

AP Language and Composition
Summer Reading 2024
Ms. Nelson

AP Lang is all about rhetoric -- the power of speaking and writing, the power of words, the power of persuasion. The texts that we read will all be nonfiction, and so your summer work will be centered around nonfiction as well.

Please note -- I still encourage you to read good *fiction* this summer. There's nothing like getting lost in a story. Feel free to email me if you'd like book suggestions, or drop into your local library.

Assignment:

- Buy a notebook.** Your summer work must be handwritten, in pen. If your work is not legible, you will not receive credit -- so take some time this summer to work on your handwriting if necessary.

- Choose one (1) book from the list, and get a copy.** You must have a physical copy of the book over the summer and on the first day of school. You can either purchase one, or borrow one from a library.

- Read the book, and complete 6 reading response entries.** Each entry has a specific task, allowing you to demonstrate your understanding of the content of the book and explore the rhetoric.

- Read the news -- 3 stories in July, and 3 stories in August -- and take notes.** Knowledge of current affairs is key in AP Lang. If you're not already in the habit of reading the news, now is the time to get started.

All reading and journals are due on the first day of school, no exceptions.
Anyone who does not have her/his assignment on the first day of school
will receive a zero (0), with no opportunity to re-do.

Expectations are high in Advanced Placement classes, and they begin now.

Journal Entries

Choose six (6) of the following prompts, which have been lovingly stolen from another American AP Lang teacher. Hand-write your responses in your notebook.

DO NOT look up literary criticism, articles, or “helpful sites” about your book.
I am not interested in how well you paraphrase (aka plagiarize) someone else’s thoughts.
Do not use AI / ChatGPT to “help” you craft a response.

These reading responses should be 1-2 handwritten pages in length and should include: question you are responding to, page numbers, quotes from the book, and insightful thoughts. A reading response is NOT an argumentative paper, but is rather an exploration of thought. Therefore, you do not need to take a firm stance or develop a thesis statement; instead, you are reflecting on a variety of avenues and thoughts regarding a topic.

Below are suggestions for you to begin your reading reflection; these reflections should be useful and apply to your reading, so feel free to use these prompts OR to create your own.

- 1) Compare and contrast elements of storytelling and elements of nonfiction. How do these elements play into the meaning created? Do you feel storytelling or nonfiction is more prevalent? Why is this the most effective way to tell this story and give this information?
- 2) Focus on the development of one character (this can be the protagonist, a main character, OR a minor character). How is the character developed throughout the book? What can we, as readers and viewers, learn about the character, ourselves, and/or the world through the conflicts and traits presented?
- 3) Discuss one of the major THEMES in the book. How is the theme presented and then developed? How might this theme apply to you? (Remember, a THEME is a larger, underlying, more specific idea, such as: the American Dream is unattainable, our justice system is not black and white, society is more important than the individual, etc.)
- 4) Discuss the role of the reader/audience in the story. What point of view is the story written in, and what information does the reader/audience know or doesn't know? What relationship does the reader/audience have to the characters in the story? How does this impact how the story is interpreted?
- 5) Write about a situation in the story that changed your perspective on something; this could be about a character, an idea, a place, etc. What were your initial thoughts, and how was your perspective shifted; how might this perspective-shift be useful to you in your own life?
- 6) One way to examine plot is to determine what type of conflict it entails. The classic divisions are: (1) person vs. person; (2) person vs. society, (3) person vs. nature, and (4) person vs. self. Often, more than one of these types of conflict occurs in a story. Using this analysis, briefly describe one of the conflicts in this story thus far, identify which type of conflict it is, and explain how this conflict impacts the interpretation of the story.
- 7) Consider the time and place in which your story was published, and consider how the events, characters, or topics in your story could be a reflection of time and place. Then, explore what we can learn about culture or society based on your story.
- 8) Write about a meaningful passage or quote from the story. Why did this passage or quote stand out to you? How is it relevant to the story? What connections can you make to the real-world?
- 9) Connect something you've encountered in the book to a reading or discussion that you've had in a class (for example, you may consider discussions about race/gender representation, justice, morals & values, power roles, stereotypes, reality, etc.) Why is this connection relevant to you, and how can this connection shape, challenge, add or, or change a view you previously have had?

