AP Language and Composition: Summer Reading Assignment
Souderton Area High School

Welcome to AP Language and Composition.

The following summer assignment is designed to introduce you to elements of rhetoric that will be addressed in the course. Starting the course with a cursory understanding of such elements will enhance your experience and overall appreciation for how communication is crafted visually and through the written word.

The assignment is detailed below. Use the attached document to record your responses.

The assignment for both books is due to Turnitin by 11:59 p.m. on the first day of the semester in which you are taking the course. The Turnitin link is located on your class' Schoology page. All work must be typed on the document and completed in MLA format. All passages should be cited using page numbers.

Step 1: Choose one book from LIST A and one book from LIST B. Read them carefully. Consider annotation to help you fully digest the material.

Step 2: For your selection from LIST A, you will select 20 passages (at least three sentences) from the book that exemplifies one of the elements listed below. For each passage you select, you will identify the element and attach significance and meaning to the author's stylistic choices. Each analysis must be at least three sentences. Mere identification is not acceptable. The following seven elements must be identified at least twice.

- ❑ TEXT FEATURES: Text features help a reader to navigate the text. Ex: pictures, maps, charts, overall organizational structure. What does the feature achieve? You may choose no more than one photo.
- ❑ TONE: How does the author reveal his/her opinion about or attitude toward the subject matter?
- ❑ DICTION: This refers to word choice. What kinds of words is the author employing (colloquial, sophisticated, strong verbs, vivid adjectives, concrete nouns, double-meaning words, slang). Why?
- ❑ SYNTAX: Syntax refers to sentence structure. Consider how the length and structure of sentences help to achieve a purpose. Look for sentence fragments or short sentences, extra-long sentences, or lists. Consider the author's use of declaratives (statements), interrogatives (questions), imperatives (commands), and exclamatory (express emotion). Also consider punctuation (or lack thereof) and how that conveys meaning.
- ❑ IMAGERY: Imagery invokes any of the five senses (smell, taste, sight, touch, sound). To what effect?
- ❑ PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT: Where does the author employ a certain structure, like compare/contrast, definition, cause/effect, process analysis (explains how things are done), narrative (tells a story of who, what, where, when, why), description (tells story with sensory detail), division and classification (organizes items/ideas into categories). To what effect?
- ❑ CREDIBILITY: What about the author seems reliable? How do you know? Consider information presented that sounds valid. How/why? Conversely, where does the author or the material presented seem questionable or biased?

Remember to use the attached document to complete step 2. See the following example:

SAMPLE PASSAGE from *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding:

"I should have thought," said the officer as he visualized the search before him, "I should have thought that a pack of British boys – you're all British, aren't you? – would have been able to put up a better show than that – I mean –"

"It was like that at first," said Ralph, "before things –" (Golding 201-202).

SAMPLE RESPONSE: Tone

The officer's tone is condescending and ironic. He expresses his disappointment in the boys based on their appearance and what Ralph tells him has transpired on the island. There is irony in that the officer, who is dressed in a British military uniform and in the middle of a war himself, scoffs at the idea that the boys could behave so primal.

Step 3: For your selection from LIST B, identify each component below. In your explanation, be sure to attach significance/meaning to the author's choices. Mere identification is not acceptable. Each component's response should be at least five sentences in length.

- ❑ SPEAKER: Think about who the writer is and how what he/she knows is communicated. This should help you decide the author's credibility. Consider the author's background (ethnicity, education, location, religion, personal experiences, etc.)
- ❑ OCCASION: Consider what has occurred historically, politically, socially or even personally that may have prompted the writer to address this topic.
- ❑ AUDIENCE: Think about what kind of person or people the author intended as the audience and whether the author is able to connect with that audience effectively.
- ❑ PURPOSE: Think about the author's purpose in writing this book and whether he/she is effective in that purpose. What was the author's goal? To inform? To persuade? To argue? To defend? To criticize? To entertain?
- ❑ SUBJECT: Think about what the book is discussing and whether the author demonstrates why this subject is important. Consider how the author develops the sides/complications of the issues.

Remember to use the attached document to complete steps 3 and 4. See the following example:

SPEAKER: *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding:

William Golding served in the Royal Navy during World War II. Of his World War II experiences, Golding said, "I began to see what people were capable of doing. Anyone who moved through those years without understanding that man produces evil as a bee produces honey, must have been blind or wrong in the head" (Biography.com). *Lord of the Flies* explores the savage side of human nature as the boys, let loose from the constraints of society, brutally turn against one another in the face of an imagined enemy. The book set the tone for Golding's future work, in which he continued to examine man's internal struggle between good and evil.

Step 4: Complete this step for ONE of the two summer reading books you read. Address the following bulleted prompts. Each prompt's response should be at least five sentences in length.

- ❑ READER RESPONSE: Consider insightful, sophisticated reactions:
  - Your reactions/emotional responses (humor, surprise, sadness, anger, frustration, disappointment, tension/suspense, disgust, criticism, disagreement, confusion)
  - Your questions or lack of understanding or doubts (ask "Why?")
  - Connections: "This reminds me of…"
  - Writer's craft: passages that strike you artistically/aesthetically and why
  - Your revelations: The purpose of rhetoric is to inform, persuade, and motivate. What did this book do to you?

BOOK OPTIONS:
Please choose your selections carefully and be sure to obtain parental permission, as some options contain mature and/or sensitive material. These books were selected to appeal to a variety of interests.

