



Honors American Literature 2026- 2027 Summer Reading

Dear Parents and Students,

Congratulations on the completion of another school year! The following is the Honors American Literature reading requirement for the summer of 2026. The purpose of summer reading is to enjoy literature as well as prevent students' reading and writing skills from regressing.

This year, students in Honors American Literature are required to read the **unabridged 1831 version** of ***Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley** and **complete the dialectical journal as explained in the following pages**. Even though Mary Shelley is a British author, the novel *Frankenstein* was a precursor to many of the American Gothic tales that will be read in Honors American Literature, and it is a thought-provoking commentary on the dangers of pursuing knowledge without considering the moral consequences. It is best to use [THIS](#) link to purchase a physical copy of the book so that all students can be "on the same page," but it is not required. However, if you choose to use a book from the library, please **plan to have the book with you in class** for the first few weeks of school because we will be using the book and writing an essay after we return from summer break.

In addition to the summer reading book, students are encouraged to read at least 20 minutes daily throughout the summer. Many times, students will make a lot of progress during the school year, but when they do not read daily over the summer, they often lose reading development. Students who do read tend to gain reading proficiency.

All returning students are required to complete the summer reading assignments regardless of date of re-enrollment.

If you have any questions please direct them to me at the following email address:

nstewart1@parkwaychristian.org

I will check my email periodically throughout the summer.

Have a blessed summer, and we look forward to seeing you back in the fall.

Mrs. Nancy Stewart
The English Department
Parkway Christian School
586-446-9900

Frankenstein Dialectical Journal
Summer Reading 2026
Honors American Literature

DIALECTICAL JOURNAL INSTRUCTIONS- Due the 1st day of School, August 24, 2026

The term “Dialectic” means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer”. Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with the text– like a Socratic seminar, but in written form. The process is meant to help you develop a better understanding of the texts we read in class.

ASSIGNMENT: Obtain and read an **unabridged** copy of *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley.

- As you read, you will create a dialectical journal for *Frankenstein*.
- Journal entries must be **neatly handwritten** and **100% original thought**- no AI use of any kind is allowed and will result in zero credit if utilized.
- Each entry must have a quote with the proper citation in MLA format (Shelley page number) AND a response to each passage.

The sections and number of entries are as follows:

- Letters 1-4 (Walton’s POV) – 2 entries- 12 pts.
- Chapter 1-10 (Victor’s POV) – 2 entries- 12 pts.
- Chapter 11-16 (Creature’s POV) – 2 entries- 12 pts.
- Chapter 17-24 (Victor/Walton’s POV) – 3 entries- 18 pts.

PROCEDURE: For each dialectical journal entry per section (9 total), please consider the following:

1. As you read, **choose passages that stand out to you** and record the speaker and the quote in the left-hand column of a T-chart (ALWAYS include a proper citation). **Highlight the words** you will focus on in your journal entry.
2. Look for quotes that seem significant, powerful, and/or thought provoking:
 - a. Effective and/or creative use of stylistic or literary devices
 - b. Structural shifts or turns in the plot
 - c. A passage that makes you realize something you hadn’t seen before
 - d. Examples of patterns: recurring images, symbols, or motifs
 - e. Passages that illustrate a particular character
 - f. Passages that show and track the development of a particular theme
3. In the right column, write your response (include the category of response from the list on the next page). Each response should be 8-10 properly-written sentences.
4. Grading Rubric: 1 pt. for speaker, 1 pt. for quotation, highlight, and citation, 1 pt. for category, and up to 3 pts. for depth of thought in your response. (Total of 6 pts. per journal entry). An additional 6 pts. will be included for overall thought, neatness, adherence to instructions, for a total quiz grade of 60 pts.

CATEGORIES/TYPES OF RESPONSE: (list one or more before your paragraph response):

1. **Question:** ask about something unclear.
2. **Connection:** make a connection to the world, life, the Bible, or another book.
3. **Prediction:** anticipate what might happen in the story.
4. **Clarification:** answer earlier questions or confirm/correct a prediction.
5. **Reflection:** think deeply about what the passage means or what conclusions you can draw about the world or humanity.
6. **Evaluation:** make a judgment about the author's main idea.
7. **Analysis:** explain how the author is using language to make a point or persuade his audience.

EXAMPLE DIALECTICAL JOURNAL ENTRY (must be handwritten):

Speaker/Quote/Citation	Category/Response
<u>Speaker:</u> Robert Walton "My affection for my guest increases every day. He excites at once my admiration and my pity to an astonishing degree. How can I see so noble a creature destroyed by misery without feeling the most poignant grief? He is so gentle, yet so wise; his mind is so cultivated, and when he speaks, although his words are culled with the choicest art, yet they flow with rapidity and unparalleled eloquence" (Shelley 11).	<u>Category:</u> Reflection, Question, Analysis Robert Walton's letters show that he has been lonely and has wanted to find someone who will understand him and be an intellectual equal. Why then does he call Victor Frankenstein a "creature"? Is this just a word choice, or is Shelley trying to foreshadow the coming tale? Are humans "creatures" as a "creation" of God? Are these terms interchangeable? Does the word choice matter, with Walton inadvertently distancing himself from Victor Frankenstein's crushed humanity by calling him a creature? He could also just be choosing elevated language to imply his deep admiration and respect for him. Also, "culled" means carefully chosen, and "choicest art" implies that it is done with skill and deliberation. I wonder if both of these terms used for his eloquence will also later reflect how Victor will create the monster? It will be interesting to see if any of these words appear again in the novel in a different context.

Academic Integrity Statement: I have read the entire unabridged book *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley and have completed this journal entirely by myself by hand without the use of the internet or any type of AI.

By signing, you verify that the statement above is 100% true, and you understand that serious penalties including, but not limited to, a grade of zero, detention, and suspension may be assessed if it is found that a student has been dishonest or has cheated in any fashion.

Student Signature_____