

**Dear Advanced Placement Language and Composition Student,**



**Welcome!** Next year, we will study together with a dual purpose: to help you learn to analyze rhetorical and argumentation strategies that writers employ to achieve their purposes through close reading techniques and to help you learn to apply those strategies in your own writing. Indeed, these skills will not only serve you well on the AP Language and Composition exam next May, but they will also aid you in becoming stronger readers, writers, and rhetoricians beyond our class!

**What does this course entail?** Rhetoric is the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing. AP English Language and Composition is an introductory college-level composition course in the study of rhetoric. Students cultivate their understanding of writing and rhetorical arguments through reading, analyzing, and writing texts as they explore topics like rhetorical situation, claims and evidence, reasoning and organization, and style. The focus of the course is learning three modalities of writing: argumentation, rhetorical analysis, and synthesis. Subsequently, the course relies heavily on non-fiction (TED Talks, letters, commencement speeches, essays, addresses to the nation, apologies, documentaries, editorials, memoirs, etc.).

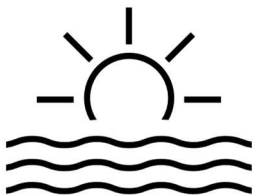
The year centers on three main units focused on each type of writing, but the class is recursive – students will need to demonstrate skills of each writing type throughout the year as we prepare for the national exam in May. Each unit begins with a skills portion to explicitly teach how to write the essay and then moves into a thematic portion which brings our reading, writing, and critical thinking skills into the real world of rhetoric. Please review the following page which details the skills for each unit and how summer reading connects to the units. Note: there is a “bonus” for unit three which is explained later.

**Summer Reading:** To begin our journey, you are required to complete two nonfiction summer reading assignments: Tara Westover’s [book \*Educated\*](#) and Marcus Luttrell’s [book \*Lone Survivor\*](#) (click the titles for a link to Amazon). These stories demonstrate how real writers craft a narrative for a purpose and how rhetoric is a part of our daily lives.

AP Language is a college level class with high expectations, but we are confident that you can reach them. It is important to spend time and effort when reading these books. Reading them quickly “just to get it done,” or only watching a film version, will not suffice. Read these texts closely looking for not only what the author says, but also how he/she says it to craft his/her story. *It is not required, but we highly suggest that you purchase a copy of each of your books due to the annotation requirements (see below).*

Type your summer reading responses in MLA format (font size, type, spacing) and proofread thoroughly. Make a strong first impression as a reader, writer, and thinker by demonstrating a command of these skills. Read the requirements of each assignment and allow yourself ample time to develop your responses and complete your annotations. Summer reading is due when school begins but wait for submission directions from us during the first week. If you have specific questions regarding the assignments, not covered in the directions, please reach out to one of us via email. These questions should be specific and not ask us to merely “check if my answers are right.”

We are excited to teach this course, which offers you a new way of examining what you read, develops sophisticated writing skills, and broadens your knowledge base, all of which makes you a better participant in the world around you.



Happy summer and happy reading!

Mrs. Lora Padilla and Ms. Tierra Jones

### Unit 1: Argumentation Skills

- Identify and describe the claims and evidence of an argument (reading).
- Analyze and select evidence to develop and refine a claim (writing).
- Describe the reasoning, organization, and development of an argument (reading).
- Use organization and commentary to illuminate the line of reasoning in an argument (writing).

### Unit 1: Argument Thematic Portion



#### The Value of Education



We will read and discuss the concept of education by exploring ideas such as what it means to be educated, the extent to which our schools promote the goals of education, inequities within education, what is “best” in education, and who should decide what is paramount for the learner.

*Summer Reading Connection: Educated by Tara Westover*

### Unit 2: Rhetorical Analysis Skills

- Identify and describe components of the rhetorical situation: the exigence, audience, writer, purpose, context, and message (reading).
- Make strategic choices in a text to address a rhetorical situation (writing).
- Explain how writers’ choices reflect the components of the rhetorical situation (reading).
- Develop a paragraph that includes a claim and evidence supporting the claim (writing).