Nonfiction Book List

Autobiography / Memoir / Biography

Alexander, Caroline	The Endurance	(Sir Ernest Shackleton's legendary Antarctic expedition)
Dillard, Annie	An American Childhood	(Growing up in 1950s Pittsburgh)
Frankl, Victor E.	Man's Search for Meaning	(Memoir of life in Nazi death camps)
Hillenbrand, Laura	Seabiscuit	(Sports biography of a great American race horse in Depression era)
McBride, James	The Color of Water	(A man's tribute to his remarkable mother)
Nafisi, Azar	Reading Lolita in Tehran	(Secret young women's book club in the Islamic Republic)
Noah, Trevor	Born a Crime	(Growing up in South Africa during apartheid)
Orwell, George	Down and Out in Paris and London	(Life as a tramp in Europe)
Walls, Jeannette	The Glass Castle	(Story of childhood with eccentric, bordering on abusive, parents)

Nature / Adventure / Science

Carson, Rachel	Silent Spring	(The book that gave birth to the environmental movement)
Junger, Sebastian	The Perfect Storm	(Swordfish boat vs. Mother Nature)
Krakauer, Jon	Into Thin Air	(Everest climb gone wrong)
Shetterly, Margot	Hidden Figures	(African American female mathematicians working for NASA in the 1960s)
Skloot, Rebecca	The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks	(Cancer cells, research, and stolen science)

History / Politics / War

Ambrose, Stephen	Undaunted Courage	(Compelling story of Lewis and Clark expedition)
Chernow, Ron	Alexander Hamilton	(The book that inspired Lin-Manuel Miranda to write <i>Hamilton</i>)
Fleming, Thomas	Duel	(Story of the duel between Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton)
Gladwell, Malcolm	The Tipping Point	(Explains why changes in society occur suddenly)
Hillenbrand, Laura	Unbroken	(Unforgettable account of a WWII prisoner of war)
Kennedy, John F.	Profiles in Courage	(Stories of eight U.S. Senators, as told by a President)
Kurlansky, Mark	Salt	(The history of how salt has shaped civilizations)
Machiavelli, Niccolo	The Prince	(Practical advice for absolute rulers to maintain a strong government)
Manchester, William	American Caesar	(Biography of General Douglas MacArthur - WWI, WWII, Korean War)
McCourt, Frank	Angela's Ashes	(Poverty, starvation, and exuberance in depression Ireland)
Winchester, Simon	The Professor and the Madman	(Tale of compilation of Oxford Dictionary)
Sontag, Sherry	Blindman's Bluff	(Story of American submarine espionage)
Stanton, Doug	Into Harm's Way	(The WWII sinking of the U.S.S Indianapolis)

True Crime

Berendt, John	Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil	(Entertaining true crime story)
Capote, Truman	In Cold Blood	(The first, some say the best, in this category; gruesome murder)
Cornwell, Patricia	Portrait of a Killer	(Jack the Ripper)

Travel

Bryson, Bill	A Walk in the Woods	(Discovering America on the Appalachian Trail)
Kerouac, John	On the Road	(Cross-country bohemian adventure)
Pirsig, Robert	Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance	(Travel, philosophy, and bikes)
Steinbeck, John	Travels with Charley	(Cross-country trek with a poodle)

General Nonfiction

Cialdini, Robert	Influence	(All about the psychology of persuasion, manipulation, and pressure)
Foer, Franklin	How Soccer Explains the World	(An unlikely theory of globalization)
Gilbert, Daniel	Stumbling on Happiness	(Harvard professor helps you rethink happiness, with science)
Loewen, James W.	Lies My Teacher Told Me	(Everything your American History textbook got wrong)
Peck, M. Scott	The Road Less Traveled	(Love, science, spirituality, personal growth, balanced lifestyle)
Schlosser, Eric	Fast Food Nation	(Exposing the dark side of America's fast food industry)
Waitzkin, Josh	The Art of Learning	(How to master chess, martial arts, and life)
Wolf, Naomi	The Beauty Myth	(The obsession with physical perfection, and the effect on women)

News Stories

Please read 3 news stories in July, and 3 in August. For each piece, take notes on *what* the message/content is and *how* it is delivered (pay particular attention to rhetorical choices such as tone, audience appeals, diction, syntax, devices, etc.) When possible, find different news organizations reporting on the same story/topic and note any similarities and/or differences in delivery. This is something we will continue to do throughout the year.

Each set of notes should be roughly a page worth of bullet points, set up roughly like this:

Date:

News story:

Source:

Intended Audience: (think carefully about who / what kinds of people are being targeted)

Content (*what* is being said):

Rhetorical Choices (*how* it is being said):

If applicable, comparisons with other networks: