

Summer Reading AP United States Government and Politics 2024

Please note this summer assignment includes 1 required book and the required research of 1 current events article. The explainer article linked in this assignment is optional reading.

**I. Purchase and read the book Why Are We Polarized? by Ezra Klein
ISBN-10: 1476700362 or ISBN-13: 978-1476700366**

In this book, Klein shows how and why American politics polarized around identity in the 20th century, and what that polarization did to the way Americans see the world and one another. As an option, before you read Klein's book, read this short [explainer article](#) about political polarization from Facing History to help ground you in this concept.

As you read his book, consider the **causes and effects** of such polarization according to Klein. Be sure you understand his **thesis** and how he proves it. Consider whether you agree with his arguments or not and why.

There are a lot of political terms used in the book that may be new to you. Please list any terms that you were not familiar with so that we can discuss these when we meet.

Finally, be prepared for an in class essay on this book during the first or 2nd week of school. Date TBD.

II. Research 1 current events article from the last 6 months that also raises an issue of polarization.

- Read the current events article you selected and provide a link to it
- Provide a 1 paragraph summary of your selected current events article
- Analysis: Does this current events article align with or counter Klein's thesis about polarization. Explain why or how. (1 paragraph)

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
American Dialogue by Joseph J. Ellis

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.

If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Scheinmann (rscheinmann@jbha.org)