

School-wide Interdisciplinary Summer Reading Initiative
Class of 2026

Schoolwide guidelines:

- Book Assignment
 - **Class of 2026 - *Martyr of the Catacombs - A Tale of Ancient Rome* by James DeMille**
 - World Language & History
 - Creative Project is due **September 3, 2024**
 - Extemporaneous Writing - prompt will be provided on **September 3, 2024** and completed in homeroom during community time that day
- Schoolwide Standards
 - Students are encouraged to annotate the hardcopy of the book while reading and are permitted to use **ONLY** the hardcopy during the writing assessment on September 3, 2024
 - For each book, a reading guide is provided. Students should complete this reading guide as they progress through the book. The reading guide is ungraded and designed to assist the students as they prepare for the extemporaneous writing prompt - think of the reading guide as a study guide. Students will not be permitted to use or reference their completed reading guide when answering the writing prompt.
 - Grading
 - What will the weighting be?
 - Quiz or quiz equivalent
 - Where will the grade land in the grade books?
 - The grade will land in **both** discipline's grade books
 - If you are enrolled in two history classes, the grade will land in the higher rigor level class.
 - How will the grade be calculated?
 - A single, blended grade based on the rubric scores for the creative project and the response to the extemporaneous writing prompt
 - The final grade is a 50/50 blend of the rubric score on the creative project and the rubric score on the writing prompt.
 - Students who complete only one part (either project or writing prompt) of the assignment on time (firm deadlines) will earn a 50. Students who do not complete either part of the summer work on time (firm deadlines) will receive a zero.

Reading Guide for *Martyr of the Catacombs - A Tale of Ancient Rome*

These questions are not required to be answered for any one specific assignment, but may help in guiding your reading of the book and assist in the development of your creative project and your notes for the writing assessment that you will have upon your return to school. **This reading guide may not directly be used as a resource for your writing assignment, but you may write notes in your book as a resource.**

- How does the protagonist's faith evolve throughout the story and what pivotal moments contribute to his development?
- In what ways does the author use historical context to enhance the narrative and deepen the reader's understanding of the persecution faced by early Christians?
- Analyze the role of secondary characters in shaping the protagonist's journey and overarching themes of martyrdom and resilience.
- Discuss the significance of the catacombs as a setting and symbol in the novel, and how they reflect the clandestine nature of early Christianity under Roman rule.
- Why did the Roman authorities view the Christians as a threat? What was their main method of persecution?
- Explain how the languages in Ancient Rome separated the classes of people and how Latin is evident in today's society?
- How did the leadership in ancient Rome influence language?
- What language is used to describe the Christians buried in the catacombs? Give two examples of words and symbols used.
- How does the author represent the general culture in Rome relative to the culture of the Christians?
- How are faith and loyalty represented within the book? At times, are they the same thing?
- Would you consider Lucullus to be a protagonist or antagonist in the story and for what reasons?
- How was the coliseum described culturally and historically within the text?
- The Persecution of Decius described in the book (249-251 AD) was the first systematic persecution of Christians by the Roman Empire. If you were faced by a choice of loyalty to your country or loyalty to your faith how would you navigate that? How do you think you would handle the kinds of ordeals described in the book?
- What are some of the topics and themes of the book that you might encounter in both a History class and a World Language class?
- Would you risk your life for the truth?
- To what extent does the book challenge or reinforce traditional notions of heroism and martyrdom?

Creative Project: Visual Book Summary & Infographic

Create a visual summary for the book *Martyr of the Catacombs - A Tale of Ancient Rome*. The visual summary should include various key elements of the book and should be formatted in a creative, clear, and appealing manner. Please include the following in the visual summary.

- Title and Author
 - The book's title and author should be clearly identifiable on the infographic
- Cover Art
 - There should be a representation or reflection of the book's cover art
- Plot Overview
 - Use a flowchart or timeline to depict the main events in the plot
- Characters
 - Create a character map with brief descriptions and the relationships of the main characters
- Setting
 - Use images or illustrations to represent the book's primary settings
- Themes
 - Identify and visualize the themes with icons, symbols or imagery
- Quotes
 - Highlight impactful quotes or excerpts from the book
- Genre
 - Include visual elements that represent the genre of the book
- Symbols/Motifs
 - Incorporate symbols or motifs that are significant to the story
- Mood/Tone
 - Use specific colors and images to convey the mood and tone of the story
- Key Scenes
 - Illustrate or highlight pivotal scenes that define the narrative of the story.

Each of these elements should be clearly identifiable and demonstrate your understanding of the book. The layout of the infographic or visual summary should be balanced, thought out and visually pleasing. The infographic should be handmade and should be done on a small poster or sheet of paper, no larger than 11 by 17 inches. The use of unauthorized materials and artificial intelligence in any form is not permitted.

Rubrics:

Creative Assessment

Criteria	Grow - Fell Short (0 Points)	Got it! - Met expectations (1 Point)	Glow - Exceeded Expectations (2 Points)
Content			
Creativity			
Effort			
Conclusion			

Total : / 8

Grading Scale:

- 8 Points - 100
- 6-7 Points - 98
- 4-5 Points - 95
- 2-3 Points - 90
- 1 Point - 80
- 0 Points - 0

Writing Rubric:

Criteria	Grow - Fell Short (0 Points)	Got it! - Met expectations (1 Point)	Glow - Exceeded Expectations (2 Points)
Thesis Statement			
Logic and Support			
Clarity and Organization			
Analysis and Interpretation that is supported by the book			
Addresses all three questions			

Total : / 10

Grading Scale:

- 8-10 Points - 100
- 6-7 Points - 98
- 4-5 Points - 95
- 2-3 Points - 90
- 1 Point - 80
- 0 Points - 0