

## AP Seminar Summer Reading 2025

Dear Rising Junior,

Welcome to AP Seminar! I am excited that you have chosen to go on this journey of research and self-discovery. This year, we will explore several pieces of literature while also working on team and independent research projects. Because AP Seminar satisfies an English requirement at Assumption High School, your coursework will include lessons in vocabulary and grammar with an emphasis on how to use these skills for research and argumentation. Finally, public speaking skills are an important component of the AP Seminar curriculum.

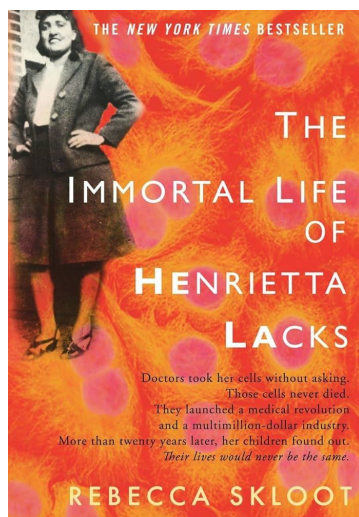
For your summer reading project, I have selected a book which I think you will enjoy. Moreover, this text provides an excellent introduction to many of the themes and skills which we will discuss in AP Sem. You need to read the book and complete the attached activities over the summer. On the second day of class, I will check your work. If any questions arise over the summer, do not hesitate to contact me via my school email address: [colleen.murphy@ahsrockets.org](mailto:colleen.murphy@ahsrockets.org).

AP Seminar emphasizes teamwork and student-directed research. The course is all about discovery-learning, and your ideas are as important as any that your teacher presents. Therefore, your preparation for class is essential in ensuring our success as a group. Have a wonderful summer and come back well-rested and prepared to begin your junior year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Murphy

### The Book:



**From Amazon:** Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor black tobacco farmer whose cells--taken without her knowledge in 1951-- became one of the most important tools in medicine, vital for developing the polio vaccine, cloning, gene mapping, and more. Henrietta's cells have been bought and sold by the billions, yet she remain virtually unknown, and her family can't afford health insurance. This phenomenal New York Times bestseller tells a riveting story of the collision between ethics, race, and medicine; of scientific discovery and faith healing; and of a daughter consumed with questions about the mother she never knew.

## The Assignment:

**Buy and read the book.** As you read, annotate the book. Annotate your book for each of the themes listed below. This means you will need to:

- **Highlight quotes** or passages related to the themes.
- **Write questions** about the book in the margins of the text.
- **Summarize plot points** at the end of each chapter.
- **Make outside connections** with personal experiences, historical events, or other books, and jot them down in the margins or on Post-It notes which you place in the book near the connections.

**Create a response journal.** When you are finished reading and annotating, create a response journal in which you type an entry for **each** of the following themes in the book:

- Justice and Injustice
- Family Connections
- Ethics and Responsibility
- Prejudice and Power Structures

Directions for journal entries:

- For each theme, provide one example (a direct quote for each example) and a 5-7 sentence commentary that explains the significance of each quote with your thoughts, connections, and reflections on the theme. Do NOT merely summarize the quote.
- A quote can only be used ONCE.
- Put your quotations in MLA format
  - Example: "This is my example quotation for the response notebook" (3).

Please follow the directions and be thorough and thoughtful when writing your commentary. Writing, grammar, and proofreading matter!

## Assessment:

**Annotations** (checked for completion) / 20 points PROGRESS

**Response Journal Entries** (submitted via Teams) / 40 points PROGRESS

- Four entries total, one for each of the themes listed
- Each entry has one quotation in correct MLA format
- Writer gives a 5-7 sentence commentary for each quote point
- Entries are well-written and carefully proofread

**Comprehension Quiz** / 40 points PROGRESS

The **response journal** will be due to Teams on the **first day** of class. Please be prepared to bring your book to school on the first and second day of class, as I will be checking annotations on those days.