

11th Grade Thematic Topic: The American Dream

The Jungle by Upton Sinclair: In this powerful book we enter the world of Jurgis Rudkus, a young Lithuanian immigrant who arrived in America filled with dreams of wealth, freedom, and opportunity. And we discover, with him, the astonishing truth about “packingtown,” the busy Chicago stockyards, where new world visions perish in a jungle of human suffering. Upton Sinclair, master of the “muckraking” novel, here explores the workingman’s lot at the turn of the century: the backbreaking labor, the injustices of “wage slavery,” the bewildering chaos of urban life. *The Jungle*, a story so shocking that it launched a government investigation, recreates this chapter of our history in unflinching detail.

Catch Me If You Can by Frank Abagnale: Frank W. Abagnale was one of the most daring con men, forgers, imposters, and escape artists in history. In his brief but notorious criminal career, Abagnale donned a pilot’s uniform and copiloted a Pan Am jet, masqueraded as the supervising resident of a hospital, practiced law without a license, passed himself off as a college sociology professor, and cashed over \$2.5 million in forged checks, all before he was twenty-one.

The Bean Trees by Barbara Kingsolver: Growing up in Kentucky, Taylor Greer dreams of getting away. She heads west with high hopes and a barely functional car. By the time she arrives in Tucson, she has acquired a completely unexpected child and must somehow come to terms with both motherhood and the necessity for putting down roots. Hers is a story about love and friendship, abandonment and belonging, and the discovery of surprising resources in apparently empty places.

Fools Crow by James Welch: In the Two Medicine Territory of Montana, the Lone Eaters, a small band of Blackfeet Indians, are living their immemorial life. The men hunt and mount the occasional horse-taking raid or war party against the enemy Crow. The women tan the hides, sew the beadwork, and raise the children. But the year is 1870, and the whites are moving into their land. Fools Crow, a young warrior and medicine man, has seen the future and knows that the newcomers will punish resistance with swift retribution.

Guiding Questions:

- What is the American Dream? To what extent is it achievable for all Americans?
- In what ways does the American Dream mean different things for different Americans?
- How has the American Dream changed over time?

Directions: The book you have chosen to read this summer will help you to learn about the American Dream. As you read, consider the thematic topic and guiding questions above and

record your thoughts. You are responsible for identifying and recording textual evidence, as well as reflecting upon and analyzing how the evidence relates to the theme. In September, you will use these notes to write and speak about the text in class and submit them to your teacher for a grade. You may choose from any of the note-taking options listed below, but your notes must fulfill the following requirements:

- There is no minimum page requirement. However, notes must cover the entire length of the text. Be sure to include notes from the beginning, middle and end of the text.
- Notes must include textual evidence (include page number) and your thoughts, analysis, interpretation, and/or questions.
- Notes may be typed or handwritten. If you choose to type the notes, you must have a printed copy to use in class by the second day of school.

Note-Taking Options and Rubric

1. Dialectical Journal (Two-Column Notes): Using a two-column format, engage in a written dialogue with the text as you read. In the left-hand column, write the important text. In the right-hand column, respond to the text. This is where you can include reflections, analyses and explanations of how the text connects to the thematic questions.

2. In-Text Annotations: For in-text annotations, you will need to have a physical copy of the book. Record your notes directly in the book (if you purchased the book) or on post-it notes, reflecting how the text connects to the guiding questions. You will need to bring the book and your notes the first day of classes. Each post-it shall include the date and page number.

3. Outline: Create a structured outline focused on the theme and supported with textual evidence. It may be helpful to organize it based on the plot or by guiding questions.

4. Mind Mapping: Create a visual representation of text, important characters or plot episodes that connect to the guiding questions. Use lines, arrows, bubbles and/or sketches to link notes to the theme.

<p>20 Description Notes are thorough and reflective, and appear to cover the full length of the text.</p>	<p>10 Notes are somewhat thorough and reflective, and appear to cover some of the text.</p>	<p>0 Student did not complete or submit notes.</p>
---	---	--