### Unit 2: Rhetorical Analysis Thematic Portion



#### The Language of War



Margaret Atwood once said, "War is what happens when language fails." Her message about ineffective communication is the heart of this unit. The goal of a rhetorical analysis is to explain the effect a piece of writing has on its audience and how the writer achieves his or her goals. During the unit, we work to understand the impact of language during times of war.

*Summer Reading Connection: Lone Survivor by Marcus Luttrell*

### Unit 3: Synthesis Skills

- Identify and describe the claims and evidence of an argument (reading).
- Analyze and select evidence to develop and refine a claim (writing).
- Describe the reasoning, organization, and development of an argument (reading).
- Use organization and commentary to illuminate the line of reasoning in an argument (writing).

### Unit 3: Synthesis Thematic Portion



#### Worldly Wisdom



In this unit, we explore several topics through real world conversations and consider all sides of an issue to make an informed argument. This unit builds upon the knowledge and skills acquired from the previous two units and allows us to demonstrate our mastery of critical thinking skills and expert writing.

### *Summer Reading Connection (“bonus”): Worldly Wisdom*

Explore topics from the following websites/podcasts as a way of expanding your knowledge (this is an optional task):

[Pop Culture Happy Hour](#) / [TED Talks Daily](#) / [Science Friday](#) / [American Experience](#) / [Nerd Writer](#) / [Biography](#) / [Bloomberg Originals](#) / [CNN 10](#) / [The Food that Built America](#) / [Freakonomics Radio](#) / [Grammar Girl](#)

**Plagiarism Note:** Plagiarism is a violation of the code of conduct and is taken seriously. Plagiarism includes: Directly copying information or paraphrasing from an outside source without properly citing • Taking others’ ideas (internet) without properly citing • Copying another student’s assignment in whole or part • Sharing your assignments with classmates. • If you are caught plagiarizing, you will receive an automatic zero on the assignment and your violation will be reported to the administration. Please note that giving your work to other students to copy or use is plagiarism.

# Summer Reading Annotations: The Expectation

## Why do I even need to annotate?



Let me begin my answer with a little advice, a caveat (*do you know this word? If not...look it up 😊*) of sorts. It has been my experience when working with students, that when they themselves do not know something, participate in something, or have not experienced something, then to them it is not something of value or something other people know, do, or experience. There is a tendency to be a little ethnocentric (*do you know this word? If not...look it up 😊*) in our thinking. For example, when I use a word in class that students do not know, I may explain it with synonyms. Their response is usually, “well why didn’t you just say that? No one says [inset mysterious unfamiliar word]!” That is an ethnocentric reaction – the students may not have known the word because they are still learning and expanding their vocabulary, but it is in fact a word people use. The same can be said for reactions such as, “oh gross...no one eats that!” or “no one listens to that music!” or “no one watches that show!” Yes, others do eat that, listen to that, and watch that.

**So, what does this have to do with annotation?** There are always a few students who insist that they just cannot annotate while they read or that annotation is not important. Before these students can authentically use the strategy of purposeful annotation, they need to develop a growth mindset on the issue (*added video benefit: connects to the education unit*). Rather than saying “I don’t do that” or “I can’t do that” or “no one does that,” I urge you to say, “I’ve not done that before, but I’m willing to try it.” Consider the fact that I am teacher whose wheelhouse is how to effectively teach students to read and write well, so if I value a strategy then it must be an effective one worth using (*added video benefit: notice how the term “wheelhouse” is used in a variety of popular TV shows, so if it is not a word you are familiar with realize that it is a commonly used word*).

