

Summer Reading AP United States Government and Politics 2023-24

Please note this summer assignment includes reading 1 book, 1 article and researching 1 current event.

- I. Read **American Dialogue: The Founders and Us** by Joseph J. Ellis.
ISBN-10 : 0804172471

This book analyzes our current political climate through the words, actions, letters and legacies of four of the founding fathers: Jefferson, Adams, Washington and Madison.

As you read, consider how Ellis connects each founder to a current theme. For each founder, **make notes (either in the margins or in your notebook)** on what big questions and concerns each founder had regarding the formation of the country. What were their goals and what were their concerns for the new nation?

You do not need to turn in your responses to the questions above. There will be an open book in class essay on this book during the second or third week of class.

- II. **Reading response and current event (to be submitted on the first day)**

Read [this article](#) by James Davison Hunter about the origin of culture wars. Consider what culture wars exist now and find a current event that discusses a polarizing issue in America today.

Your reading response (1-2 pages) should include the following:

1. Explain the author's thesis in "The Enduring Culture War" and describe the evidence used to support it. Do you agree? Why? Why not?
2. Describe the modern culture war you selected (from your current events article) and explain how the conflict developed. Provide a link for current event.
3. Do you see any resolution of this issue? What political action, if any, could be taken by the American government or public to address such issues?

III. Optional reading:

Gideon's Trumpet by Anthony Lewis

Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson

Political Tribes by Amy Chua

Thirteen American Arguments by Howard Fineman

Hillbilly Elegy by J.D. Vance

Leadership by Doris Kearns Goodwin

Lyndon Johnson And The American Dream by Doris Kearns Goodwin

The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander

IV. Stay informed!

Read news articles and/or listen to politically engaged podcasts.

Some suggestions for reading news and opinion articles about politics are:

The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, CNN, Fox News, Vox, The Atlantic Weekly, and The New Yorker.

Some good podcasts are: The Daily (my favorite), NPR Up First, Civics 101, Constitutional, Radiolab More Perfect Union and We the People.