

AP English Language and Composition

Tokay High School Summer Reading Assignment 2022-2023

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Read the following pages carefully, as this will be your first assignment for AP Language and Composition, and so you will not have to email me with questions that are already answered here (which is both super annoying to me and not the best first impression of your reading ability). Obviously, if you do have questions that are not addressed here, email or "text" (by way of Remind) me, and I will happily answer. Walk into class on the first day of the 2022 school year having completed your active reading, your hand-written reflections, and your notebook. **No late work will be accepted** for points, so if you cannot attend on the first day, send your work in with someone. Your first (of many!) in-class, timed writing assessments will be based on your chosen text. On the first day, **remember to bring your book with its rainbow of post-its.**

Reading

For your summer reading, I want you to delve into and enjoy at least one of the following novels. Choose from the selections below:

1. Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*, (available in the Library; this is an option if you like multiple narratives, academic merit, and all of the feelings. You may ugly cry. It's ok. I did.) I would highly recommend watching the movie at some point if you choose this one. It will help keep track of all the different narrators.
2. John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (available for check out from Tokay's library; this option is for you "serious" readers who want a beautifully written classic of academic merit—it's not hard to understand but long and, considering that it's set during the Great Depression, rather depressing) It is worth mentioning that while this is similar in topic to his other works, it's also very different in length.
3. Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (one of my favorites, also available in the library, or maybe purchase David Shapard's annotated version to help you understand older prose and nineteenth century conventions, or you can always read the slightly more macabre *Pride, Prejudice and Zombies*. While it has less literary merit than the original, it follows a similar structure, and it has zombies and ninjas)
4. Garth Stein's *The Art of Racing in the Rain*: A lovely and somewhat sad story about a man, his daughter and his dog told from the dog's perspective. This is a more contemporary novel that deals with a lot of heavy stuff. Not exactly a College Board text, but absolutely gorgeous nonetheless. You can get this from the library or purchase your own.

You can pick one, a couple or all four! Perhaps watch a movie version of all four then read the one that most appeals to you. Plot is not all that important for this process, so watch one or all of the movies and see which one grabs your interest (though *Pride, Prejudice and Zombies* is very different from its movie, so maybe use that one for entertainment and not as a way of previewing or deciding on a book). Knowing the story will not hurt but rather allow you to focus on what matters more for our purposes: the author's language & style. Your summer reading should allow you to look for beautiful diction and unique syntax. **You will need your text and three different colors of sticky notes/post-its.** Specific directions for each color of post-it follow, but know that you should explain on each post-it what your thoughts are in choosing to mark that spot, so those typical 3x3 square post-its are probably best.

Active Reading

On your brightest post-it: Mark instances of stunning writing—the types of sentences in which the author shows he/she's an artist. Every writer forms sentences in ways that have NEVER been written exactly in that way before: sentences with engaging syntax or diction, sentences with vivid images, sentences that sound like music, sentences that surprise and satisfy. Find those lines. Mark them with your brightest colored post-its. Note what makes those sentences unique, and interesting. Essentially, write what made them sing in your eyes

(and ears). This one is the real practice for what we will be doing all year, so the more time you spend practicing with post-its, the better your essays and your own precise use of language should be.

On your next color post-it: Ask questions. Write questions that occur to you and at least one possible answer for each question; these questions may be plot related (e.g. Why is the narrator talking about colors?), vocab related (e.g. What does ----- mean?), or “text to world” related (e.g. Does California still have the appeal it did in the 1930s?). At least **ten** questions should occur to an active reader in the course of a book.

On your last color of Post-it: Analyze your text. Mark/note how the author reveals his/her tone, or attitude, toward family—in other words, how does the author feel about families. For example, Steinbeck portrays family as crucial for survival, Austen shows how different members of the same family are, Tan shows the different dynamics of mothers and daughters, and Stein shows the importance of love, loss and the effect those have on a family. Pay careful attention to the particular words the author uses for characterization, the particular details s/he chooses to convey; out of a world of words and events, the author makes specific choices, perhaps subconsciously but more likely intentionally, that show how s/he feels about his subject. Find, note, analyze.

Reflective Writing

When you’ve finished reading, review your post-its and reflect on your experience. Write (in ink, not typed) at least three pages (one side, not front and back) of what I’ll call “fluency” practice about the text: discover something original to say for our beginning of the year discussion about the role of family in characters’ lives and ours. Write an especially engaging hook and powerful final sentence. Play with language to express precisely and elegantly your questions/comments/insights. **Again, do not merely summarize the text.** You may use these reflections as well as your book on the first day for an in-class essay.

Notebook

As with most classes, you will need a notebook to keep track of all the notes and writing you will do this year. Because taking an entire class period to set up a notebook seems like a waste of class time (for you and me), I’m going to give you instructions here to get the bulk of the easy stuff out of the way. You will need a single subject notebook or composition book (100 pages college ruled is ideal for me, but you do you). Write your name on the cover, and decorate it however you want, within reason! On the **first page** of notebook paper, you should write **Table of Contents**. On the next page, **start numbering your pages on the bottom corner on both sides** (this will help tremendously when you need to refer back to your notes, especially, when we get into 3rd and 4th Quarters). That’s it! That’s all you need to do! We will fill it out as we go, but this will make the rest of the set up so much easier! (You can also see the rest of the instructions under the Notebook Instructions on Google Classroom)

A Final Note

In choosing to enroll in an Advanced Placement course, you, as a high school student, have undertaken college-level rigor for reading, writing, and oral participation. This necessitates that you be prepared: read carefully not cursorily, annotate your texts, question, discover. Give yourself enough time to enjoy the challenge and time to let your abilities shine. Do not wait until the last week then pull multiple all-nighters. There will be time for those later in the year! Take your time, and enjoy the ride!