**Still unconvinced?** Answer this question: have you ever been reading a book and you get to the end of page and realize that your eyes read it, but your brain did not? I am guessing the answer is yes. Sometimes we zone out in the middle of a page, but with purposeful annotation, you can focus on the text by engaging with it. Not only will your brain read the text, but you will have notes to refer to when needed. How else will go back and find important parts of a text? How will you remember what you were thinking as you read? How will you identify parts that confused you or challenged your thinking? How will you expand your vocabulary if you do not identify and define words unknown to you? How will you trace the author’s argument and how they develop their story? Simply put, you will not, therefore it is imperative that you annotate your books.

**Still unconvinced?** Aside from your AP Lang and Comp teachers, there are many people who ascribe to the belief that annotation is relevant and important. Watch this gal’s video about annotating books (*added benefit: tools and tips*), or this gal’s video (*added benefit: variety of examples*), or this guy’s video (*added benefit: uses nonfiction and discusses argumentation*) or this guy’s video (*added benefit: discusses synthesizing*). Who are these people and why should I listen to them? They are regular, everyday people who acknowledge the benefits of annotation and allow you to see that it is not just an “English teacher thing.”

**Still unconvinced?** Consider David Conley’s research: “*The [students] who had the greatest success were those who were willing to take some modicum of ownership of their learning and responsibility for their behavior. I reached the conclusion that the social contract was a two-way street: society has a responsibility to create a level playing field, and individuals have a responsibility to take advantage of it.*” Annotation is taking ownership of your learning and if you understand how it aligns with why we are doing the reading in the first place and what we are going to do with reading after we are finished, then you should embrace it as a valuable tool.

**Still unconvinced?** Well, then I pull the parent card and say: “because I told you to.” 😊

## What is the process for annotation?



1. We recommend purchasing a copy of each book (links to Amazon appear on the first page) so you can directly mark the text and easily go back to your annotations. If you choose to borrow the books, you need to keep track of your annotations by writing them on a sheet of notebook paper or using post-it notes BUT you will also need to include page numbers and quotes from the text so you can connect your annotations directly to the text. There are many ways to annotate a text and while no method is inherently right or wrong, you can fall victim to “busy work” type of annotations – ones that make it seem as though you have completed the task when in reality you have just put some random markings in your book. Remember: this is a college level class, so the expectation is that you will read and write with intent. Do not cheat yourself by completing “busy work” annotations and instead take ownership over your learning.
2. Read “How to Mark a Book” by Mortimer J. Adler as an overall guide for annotating your summer reading books, as well as a way to annotate any reading assignment. This reading provides guidance with types of markings to make, but also consider some of the ideas from the videos. You have some autonomy in this process. Remember: the goal is to interact with the text and to remember what you read, so make annotations work for you. Once you read this article, you should understand the following (check yourself and hold yourself accountable for this reading):
  - *What correlation does Adler make between owning a beefsteak and consuming it to owning and consuming books?*
  - *In what sense does annotating keep you awake?*
  - *What types of books do not require active reading? What types of books do require active reading?*
  - *Why is writing important?*
  - *What is his argument regarding the speed of reading?*
3. Create a key on the inside front cover of your book. Identify how you are using symbols, colors, underlining, highlighting, sticky notes, etc.

## Additional Resources:



While it is not required that you buy any special supplies for annotation (feel free to be creative with what you already have at home), some students find the following items useful (click on the links to purchase on Amazon):

[Sticky tabs](#) / [Muted colors highlighters](#) / [Transparent sticky notes](#) / [Highlighter tape](#) / [Sticky tabs with ruler](#) / [Quick dry pens](#) / [Bookmarks](#) / [Erasable highlighters](#)

## Extension:



By now, you’re probably thinking to yourself, “I absolutely love this whole process...what more can I do to immerse myself in reading?” Well, I’m so glad you asked! Consider logging your reading into a reading journal of some type ([here is a link to one I use](#)) or join a community of readers.

