



DEPAUL COLLEGE PREP
FR. GORDON CAMPUS

AP Language & Composition Summer Reading Assignment

Instructions:

- **Part One - Reading**
 - Read and annotate *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* by Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner.

- **Part Two - Analysis**
 - Answer each of the questions on the following page thoughtfully and completely in the format of Rhetorical Précis. Information on this format can be found on the attached handout.
 - At the end you should have a total of 10 Rhetorical Précis responses.
 - Your responses should be typed in 12-pt Times New Roman font, and should be free from spelling, capitalization, and grammatical errors. All references to the text must include an MLA format citation.
 - A thorough response will require several sentences of specific thought and will demonstrate that you have engaged with *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*.

- **Please note:** on the first day of school, you will write an in-class essay related to *Freakonomics*. You will be allowed to use your book, annotations, and question responses for the essay.

AP Language & Composition Summer Reading Assignment Questions

Introduction: The Hidden Side of Everything

Question 1 - What is the book's central idea?

Question 2 - Why is knowing what to measure, and how to measure it the key to understanding the modern life?

Part One: What Do Schoolteachers and Sumo Wrestlers Have in Common?

Question 3- What is the claim made about incentives and cheating? How do the examples given fit together and inform the reader?

Part Two: How is the Ku Klux Klan Like a Group of Real-Estate Agents?

Question 4 - What is the claim made about the power of information and how that power is abused? How do the examples given fit together and inform the reader?

Part Three: Why Do Drug Dealers Still Live with Their Moms?

Question 5 - What is the claim made about conventional wisdom and how we understand it? How do the examples given fit together and inform the reader?

Part Four: Where Have All the Criminals Gone?

Question 6 - What is the claim made about crime and what we know as facts about crime? How do the examples given fit together and inform the reader?

Part Five: What Makes a Perfect Parent?

Question 7 - What is the claim made about the significance of parenting? How do the examples given fit together and inform the reader?

Part Six: Perfect Parenting, Part II; or: Would a Roshanda by Any Other Name Smell as Sweet?

Question 8 - What is the claim made about the significance of naming a child? How do the examples given fit together and inform the reader?

Epilogue: Two Paths to Harvard

Question 9 - What is the claim made about the dependability of data? How do the examples given fit together and inform the reader?

Continued Thinking

Question 10 - What overall argument are Levitt and Dubner trying to make through this text? Was this argument effective? Why or why not?

Rhetorical Précis*

A rhetorical précis differs from a summary in that it is a less neutral, more analytical condensation of both the content and method of the original text. If you think of a summary as primarily a brief representation of what a text says, then you might think of the rhetorical précis as a brief representation of what a text both says and does. Although less common than a summary, a rhetorical précis is a particularly useful way to sum up your understanding of how a text works rhetorically (*Reading Rhetorically*, 62).

→ The Structure of a Rhetorical Précis

Sentence One: Name of author, genre, and title of work, date in parentheses; a rhetorically active verb; and a THAT clause containing the major assertion or thesis in the text.

Sentence Two: An explanation of how the author develops and supports the thesis.

Sentence Three: A statement of the author's apparent purpose, followed by an "in order to" phrase.

Sentence Four: A description of the intended audience and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience.

→ Rhetorical Précis Sentence Starters

Sentence One (Who/What?)

_____ (Author) _____ in the __ (A) __ (Title) _____ ,
_____ (B) _____ that
_____.

Sentence Two (How?)

_____ (Author's Last Name) _____ supports his/her _____ (B) _____ by
_____ (C) _____

Sentence Three (Why?)

The author's purpose is to _____ (D) _____ in
order/so
that _____

Sentence Four (To Whom?)

The author writes in _____ (E) _____ tone for _____
_____ (audience _____).

Word Bank – some possibilities

A	B	C	D	E
article, book review, essay, column, editorial	argues, argument, asserts, assertion, suggests, suggestion, claims, questions, explains, explanation	comparing, contrasting, telling, explaining, illustrating, demonstrating, defining, describing, listing	show point out suggest inform persuade convince	Formal informal sarcastic humorous contemptuous

(*by Micah Jendian)

Précis Examples

A. Toni Morrison, in her essay "Disturbing Nurses and the Kindness of Sharks," implies that racism in the United States has affected the craft and process of American novelists. Morrison supports her implication by describing how Ernest Hemingway writes about black characters in his novels and short stories. Her purpose is to make her readers aware of the cruel reality of racism underlying some of the greatest works of American literature in order to help them examine the far-reaching effects racism has not only on those discriminated against but also on those who discriminate. She establishes a formal and highly analytical tone with her audience of racially mixed (but probably mainly white), theoretically sophisticated readers and critical interpreters of American literature.

B. Eric Schlosser in the book, "Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal" (2001), suggests that the significance of each chapter title comes with a specific story to tell. Schlosser supports his usage of titles by illustrating the humble beginnings of fast food industry founders, such as Carl Karcher. His purpose is to inform the people that there is no reason to wish for the past because everything that people work for is "a mark of success" (Schlosser 28). Eric Schlosser establishes a formal relationship with the founders and the food components.