

**Anchor Bay High School
Honors English 10
Required Summer Reading and Assignment
2025-2026**



“To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark.” — Victor Hugo

Overview

During this course, you will be progressing at an accelerated rate developing your critical analyzing and synthesizing skills while reading and writing. Reading for fun and reading to analyze require two different approaches. Since we will be focusing on analysis this year, be sure to approach the texts by looking beyond the literal level and searching for a deeper meaning.

All Honors English 10 students will read the memoir, *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls. You **MUST** purchase your own copy.

You will have assessments (discussions, objective tests, short answers, and/or essays) concerning the text when we return in the fall. The assignment is due on the first full day of school. Late work will follow the ABHS policy.

While we have high expectations about your job analyzing the text, we also hope you enjoy reading it as well! If you have any questions about the assignment, please contact Mrs. Skeltis at cskeltis@abs.misd.net or Mr. Dodt at rdodt@abs.misd.net. Be sure to appropriately title your emails. We look forward to working with everyone next year!

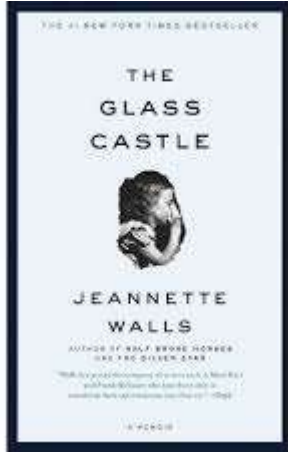
“I still love books. Nothing a computer can do can compare to a book. You can’t really put a book on the Internet. Three companies have offered to put books by me on the Net, and I said, ‘If you can make something that has a nice jacket, nice paper with that nice smell, then we’ll talk.’ All the computer can give you is a manuscript. People don’t want to read manuscripts. They want to read books.”

— Ray Bradbury

***The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls**

Assignment Directions

The Glass Castle is a memoir by Jeannette Walls that recounts her unconventional and often harsh upbringing in a deeply dysfunctional yet loving family. Growing up in poverty with nomadic, eccentric parents—an intelligent but alcoholic father and a free-spirited, neglectful mother—Walls and her siblings must learn resilience and self-reliance. Despite the neglect and instability, Walls eventually escapes her circumstances to build a successful life, showing remarkable determination and hope.



Rationale for Reading *The Glass Castle*:

The Glass Castle serves as an excellent foundation for analytical study due to its narrative style, complex character development, and layered themes. As a memoir, it blurs the line between objective truth and personal perspective, offering students the opportunity to examine the reliability of narration, the role of memory, and the construction of identity through storytelling. The text invites critical analysis of themes such as independence, resilience, and the American Dream, while also prompting discussion on broader social issues like poverty, mental illness, and familial responsibility. Its rich literary devices—symbolism, irony, tone, and structure—make it a valuable text for honing close reading, annotation, and writing skills, aligning with honors-level expectations for textual interpretation and evidence-based argumentation.

Disclaimer:

The Glass Castle contains some mature content and situations. These elements are presented with literary purpose, contributing to the memoir's authenticity and emotional depth. This content will not be focused on, but any discussions will be handled with care and respect in the classroom, and students will be encouraged to engage thoughtfully with the material. Parents and guardians are welcome to preview the text and reach out with any concerns.

What to Do:

1. Read the entire work.
2. As you read, annotate the text by writing notes, questions, and highlighting important lines directly on the pages. Review the following information on how to annotate effectively.
3. Respond to the following analytical questions. These responses should be **handwritten** on lined paper in blue or black ink. Review the following information on how to write analytical responses. Please label each question with the corresponding number and include your first and last name at the top your work on each page. Make sure all writing is neat and legible.

A Reader's Guide to Annotation

As you read your novels, think about ways that you can connect with what you are reading. The following are some suggestions that will help with annotating.

1. Instincts & insights (your internal thoughts + personal connections)

- a. *These are your personal thoughts, questions, connections, or emotional reactions – anything that jumps out at you or sparks your interests*

2. Character Development & Dynamics Between Characters

- a. *Keeping track of characters. Pay attention to how characters grow, clash, connect, change, and how their relationships shape their journey and or the plot.*

3. Shifts in Tone & Mood

- a. *How does the story feel?*
 - i. *Track the shifts in tone and mood – whether it's sunny, tense, stormy, playful, or eerie – you're trying to understand the emotional landscape of the text*

4. Literary Tools & Devices Used by the Author

- a. *Highlight or label literary devices that the author is using to tell the story. (i.e. metaphors, imagery, symbolism, irony, diction, figurative language... etc.)*

5. Big Picture Views (theme development)

- a. *Look for recurring ideas, questions, or messages the author wants you to think about – look at the big picture – this is how you find theme*

~Beginning to annotate.

Use a pen, pencil, post-it notes, or a highlighter (*although use it sparingly!*)

- Summarize important ideas in your own words.
- Add examples from real life, other books (especially those read in school), TV, movies, and so forth.
- Define words that are new to you; this will help to build your vocabulary.
- Mark passages that you find confusing with a ???
 - (Remember to get your questions answered during class discussions)
- Write questions that you might have for later discussion in class.
 - (Remember to get your questions answered during class discussions)
- Comment on the actions or development of characters.
- Comment on developing themes
- Comment on things that intrigue, impress, surprise, disturb, etc.
- Note how the author uses language; paying particular attention to how literary devices are used.
- Feel free to draw picture when a visual connection is appropriate
- Explain the historical context or traditions/social customs used in the passage.
- Highlight/underline passages that are referred to on your study guides.

