

# Naperville Central Communication Arts | Summer Reading Assignment

## Honors English 2: Journalism

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“There is no more important contribution that we can make to society than strong, publicly spirited investigative journalism.”

~Tony Burman, editor-in-chief of CBS News

“Good journalism thrives on good quotations. The right quotes...enliven and humanize a story...”

~Paula LaRocque, *Championship Writing*

“Don’t write about man, write about a man.” ~E.B. White

Welcome to Honors English 2: Journalism! Regardless of your future goals and career plans, studying journalism will pay off for you. This course focuses on real-world skills you can apply to your academic and professional life, such as writing frequently for an authentic audience, researching, interviewing and talking to people, identifying facts, and communicating in a way that will inform and interest others.

In a world where anyone can publish “stories” and “report news” online, it is more important than ever to learn how to detect and produce journalism with integrity and accuracy. Journalism is a fast-paced, exciting and quickly-evolving field, but its core principles have not changed much at all. It is still a career path for those who believe that the truth must be made available to people and that **everyone has a story worth telling**. We want to begin that storytelling journey right away!

As preparation for the fall semester of your English 2 experience, you will be expected to read a novel and a section of a non-fiction text about journalism. You should arrive to class on the first day prepared to discuss them. The opening days of the semester in the fall will include an in-class writing experience based on our discussions.

Best-selling author Stephen King, in his memoir *On Writing*, said that “if you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot.” Honors English 2: Journalism will be filled with rich and challenging reading and writing experiences. Your completion of this summer assignment will adequately prepare you for our journey together.

If you have questions while working on your assignment, you can contact Mr. Carlson at [kcarlson@naperville203.org](mailto:kcarlson@naperville203.org). Please understand that a response might take a few days due to summer schedules. I look forward to meeting you and helping you to become a stronger writer and student!



Mr. Keith Carlson, CJE (Certified Journalism Educator)  
Communication Arts teacher and faculty adviser to the *Central Times*

## READING ASSIGNMENT

To prepare yourself for Honors English 2: Journalism, please acquire copies of the following books:

1. ***The Shipping News* by Annie Proulx, 1994** (roughly \$10 on Amazon).
2. ***The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect, Revised and Updated 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition* by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosensteil, 2014** (roughly \$14 on Amazon...make sure to get the correct edition!)

Because you are expected to annotate, purchased copies are preferable to library books, and print copies are preferable to digital, unless you are skilled with digital annotation and can show evidence of it to your teacher. (If borrowing a book, please develop a post-it note annotation system.) Below, you will find some discussion questions to guide your reading and help you self-assess your reading comprehension. Consider identifying answers to these questions in your annotations or separately.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR *THE SHIPPING NEWS*

Read and annotate the full novel over the summer. We will have discussions followed by an in-class writing assignment about the book during the first couple of weeks of class. As you are annotating, you should be thinking about the following questions:

1. **How do the editors and writers of the *Gammy Bird* prioritize the stories that appear in the newspaper?**
2. **How do the values of the community and the lifestyle of Newfoundland affect “what is news?”**
3. **What do you notice about the process of reporting in the book? Is it similar or different from what you expect traditional reporting to look like? How? Why?**
4. **How is the process of putting together the newspaper (writing, editing, layout, etc...) similar or different from what you expect it to look like? How? Why?**
5. **Where do you see the “Elements of Journalism” present in the book? Can you point to specific examples?**

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR *THE ELEMENTS OF JOURNALISM*

Read and annotate the preface, introduction and first chapter of the book over the summer. This will provide you with an overview of the authors’ 10 “elements of journalism,” which are each explored in detail in the book’s remaining chapters. **You do not need to read past the end of Chapter 1 (page 45) this summer;** you’ll be assigned additional chapters from the book throughout the school year. (For this reason, it’s recommended that you buy this book!) As you are annotating, you should be thinking about the following questions:

1. **What are the roles and responsibilities of citizens in relation to journalism? In what ways could journalism be defined as “collaborative”?**
2. **What is a journalist, and how has its evolving definition impacted the practice, craft, and profession of journalism? How important is it that we have a universal definition for journalist or journalism?**
3. **How would you describe or characterize “fair journalism”?**
4. **How has the role of the journalist evolved in our country, and what are some of the tasks now required of a journalist?**
5. **What is the “theory of the interlocking public,” and what challenges do journalists today face in dealing with this kind of audience? How has the audience for journalism evolved from the one described in *The Shipping News*?**

## ANNOTATING YOUR BOOK

Annotating is an important skill that must be individualized for each reader. There is no single “correct” way to annotate literature, though there are several strategies that have proven to work well for many students. You should develop your own strategy for annotation that accomplishes the following:

- Mark/identify key or important ideas or plot developments
- Ask questions
- Define terms or unknown vocabulary
- Identify answers to pre-reading discussion questions provided by your teacher
- Highlight quotes or ideas that you find personally impactful or meaningful
- Summarize sections of readings (such as chapters) for quick reference later on

Consider these strategies and suggestions as you work to find a method of annotating that works best for you. If reading electronically, try to develop strategies that approximate these ideas:

- **Do not simply highlight everything.** When you highlight most of a page, the highlights don’t mean much. Save highlighting for things like favorite quotes or most important points or key evidence. No more than 20% of the total text should be highlighted!
- **Use pencil or colored pens for everything else.** Underline things that you want to be able to find later, but that aren’t important enough to highlight. Make notes on the outer margins of pages to help you quickly find reading sections later on. Circle new and unfamiliar words to look up as soon as possible. Underline names of new characters as they enter the story.
- **Underline the topic sentence in nonfiction passages.** With most nonfiction writing, new sections and sometimes individual paragraphs have a topic sentence, and the rest is supporting information and examples. If you can identify the topic sentence, it will be easier to find everything.
- **Use your own code system.** Many readers develop their own system of codes to annotate while reading. This could include colored pens or highlighters to indicate different aspects of the writing, or written shorthand, such as a question mark in the margin next to something you don’t understand or star for a “most important point.” Add numbers in the margins to longer nonfiction texts that are making several points (such as: “there are three main reasons for...”). Draw arrows.
- **If you’re averse to marking up a book, change your attitude!** Some people have an aversion to marking directly in their texts. Books are precious things to many people and some want to protect them from damage and even the wear and tear of everyday use. Try to think of these texts as a lasting record of your learning and discovery process, and mark them up! Your books will become more valuable to you when you can look back on the notes you took in them and revisit what you were thinking at the time. In 10 years, you won’t even be the same person you were when you read a book. When you annotate, a book becomes *your* copy, not just *a* copy.
- **But if you just can’t bring yourself to write in your book, you can still annotate!** Grab some sticky notes or flags and do your marking and writing on them. You can even use the post-its to organize ideas for future writing assignments.
- **Summarize.** One of the best ways to help you find things later is to pause at the end of each chapter and go back to the beginning of that chapter and write a sentence or two that summarizes the main points or ideas of that chapter. You can also write phrases along the outside page margins to remind yourself what happens on that page. This will make your life a lot easier when you’re trying to flip back through the book to find something. It also creates a way for you to “speed re-read” the book at a later date...you’ll be able to skim rather than read every word.

### \*\*\*IMPORTANT!\*\*\*

*Bring your annotated texts and reading notes to the first day of class! You will need them for both class discussion and your first assignment. Failure to complete the reading may result in a loss of points not only for this assignment, but for any activities related to the readings that take place at the start of the school year.*