

June 2024

Dear AP Composition Student:

Welcome to Advanced Placement English Language and Composition!

Your summer assignment is designed to keep your reading and writing skills sharp. As a member of a writing group, you owe it to yourself to read and to write as often and as much as possible. To start you on your way, your teachers ask that you complete the following assignment before the beginning of the school year.

**Read *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life* by Anne Lamott.**

*Bird by Bird* is a real treat for those who like to write as well as for those who want to learn to write.

As you read, take copious notes from ***at least ten chapters*** of the book that offer good writing advice or provide a discussion of writing. These notes should be typed and should not exceed three pages. You will be expected to use these notes for class discussion within the first few weeks of school. If you need access to a digital copy of the text, please search Google using the title for free access.

Remember that **all work must be brought to school on the first day of class**. All responses should be highly introspective and detailed, reflecting work on an AP level.

We look forward to working with you this coming school year in this very engaging course.

Sincerely,

Your AP English Language and Composition Teachers

**\*\*Suggested Reading Assignment and Reflection:** learn more about current issues and debatable topics by reading a work of nonfiction. Select one listed below or discover another on your own and read to learn its writer's perspective on a particular topic.

**Suggested Summer Reading List**  
(with descriptions from *BarnesandNoble.com*)

**Chua, Amy**    *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*

All parents want to do what's best for their children. What *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* reveals is that the Chinese just have a totally different idea of how to do that.

**Diamond, Jared**    *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*

Jared Diamond argues that geographical and environmental factors shaped the modern world. Societies that had a head start in food production advanced beyond the hunter-gatherer stage, and then developed religion—as well as nasty germs and potent weapons of war—and adventured on sea and land to conquer and decimate preliterate cultures.

**Dyer, Geoff**    *The Ongoing Moment*

Cultural critic Dyer explores the way the visual image affects our understanding of the world.

**Ehrenreich, Barbara**    *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*

Ehrenreich went undercover to show the “dark side of American Prosperity.” She left her home and traveled to various states such as Maine, Minnesota, and Florida, taking whatever jobs should could get, such as a nursing-home maid or a Wal-Mart sales clerk. She also tried to get lodging in the cheapest areas, such as trailer parks and residential motels. Read this book to discover Ehrenreich's “rare view of how ‘prosperity’ looks from the bottom.”

**Gardner, Howard**    *Multiple Intelligences*

Explores the practical implications and applications of Multiple Intelligences theory--the powerful notion that there are separate human capacities, ranging from musical intelligence to the intelligence involved in self-understanding.

**Gladwell, Malcolm**    *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*

The tipping point is that magic moment when an idea, trend, or social behavior crosses a threshold, tips, and spreads like wildfire. Just as a single sick person can start an epidemic of the flu, so too can a small but precisely targeted push cause a fashion trend, the popularity of a new product, or a drop in the crime rate.

**Hirsch, E.D.**    *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*

Hirsch argues that children in the U.S. are being deprived of the basic knowledge that would enable them to function in contemporary society. Includes 5,000 essential facts to know.

**Ifill, Gwenn** *The Breakthrough*

Ifill explores how politics and race and identity played out in the 2008 Presidential campaign.

**Kristof, Nicholas and Sheryl WuDunn** *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*

Through inspiring stories of extraordinary women, Kristof and WuDunn show that the most effective way to fight global poverty is to unleash the potential of women. They also offer an uplifting do-it-yourself tool kit for those who want to help.

**Levitt, Steven D. and Dubner, Stephen J.** *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*

Through storytelling and wry insight, Levitt and co-author Stephen J. Dubner show that economics is, at root, the study of incentives -- how people get what they want, or need, especially when other people want or need the same thing.

**Moore, Wes** *The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates*

In December 2000, the Baltimore *Sun* ran a small piece about Wes Moore, a local student who had just received a Rhodes Scholarship. The same paper also ran a series of articles about four young men who had allegedly killed a police officer in a spectacularly botched armed robbery. The police were still hunting for two of the suspects who had gone on the lam, a pair of brothers. One was named Wes Moore. ...Told in alternating dramatic narratives that take readers from heart-wrenching losses to moments of surprising redemption, *The Other Wes Moore* tells the story of a generation of boys trying to find their way in a hostile world.

**Paul, Ron** *Liberty Defined: 50 Essential Issues That Affect Our Freedom*

Dr. Paul writes that to believe in liberty is not to believe in any particular social and economic outcome. It is to trust in the spontaneous order that emerges when the state does not intervene in human volition and human cooperation.

**Stevenson, Bryan** *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*

A compelling read that tackles social justice and the ethics of the death penalty, *Just Mercy* shines a light on the corruption of the justice system. Bryan Stevenson, dedicated to helping people most in need, founded the Equal Justice Initiative to help those most likely to experience injustice in the court system. A poignant writer, Stevenson takes on the broken criminal justice system, using his own experience as a lawyer to emphasize the change that is desperately needed.

**Wilson, Edward O.** *The Future of Life*

An impassioned call for quick and decisive action to save Earth's biological heritage, and a plan to achieve that rescue.