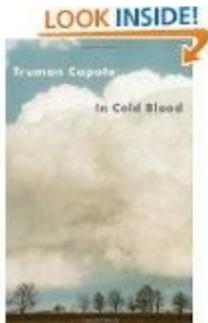


# Welcome to 2018 English 11 Honors Summer Reading!

## ***In Cold Blood*** , Truman Capote

*In Cold Blood* grew out of a series of articles Truman Capote wrote for *The New Yorker* magazine about the 1959 murder of a family in a small, western Kansas town. Capote, along with his childhood friend Harper Lee (*To Kill a Mockingbird*), conducted extensive interviews with townspeople, law enforcement, and relatives of the victims and the killers. His most extensive interviews were with the killers, however, and he waited until after their executions in 1965 to finish the book. The book is sometimes called a “non-fiction novel,” a mixture of reporting, reflection, and fictionalizing. It remains today one of the most famous works of crime writing in the U.S.

The current edition of the book, which we’ll be working with, is ISBN 978-0-679-74558-7 and looks like this:



## **What to Expect in the Fall**

You are responsible for reading the first three parts of the work. We will read part four together in the first two weeks of the year. Feel free to read the whole work, but if you do, please don't (before school or in class) talk about part four with classmates who haven't read ahead. Over the first week of school – perhaps beginning the first day – expect to do some short writing on parts one through three. You need to have your own copy of the book on the first day of school.

## When to Read

I think you'll find *In Cold Blood* an engaging read, but you're expected to read about 250 pages, so pace yourself and don't wait too late to begin reading. I would, however, suggest you wait until mid-August to read so that the book will be fresh in your mind. YES, *I'm encouraging you to procrastinate!!*

## How to Read

To help give you some direction as you read, I've provided below some background information and issues/topics for you to consider as you read. You should keep these topics in mind as you read; annotate the work as you read, and take notes on separate paper as well. Doing both will better prepare you for the work we'll do in the first quarter. I WILL EXPECT TO SEE EVIDENCE OF YOUR NOTETAKING WHEN YOU RETURN.

- Why does Capote divide the work into sections? What's the focus of each section? How does this division affect the unfolding of the story?
- Capote obviously could not interview the victims, and he conducted extensive interviews with the killers. How does Capote develop portraits of the victims in the story? To what extent is *In Cold Blood* really just the story of the killers?
- What is Capote's attitude toward the events/stories he recounts? the people he describes?
- How does the work blend fictional elements with journalistic and/or non-fiction elements?
- Describe the narrative voice/voices. How does the voice / do the voices affect the way you read the story?

I will check email every few days beginning in August. Before that, I may not check in very regularly. Write to me at [rodgersd@mjbha.org](mailto:rodgersd@mjbha.org) if you have questions about the reading.

Have a great summer vacation!