~Suggested methods for marking a text:

- *If you are a person who does not like to write in a book, you may want to invest in a supply of post it notes.
- *If you feel really creative, or are just super organized, you can even color code your annotations by using different color post-its, highlighters, or pens.
- *Marking important, and significant quotes that are meaningful to you will help you to prepare for the AP exam in May
- *Marginal Notes: Use the space in the margins to make comments, define words, ask questions, etc. (Remember to get your questions answered during class discussions)

Analyzing Literature

Now that you have thought critically about the text, you must use these ideas to analyze its meaning. In writing about literature or any specific text, you will be required to cite specific examples from the text as evidence. Rather than simply dropping in quotations and expecting their significance and relevance to your argument to be self-evident, you need to provide sufficient analysis of the passage. Remember that your over-riding goal of analysis writing is to demonstrate some new understanding of the text. Try to look at the words **beyond the obvious or literal meaning** while asking what is the significance this? The idea is to draw conclusions about the text's meaning and use textual evidence to support your point.

The following is an example of quote/evidence analysis from *The Glass Castle*:

Question: What does the following quote reveal about Jeannette's mother?

"After all,' Mom said, 'I am your mother, and I should have a say in how you're raised' "(12).

Analytical Answer: *Jeannette is showing irony in the fact that her mother says she should have a say in how she is raised, but in reality her mother lets her own kids do whatever they want with very little guidance from her. She believes she should have a say, yet her parenting skills caused her daughter to suffer a terrible burn. This quote reveals her desire for control without accountability, and it highlights the theme of parental neglect and the children's need to raise themselves.*

In this answer, the writer **does not rephrase** the quote or summarize the story. The writer **looks beyond** the literal words of the quote and digs deep to uncover its meaning. Notice that the analysis comes from one's own conclusion based on the evidence and provides insight, rather than restating the obvious. Analysis also includes looking for literary elements and thinking about their effect or purpose. The idea is to read in between the lines and think about what message/point the author is trying to send to the reader. Your goal is to explain **how the evidence works to prove your point** by looking at a text on a deeper level.

The Glass Castle

By Jeannette Walls

Study Guide & Analysis

*Directions: For each of the questions below, you must directly cite an example from the text (including page numbers) for support. Next, analyze each quotation/evidence by explaining what it shows **beyond** the literal level. (See previous handout for more explanation on how to analyze effectively. Your answers should resemble the example. Be sure to answer questions specifically by **pointing to the textual evidence that proves your point**. Answers should be thorough, complete sentences, and with correct grammar/mechanics. Please handwrite answers in ink on lined paper.*

1. **How does the memoir begin, and why do you think Jeannette starts her story this way?**
Cite the scene and explain its significance.
2. **In the early part of “The Desert,” Jeannette uses the voice of a three-year-old child who is horribly burned from cooking hotdogs. Analyze the significance of the following quotation:**
“That was the thing about the hospital. You never had to worry about running out of stuff like food or rice or even chewing gum; I would have been happy staying in the hospital forever” (12).
3. **What is the significance of the “skedaddle” in the Walls family’s life?**
Cite a specific time this occurs and explain its impact.
4. **Describe Jeannette’s relationship with her father, Rex. Cite at least one scene that shows their bond.**
5. **How does Rose Mary Walls’ attitude toward parenting differ from traditional expectations?**
Support with an example from the text.
6. **What does the Joshua tree symbolize, and how does it reflect Jeannette’s view of her family?**
Use the scene where it is described and explain its meaning.
7. **How does Rex use storytelling to influence his children’s perceptions of their life?**
Cite a story he tells and explain its effect.
8. **After Jeannette’s “swimming lesson” with Dad, what is she now beginning to realize?**
Cite specific evidence.
9. **Jeannette’s mom gets a teaching position. In what ways do the children become “parents” to their mom? Cite a specific example.**
10. **The Walls family has a camping trip that goes badly. After the family is rescued, the lady who rescues them refers to “poor” people. What does this event suggest about Jeannette’s comprehension of being poor? Cite a specific example.**
11. **How do Jeannette and her siblings respond to their life in Welch? Use textual evidence to describe their adaptation.**

12. **After swimming in the pool, what does Jeannette mean when she says: “I never felt cleaner” (192)?**
13. **Describe a time when Jeannette takes on a leadership role in the family. Provide a scene and explain what it reveals about her.**
14. **What does Jeannette’s recollection of the incident with Lori’s eyeglasses reveal about the family’s priorities? Cite a specific example.**
15. **In what ways do the Walls children support one another? Give an example of their loyalty or teamwork.**
16. **Discuss a time when Jeannette questions her parents’ choices. Cite an example showing her growing independence.**
17. **What does the memoir suggest about resilience and survival? Support with a specific example of how a character adapts.**
18. **The youngest sibling, Maureen, is drastically different than the other three siblings. Cite an event that shows this contrast and explain its importance.**
19. **What does Lori hope to achieve by moving to New York, and how does she make it happen? Use the text to support your answer.**
20. **In what ways is education presented as a path to freedom in the memoir? Support with Lori’s or Jeannette’s experiences.**
21. **In Part IV: New York City, Lori and Jeannette begin a new life in New York City, and later Brian joins them. However, their dreams of independence are shattered when their parents decide to join them. How do the Walls children handle their parents and set limits on them? Cite a specific example.**
22. **How does the Walls family challenge or reinforce the idea of the “American Dream”? Cite a scene that shows either pursuit or rejection of this idea.**
23. **What does the fact that Rose Mary Walls had over a million dollars tied up in real estate reveal about her character and values? Explain how this changes or reinforces your understanding of her.**
24. **How does Walls use humor to soften or highlight painful experiences? Cite a passage that uses humor and analyze its effect.**
25. **What message does The Glass Castle convey about forgiveness and understanding? Support your response with a moment when Jeannette reflects on her parents’ actions.**