LIST A: NARRATIVE NONFICTION

- ❑ *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* by Susan Cain: At least one-third of the people we know are introverts. They are the ones who prefer listening to speaking; who innovate and create but dislike self-promotion; who favor working on their own over working in teams. It is to introverts—Rosa Parks, Chopin, Dr. Seuss, Steve Wozniak—that we owe many of the great contributions to society.
- ❑ *Secondhand Time: The Last of the Soviets* by Svetlana Alexievich: In *Secondhand Time,* Alexievich chronicles the demise of communism. Everyday Russian citizens recount the past thirty years, showing us what life was like during the fall of the Soviet Union and what it's like to live in the new Russia left in its wake. Through interviews spanning 1991 to 2012, Alexievich takes us behind the propaganda and contrived media accounts, giving us a panoramic portrait of contemporary Russia and Russians who still carry memories of oppression, terror, famine, massacres—but also of pride in their country, hope for the future, and a belief that everyone was working and fighting together to bring about a utopia. Here is an account of life in the aftermath of an idea so powerful it once dominated a third of the world.
- ❑ *Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys, and the Dawn of a New America* by Gilbert King: In 1949, Florida's orange industry was booming, and citrus barons got rich on the backs of cheap Jim Crow labor. To maintain order and profits, they turned to Willis V. McCall, a violent sheriff who ruled Lake County with murderous resolve. When a white seventeen-year-old Groveland girl cried rape, McCall was fast on the trail of four young blacks who dared to envision a future for themselves beyond the citrus groves. By day's end, the Ku Klux Klan had rolled into town, burning the homes of blacks to the ground and chasing hundreds into the swamps, hell-bent on lynching the young men who came to be known as "the Groveland Boys." And so began the chain of events that would bring Thurgood Marshall, the man known as "Mr. Civil Rights," and the most important American lawyer of the twentieth century, into the deadly fray.
- ❑ *Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game* by Michael Lewis: *Moneyball* is a quest for the secret of success in baseball. In a narrative full of fabulous characters and brilliant excursions into the unexpected, Michael Lewis follows the low-budget Oakland A's, visionary general manager Billy Beane, and the strange brotherhood of amateur baseball theorists. They are all in search of new baseball knowledge—insights that will give the little guy who is willing to discard old wisdom the edge over big money.
- ❑ *Stiff: The Curious Life of Human Cadavers* by Mary Roach. *Stiff* is an oddly compelling, often hilarious exploration of the strange lives of our bodies postmortem. For two thousand years, cadavers—some willingly, some unwittingly—have been involved in science's boldest strides and weirdest undertakings. In

this fascinating account, Mary Roach visits the good deeds of cadavers over the centuries and tells the engrossing story of our bodies when we are no longer with them.

List B: TRADITIONAL NONFICTION

- ❑ *Talking to Strangers* by Malcom Gladwell: *Talking to Strangers* is a classically Gladwellian intellectual adventure, a challenging and controversial excursion through history, psychology, and scandals taken straight from the news. He revisits the deceptions of Bernie Madoff, the trial of Amanda Knox, the suicide of Sylvia Plath, the Jerry Sandusky scandal at Penn State University, and the death of Sandra Bland—throwing our understanding of these and other stories into doubt. Something is very wrong, Gladwell argues, with the tools and strategies we use to make sense of people we don't know. And because we don't know how to talk to strangers, we are inviting conflict and misunderstanding in ways that have a profound effect on our lives and our world.
- ❑ *The Price of Admission: How America's Ruling Class Buys its Way into Elite Colleges--and Who Gets Left Outside of the Gates* by Daniel Golden: Every spring thousands of middle-class and lower-income high-school seniors learn that they have been rejected by America's most exclusive colleges. What they may never learn is how many candidates like themselves have been passed over in favor of wealthy white students with lesser credentials—children of alumni, big donors, or celebrities. America, the so-called land of opportunity, is rapidly becoming an aristocracy in which America's richest families receive special access to elite higher education—enabling them to give their children even more of a head start.
- ❑ *Garbology: Our Dirty Love Affair with Trash* by Edward Humes: The average American produces 102 tons of garbage across a lifetime and $50 billion in squandered riches are rolled to the curb each year. In *Garbology*, Edward Humes investigates trash—what's in it; how much we pay for it; how we manage to create so much of it; and how some families, communities, and even nations are finding a way back from waste to discover a new kind of prosperity. Humes reveals not just what we throw away, but who we are and where our society is headed.
- ❑ *Andy Warhol Was a Hoarder: Inside the Minds of History's Great Personalities* by Claudia Kalb: Was Andy Warhol a hoarder? Did Einstein have autism? This meticulously researched look at the evolution of mental health gives readers a glimpse into the lives of high-profile historic figures through the lens of modern psychology. From Marilyn Monroe's borderline personality disorder to Charles Darwin's anxiety, Kalb provides compelling insight into a broad range of maladies, using historical records and interviews with leading mental health experts, biographers, sociologists, and other specialists.
- ❑ *Mindset* by Carol S. Dweck: After decades of research, world-renowned Stanford University psychologist Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D., discovered a simple but groundbreaking idea: the power of mindset. In this brilliant book, she shows how success in school, work, sports, the arts, and almost every area of human endeavor can be dramatically influenced by how we think about our talents and abilities. People with a *fixed mindset*—those who believe that abilities are fixed—are less likely to flourish than those with a *growth mindset*—those who believe that abilities can be developed. *Mindset* reveals how great parents, teachers, managers, and athletes can put this idea to use to foster outstanding accomplishment.

Please Note: This assignment will prepare you for AP Language and Composition's rigorous and demanding curriculum. It will also mark the first impression you will make on your teacher. Give the assignment the attention and detail that it warrants.

Remember, on the FIRST DAY OF THE SEMESTER, be sure to submit your work to the Summer Reading Assignment Turnitin link on your class' Schoology page by 11:59 p.m.

This 100-point assignment is worth 10 percent of your 1st/3rd marking period grade. Late work will not be accepted.