



Austin High School  
Summer Reading Assignment  
Incoming 12<sup>th</sup> grade AP Literature and Composition for 2025-2026

Dear Class of 2026,

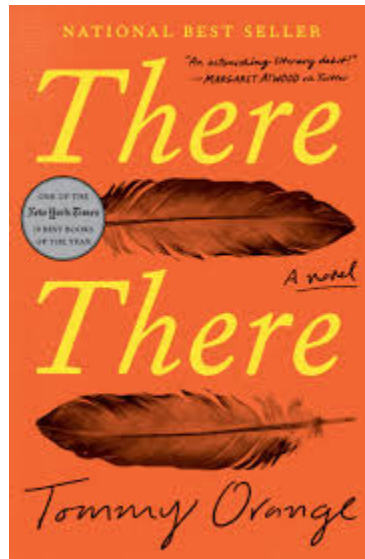
While reading in general is the expectation of any student, successful Advanced Placement students are those who read *outside* and *beyond* class assignments. We believe that life-long learners are also life-long readers and thinkers. Additionally, there are certain realities we must accept. In registering for AP Literature and Composition, you are committing to a college level course during your high school career. In order for you to compete with your peers across the nation not only on the AP test but in the college classroom, you need constant exposure to works of literary merit. We think you will find your reading both enjoyable and academically worthwhile.

The assignment asks for you to read and demonstrate some of your thoughts about the narrative elements in the novel *prior to the second day of class*. Please keep the following in mind: summer reading assignments help your English teacher gauge your critical reading, writing, and thinking skills. Therefore, all work should be completed independently; do not partner with a friend, or receive too much help from a tutor or parent. Work submitted will be screened through a plagiarism clearinghouse. Do not conduct any research online or seek out sources like gradesaver, sparknotes, cliffsnotes, schmoop, an AI site, including Grammarly, etc. which are websites designed to take advanced texts and simplify them for the reader. Using online sources like these websites is prohibited in the [Austin High ELA Plagiarism Policy](#). Our expectation is that you read the text and work independently with the text assigned, even if you have to grapple with some analysis. If you have any questions, please reach out to an English teacher listed on the assignment. We're here to help!

We look forward to learning with you,

*The AP Literature and Composition Teachers*

## Summer Reading Selection



### ***There There* by Tommy Orange**

#### About the Novel

From Goodreads —

Tommy Orange's wondrous and shattering novel follows twelve characters from Native communities: all traveling to the Big Oakland Powwow, all connected to one another in ways they may not yet realize.

Among them is Jacquie Red Feather, newly sober and trying to make it back to the family she left behind. Dene Oxendene, pulling his life together after his uncle's death and working at the powwow to honor his memory. Fourteen-year-old Orvil, coming to perform traditional dance for the very first time. Together, this chorus of voices tells of the plight of the urban Native American--grappling with a complex and painful history, with an inheritance of beauty and spirituality, with communion and sacrifice and heroism. Hailed as an instant classic, *There There* is at once poignant and unflinching, utterly contemporary and truly unforgettable.

#### The Assignment

1. Read and enjoy the book!
2. Complete the following assignment:

***There There* is divided into three parts: Remain, Reclaim, and Return. Choose a character OR relationship (either with another character or with an idea/value) that relates to EACH part of the novel and write a two paragraph response.**

- One paragraph should discuss how the chosen character or relationship represents the title of EACH part (Remain, Reclaim, Return) and should include 2 embedded, cited quotations from that part. Use the quote sandwich format to craft your response. (See the template below)
- The second paragraph should discuss how the character or relationship contributes to the theme of the work. When writing about a theme, consider the lesson the author asserts regarding the larger thematic subject of the work. Examples of thematic subjects (not necessarily for *There There*) include empathy, faith, ambition, destiny, greed, etc. Include 2 embedded, cited quotations from that part to support your suggestion of thematic relevance. You will craft **6 total paragraphs** using this template (2 paragraphs for each of the three sections of the novel.)

Sentence #		Function of the Sentence
Topic Sentence	1	Provides a direction for the response; makes a claim/asserts an argument
Quotation Sandwich	2	Introduces the text example
	3	Weaves text from the passage (embedded evidence should be grammatically correct and cited with page number)
	4 - 5	Elaborates, analyzes, and discusses the example; dissect the evidence as an example of your claim/argument
Quotation Sandwich	6	Transition to your second text example
	7	Weaves text from the passage (embedded evidence should be grammatically correct and cited with page number)
	8-9	Elaborates, analyzes, and discusses the example; dissect the evidence as an example of your claim/argument

**The following is a response to demonstrate the quote sandwich structure outlined in the template above. Note: It does NOT attempt to respond to the prompt on which you will write.**

Richard Gregory employs simple, yet powerful, diction to give the reader insight into how he perceived his own poverty and how damaging that perception was. Early in his memoir Gregory provides insight into his struggles to manage his poverty while struggling to attend school. By describing to the reader how he feels “pregnant with poverty[,] pregnant with dirt and pregnant with smells that made people turn away[,] pregnant with cold [,] pregnant with . . . no daddy in the next room, and pregnant with hunger,” we understand that poverty for Richard Gregory becomes a part of his identity just as a woman’s identity shifts when she becomes pregnant (Gregory, 2). The connotation and the repetition of the word ‘pregnant’ suggests the physical discomfort, permanence, and obviousness of his poverty, all of which brings him shame well into his adulthood. In addition to his use of such simple word choice, he also employs . . . (And you would then add a second quote sandwich to complete the paragraph.)

**\*\*\*\* Your second paragraph will follow the same template as the one above but would discuss the broader *thematic lesson* learned by *the reader* from having read the text. \*\*\*\***

Poverty has a lasting detrimental impact on an individual, particularly when coupled with feelings of humiliation. This impact is seen when Gregory “-----”, etc.

Notice that the thematic statement above does not include plot points, character names, or any other specifics of the text. To investigate and discuss the theme, ask yourself: What lesson is this text example teaching ME about human nature, about myself, about relationships, etc?

### Questions

If you have questions or need more information about the assignment, please feel free to contact Kerri Ault at [kerri.ault@austinisd.org](mailto:kerri.ault@austinisd.org) or Renae Jackson at [renae.jackson@austinisd.org](mailto:renae.jackson@austinisd.org).