

8th Grade History Summer Reading

All students must read and annotate Tom Brokaw's *The Greatest Generation*.

Journalist Tom Brokaw's non-fiction tribute to World War II veterans and their families is more than a study of history; the profiles explore the human condition, the meaning of character, and American values. We encourage you to read the entire book, but you will be responsible for several sections.

Students must read:

A. The introduction chapter, "**The Time of Our Lives**" and the closing chapter. "**The Twilight of Their Lives**"

B. The introduction for each section of the book and one profile of each person or people within that section. The sections are as follows:

Ordinary People

Home Front

Heroes

Women in Uniform and Out

Shame

Love, Marriage, and Commitment

Famous People

The Arena

1. As you are reading, annotate. See direction for annotation below. Jotting down 3-5 notes per profile is acceptable. Be sure to note character names, major plot points, and any unfamiliar vocabulary. Your notes will be graded.
2. Bring your book to school on the first day. The teacher will explain how this assignment will be evaluated.
3. There are several videos that accompany the stories and we encourage you to watch them.

An 8 minutes PBS interview with Tom Brokaw

[:http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/b1feccb3-0662-49a1-82d8-239987612a17/tom-brokaw/](http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/b1feccb3-0662-49a1-82d8-239987612a17/tom-brokaw/)

Tom Brokaw discusses his book in the 2008 dole Lecture:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fc8RrW5EldA>

If you search on PBS's website under the heading "Teacher", you will be given a search bar. Enter *WWII The Greatest Generation* and you find many interviews with veterans about their experiences.

Annotation Instructions

- Writing in your book is a skill that helps you become a stronger reader. When you annotate, you create a dialogue with the text that indicates a deeper reading and at the same time, you create a study tool. Often, students are afraid to complete a summer reading assignment in June because they worry they will forget the story; however, good annotating serves as your memory.

- To annotate effectively, keep it simple. The more colors you use, the more complicated taking notes becomes, and you want this process to be relatively easy so that you annotate everything you read, not just summer reading.
- You do not need to write pages of notes; rather, your words should be precise so that you can glance at a page or chapter and quickly recall what you have read.
- NOTE: All annotations must be HANDWRITTEN in the book OR on post-it notes. ONLY underlining passages does NOT count as a proper annotating. There must be written notes.
- Recommended Tools:
 - A contrasting ink pen is ideal because it is a different color than the black ink on the page. Blue works best, but other colors work as well
 - Stay away from fluorescent inks--these are too hard to read
 - Use your book jacket or the back few pages of a book. These are good places to make character lists, lists of major events or places, and/or vocabulary lists.
 - A paperback dictionary by your side as you are reading gives you a chance to look up a word you don't know the meaning of and jot it down quickly.
- Recommended Tips:
 - Try to make about 3-5 notes per chapter. Your teachers do not expect you to copy the book or have a note on every page.
 - Use the jacket covers for important information such as characters, setting, or vocabulary terms.
 - Use the margin of the pages to jot down important events in each chapter.
 - At the end of each chapter, briefly summarize (bullet points are okay) the material.
 - Circle unknown vocabulary words and define all words.
 - Underline important quotes or passages, paying close attention to those that indicate a theme, conflict, symbol, or motifs. If you underline a passage, write down a few words to remind yourself later why you underlined the information. Underlining without words is pointless.