

## AP Language and Composition Texts and SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT:

### CURRICULUM TEXTS (YOU NEED TO PURCHASE THESE)

#### SUMMER

- 1) *The Age of Wonder*, by Richard Holmes (ISBN-13: 978-1400031870)

**Summary:** *The Age of Wonder* is a colorful and absorbing history of the men and women whose discoveries and inventions at the end of the eighteenth century gave birth to the Romantic Age of Science. When young Joseph Banks stepped onto a Tahitian beach in 1769, he hoped to discover Paradise. Inspired by the scientific ferment sweeping through Britain, the botanist had sailed with Captain Cook in search of new worlds. Other voyages of discovery—astronomical, chemical, poetical, philosophical—swiftly follow in Richard Holmes's thrilling evocation of the second scientific revolution. Through the lives of William Herschel and his brilliant sister Caroline, who forever changed the public conception of the solar system; of Humphry Davy, whose near-suicidal gas experiments revolutionized chemistry; and of the great Romantic writers, from Mary Shelley to Coleridge and Keats, who were inspired by the scientific breakthroughs of their day, Holmes brings to life the era in which we first realized both the awe-inspiring and the frightening possibilities of science—an era whose consequences are with us still.

- 2) *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair That Changed America*, by Erik Larson (ISBN-13: 978-0375725609)

**Summary:** Combining meticulous research with nail-biting storytelling, Erik Larson has crafted a narrative with all the wonder of newly discovered history and the thrills of great fiction. Two men, each handsome and unusually adept at his chosen work, embodied an element of the great dynamic that characterized America's rush toward the twentieth century. The architect was Daniel Hudson Burnham, the fair's brilliant director of works and the builder of many of the country's most important structures, including the Flatiron Building in New York and Union Station in Washington, D.C. The murderer was Henry H. Holmes, a young doctor who, in a malign parody of the White City, built his "World's Fair Hotel" just west of the fairgrounds—a torture palace complete with dissection table, gas chamber, and 3,000-degree crematorium.

Burnham overcame tremendous obstacles and tragedies as he organized the talents of Frederick Law Olmsted, Charles McKim, Louis Sullivan, and others to transform swampy Jackson Park into the White City, while Holmes used the attraction of the great fair and his own satanic charms to lure scores of young women to their deaths. What makes the story all the more chilling is that Holmes really lived, walking the grounds of that dream city by the lake. *The Devil in the White City* draws the reader into the enchantment of the Gilded Age, made all the more appealing by a supporting cast of real-life characters, including Buffalo Bill, Theodore Dreiser, Susan B. Anthony, Thomas Edison, and Archduke Francis Ferdinand. Erik Larson's gifts as a storyteller are magnificently displayed in this rich narrative of the master builder, the killer, and the great fair that obsessed them both.

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#### FALL-SPRING

- 1) *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, by Frederick Douglass (ISBN-13: 978-0486284996)
- 2) *A Room of One's Own*, by Virginia Woolf (ISBN-13: 978-1604444278)
- 3) *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*, by Jonathan Haidt (ISBN-13: 978-0307455772)

- 4) *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, by Rebecca Skloot (**ISBN-10:** 9781400052189)
- 5) *The Things They Carried*, by Tim O'Brien (**ISBN-13:** 978-0544309760)
- 6) *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*, by Joan Didion (**ISBN-13:** 978-0374531386)

### **Summer Reading Instructions:**

1. Read and annotate *The Age of Wonder*, by Richard Holmes, considering what the author's purpose is and how it is developed throughout the text. As you annotate, focus particularly on identifying and tracing the major themes, central ideas, and arguments the author develops.

Annotate for **style**, **rhetoric**, and **structure** as well: How would you describe the author's writing style (e.g. his word choice, sentence structure, voice, use of figurative language, incorporation of evidence, etc.)? How does the author's style influence the mood of the text? Which stylistic mode best describes the book (e.g. argumentative, narrative, expository, or descriptive—see [here](#))? How would you describe the author's rhetoric (e.g. his tone; use of rhetorical devices, meta-discourse, reasoning)? How does the author treat his subjects? How is *The Age of Wonder* structured? In other words, how is the story pieced together or organized for maximum effect? What techniques does the author rely upon?

Lastly, select three (3) quotations from the text that you find to be important, striking, shocking, profound, thematically significant, or memorable. Bring those into class on the due date.

**DUE:** Wed, August 31st

2. Read/annotate *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair That Changed America*, by Erik Larson, considering what the author's purpose is and how it is developed throughout the text. As you annotate, focus particularly on identifying and tracing the major themes, central ideas, and arguments the author develops.

Annotate for **style**, **rhetoric**, and **structure** as well: How would you describe the author's writing style (e.g. his word choice, sentence structure, voice, use of figurative language, incorporation of evidence, etc.)? How does the author's style influence the mood of the text? Which stylistic mode best describes the book (e.g. argumentative, narrative, expository, or descriptive—see [here](#))? How would you describe the author's rhetoric (e.g. his tone; use of rhetorical devices, meta-discourse, reasoning)? How does the author treat his subjects? How is *The Devil in the White City* structured? In other words, how is the story pieced together or organized for maximum effect? What techniques does the author rely upon?

How does the author generate tension and build suspense in this story? What techniques does he use?

Lastly, select three (3) quotations from the text that you find to be important, striking, shocking, profound, thematically significant, or memorable. Bring those into class on the due date.

**DUE:** Tues, September 6th