

American Literature/History  
Mrs. Shannon/Mr. Southards  
Summer Reading Assignment

This summer, the rising seniors will read two texts in preparation for studying American literature and history. Both of these texts relate to the events of September 11, 2001, and the evolution of militant Islam during the 20th century as it relates to the West. Please follow the instructions below in order to receive credit for your reading in the fall. You will turn these questions in on the first day of literature class. You may not use AI to do this assignment and you should not need to do additional research.

**1.) Please watch the following short videos:**

Please watch this first video until the 11:52 timestamp:

▶ 9/11/01 Live Regis and Kelly (Entire 58 minutes of the show)

Please watch these videos in their entirety:

▶ 9/11 Timeline: The Attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City | History

▶ 9/11 Timeline: The Attack on United 93 and the Pentagon | History

▶ 9/11: The Pentagon | History

▶ WATCH: President George W. Bush's address to the nation after September 11, 2...

▶ Remarks by President George W. Bush at Ground Zero, 9/14/2001

Optional Video: Baseball after 9/11: [First Pitch](#)

**2.) Please read these texts *in the following order*:**

*The Only Plane in the Sky*, Garrett M. Graff

*Letter to the American People*, al-Qaeda, unknown author (link below)

<https://scholarship.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/218e2431-0b76-43ff-8ac5-284ae73d29ad/content>

*The Looming Tower*, Lawrence Wright



3.) Please annotate as you watch and read for the following questions and fill in your notes in the spaces below. You do not need to write in complete sentences, but your answers should be detailed. I will collect these questions as a test grade on the first day of class.

- a.) What was American culture like before and after the 9/11 attacks? Please list text references and describe.

b.) What examples of heroism are described in these texts and videos? Please list text references and describe. Which story is most striking to you?

c.) How have the 9/11 attacks continued to impact the American people's worldview, politics, media, and international relations long after they took place? Please list general observations.

d.) What factors led to the 9/11 attacks? Please list at least 10.

e.) How did the Middle Eastern terrorist groups and individuals who planned or supported the 9/11 attacks view the Western/American culture? What were they hoping to accomplish? Please list text references and describe.

f.) What characteristics of worldview/mindset did the 9/11 terrorists and supporting groups share? Do any groups share these characteristics today?