

BENGAL ENGLISH




Dear Honors English III Students,

I hope summer is getting off to a nice start for you all! This coming year as an Honors English III student, you will have the opportunity to engage in critical analysis of American literature and texts, along with intensive writing practice as we respond to these texts through a variety of activities. As your skills as a thinker, speaker, reader, and writer are pushed through this course, we will also answer questions such as, “What is the ‘American dream’?” and “How does our individual identity and experience play a role in shaping and reflecting our national identity?”

There will be one required summer read for Honors English III. It is a memoir, written by Jeannette Walls, titled *The Glass Castle*. Complete the reading and journal activities outlined below before the first day of class, on Wednesday, August 31st. You may purchase the novel (amazon, kindle, etc.) or check the novel out from Lewis and Clark Library. It is available used for \$5 and new for \$10 on Amazon.com. Please email Mr. Jones (info below) if you are unable to find a copy or purchase the novel this summer.

Enjoy the rest of summer and I look forward to talking with you about your experience with the novel, *The Glass Castle* upon our return in August!


Sol Jones
sjones@helenaschools.org

Novel: *The Glass Castle: A Memoir by Jeannette Walls* ISBN: 9780743247542

Journal activities (due 1st day of class – Aug. 31)

Criteria: Create 12 or more complete journal entries (taken from throughout the novel) based on the following four categories (label each quote with its category):

1. **3 Characterization** (quotes/passages which reveal something significant about a character)
2. **3 Theme** (quotes/passages which help to develop a theme you have identified within the text)
3. **3 Recurring Patterns of images, ideas, or symbols** (analyze one or more of these repetitions within the novel)
4. **3 Choice quotes** – these can include other structural or literary features you notice, they can be focused critiques of the novel, or they can highlight connections with other texts you’ve read. Just be sure you can support your choice.

Journal format (examples on back): Create a 3-column chart for entries (Word / Google doc, or hand-written journal). Be sure you line up entries so your organization is clear; you may want to use a ruler if hand-writing your journal, or ‘insert a chart’ in a Word or Google doc if you are completing a digital journal. Your journal should be one continuous document – DO NOT begin each journal on a new page. Digital versions must be printed and brought to class in hard-copy form. *see ex’s on back of letter →

**Journal entry format, emphasis, and criteria:*

Quote (1st column)	Analysis (2nd column)	Style (3rd column)
<p>• In the 1st column, identify the category & type what the passage “says” (do not shorten quotes & passages with ellipses). This quote should be one that you believe illustrates a significant idea. Cite these quotations in MLA format by putting quotes around them and attributing them to the author; be sure to record the page number where you found the quote (Walls #). Your passages can range in length from one sentence to an entire paragraph -- you should offer a variety within your entries.</p>	<p>• The middle column exists for your reflection and interpretation on what the text “does” - explain in your own words what you believe the significance of the passage to be. What does it reveal? How? Do not summarize what is being said – reflect on WHY it is important. Each response should be a minimum of 100 words and must be written in COMPLETE sentences. Include a word count at the end of each entry.</p>	<p>• The last column should identify the stylistic and/or literary features of the passage. This involves the structure of the passage – not just its meaning. What stylistic choices has the author made (syntax, diction, imagery, etc)? Can you identify any literary or rhetorical devices within the passage? How do these contribute to the meaning? What effect(s) do they have? Why do you think the author makes these choices in his writing? There is no minimum word count for this column but you should be clear and detailed in your response. Each passage must have at least one comment in this column.</p>

**Sample journal entry:*

Quote (1st column)	Analysis (2nd column)	Style (3rd column)
<p><i>Recurring pattern:</i> “I was sitting in a taxi, wondering if I had overdressed for the evening, when I looked out the window and saw Mom rooting through a Dumpster. It was just after dark. A blustery March wind whipped the steam coming out of the manholes, and people hurried along the sidewalks with their collars turned up. I was stuck in traffic two blocks from the party where I was heading” (Walls 3).</p>	<p>I feel this may be establishing a <i>recurring pattern</i> – seeing her mother evokes a powerful reaction. This passage provides an immediate and stark contrast between the circumstances of both Walls’ life and that of her mother. This is developed by implying the financial status of each, but also in the very different activities they are engaged in (scavenging vs. worrying over appearance prior to a party). Inclusion of Walls’ insecurities regarding her attire for evening festivities provides a “normal” concern that likely seems familiar, or at least relatable, for readers. However, while the image of her mother scavenging on a “blustery” night may evoke emotion in readers.</p>	<p>Clearly, a distinctive juxtaposition is inserted here by Walls, establishing the stark contrast between her and her mother. Walls utilizes varied syntax as she engages her reader, beginning with a lengthy complex sentence establishing character actions, followed by a short declarative sentence establishing setting. She also employs adequate imagery (“blustery” weather, steam rising in the chill of evening, and passers-by bracing themselves against the cold) without overwhelming her readers with too much too soon. This approach serves to effectively spark and retain audience attention as Walls leads into her memoir.</p>