



## HONORS BIOLOGY | SUMMER READING & ASSIGNMENT

Your task for this summer assignment is to read *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot. The purpose of this assignment is for you to see real-life application of scientific concepts and their intersection with relevant social issues.

*Henrietta Lacks 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 remains virtually unknown, and her family can’t afford health insurance.*

*Note: this book contains graphic depictions of racism, sexism, classism, sexual violence and its effect on generations of African Americans. If you feel this content might be too upsetting for you or your student, please reach out to Dan for an alternative assignment.*

### ASSIGNMENT COMPONENTS & GRADING

#### Read and Keep a Journal (minimum four entries)

While you read, I want you to get in the habit of taking notes (in this case, keeping a journal). The idea is for you to make sense of what you read, record your questions, and clarify your thoughts about the material. It is NOT a summary (It ain't cliffnotes!!) \*See formatting specifics below

#### Writing - Research

When you are finished reading, you will write a short paper (2-4 pages total) that explores the topic(s) you found interesting. The Writing Assignment has two sections outlined below:

- **Research:** Develop a research question (take one from your Journal). Research one aspect of the Biology you do not understand or questions that were unanswered in the book and record what you learn. Please cite your sources in MLA format, in-text. (~2 pages)
- **Reflection:** Share your own perspective on the book, science, author, or yourself. How is this book relevant to your life? How does what you learned impact you and society? (~2 pages)

#### Create Artifact to Share

Create something you can share with the class to show what you've learned from your reading and how it applies to *your* life. This could be a drawing, collage, an illustrated excerpt of your research, a short video, or something else that highlights what you learned. Be creative—do something that feels meaningful to you.

#### Format

- Your journal must be typed. Be sure to include dates and page numbers for each entry. Aim for a minimum of three entries (approximately 200 words each), they will help you write your paper. Use the following template:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rCVp04yrufQVippzCMXeMneEM4v0iIHALEBRgES6jVw/edit>
- Your written assignment should be typed (12 font, 1-inch margins, Times New Roman). It should be 3-4 pages, double spaced.
- Your artifact can be in any format you choose

**ASSIGNMENT IS DUE FIRST DAY OF CLASS TO GOOGLE CLASSROOM**

*Please contact Dan (dsusman@midland-school.org) with any questions and have a great summer!*