell stories to maintain cultural memories.

Note: Because annotation is subjective, you may find that your peers have marked or that your teacher is citing words, phrases, or entire passages that you did not. That is okay. You will likely note similar overarching ideas. The American Literature instructors encourage you to be self-directed, but, of course, you are welcome to email Mrs. Boswell or Mr. Coleman if you have questions.