1. [GoodReads](#). “Imagine it as a large library that you can wander through and see everyone’s bookshelves, their reviews, and their ratings. You can also post your own reviews and catalog what you have read, are currently reading, and plan to read in the future.”
2. [Litsy](#). “The Litsy community is a groundswell of passionate readers, authors, celebrities, and more. Share bookish moments with Quotes, Reviews, and Blurbs. Measure Litfluence to discover your ‘bookprint’ in the world. Explore recommendations from readers, not algorithms.”
3. [LibraryThing](#). “LibraryThing helps you create a library-quality catalog of your books. You can do all of them or just what you’re reading now. And because everyone catalogs online, they also catalog together. LibraryThing connects people based on the books they share.”
4. [AuthorsDen.com](#). “The largest most vibrant free online literary community of authors and readers! Visited by 1,400,000+ readers/mo.”

### “Owning” Books:

There are two ways you can own a book. The first is the property right you establish by paying for it. Full ownership comes only when you have made it a part of yourself, and the best way to make yourself a part of it is by writing in it. You may buy a beefsteak and put it in your freezer, but you do not own it in any important sense until you consume it and get it into your bloodstream. Books, too, must be absorbed into your bloodstream.

### Why You Should Mark Your Books:

1. It keeps you awake — and I don't mean merely conscious; I mean awake.
2. Reading, if it is active, is thinking — and thinking tends to express itself in words, spoken or written. The marked book is the thought-through book.
3. Writing helps you remember — remember the thoughts you had, or the thoughts the author expressed.

### A Closer Look:

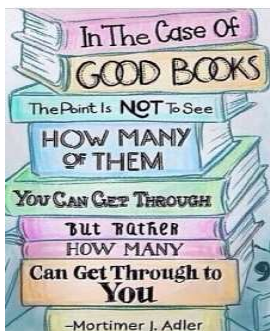
If reading is to accomplish anything more than passing time, it must be active. You can't let your eyes glide across the lines of a book and come up with an understanding of what you have read. Now an ordinary piece of light fiction, like, say, *Gone With the Wind*, doesn't require the most active kind of reading. The books you read for pleasure can be read in a state of relaxation, and nothing is lost. But a great book, rich in ideas and beauty, a book that raises and tries to answer great fundamental questions, demands the most active reading of which you are capable.

If, when you finish reading a book, the pages are filled with your notes, you know that you read actively. And why is writing necessary? — Because the physical act of writing, with your own hand, brings words and sentences more sharply before your mind and preserves them better in your memory. To set down your reactions to what you have read and the questions raised in your mind is to preserve those reactions and sharpen those questions.

When you're reading to acquire information and understanding, note in the margins your *understanding* of the points being made or the topics being covered. Capture in just a few words the essential idea. Upon a return visit, you can flip through the book and, by skimming your notes, quickly review the book's substance, quickly locate a particular point or topic.

### Useful and Fruitful Marking Devices: What to Look for and How to Mark It

1. Underline or highlight literary devices: themes, similes, metaphors, personification, images, foreshadowing, symbolism, allusions, point of view, tone, mood, motifs, etc.
2. Circle vocabulary you want to learn or words that jump out at you for some reason.
3. Make connections to movies, news events, other texts, & your life and list these in the margins.
4. Trace the actions or development of a character. Does the character change? Why? How?
5. Underline, circle, or highlight key words or phrases — explain these in the margins.
6. Look for patterns and label them (word choice, sentence patterns).
7. Summarize key events - at the ends of chapters or sections.
8. Write an alternative title for each chapter or section and explain your thinking.
9. Make predictions or note anything you would like to know more about or do not understand.
10. Star, asterisk, or use other doodads in the margin. You may want to use a sticky tab to find them later.



You may say that this business of marking books is going to slow up your reading. Yes, exactly — that's one of the reasons for doing it. Most of us have been taken in by the notion that speed of reading is a measure of our intelligence. But for intelligent reading, there is no such thing as the right speed. Some things should be read quickly and effortlessly; some should be read slowly, even laboriously. In the case of good books, the point is not to see how many of them you can get through, but rather *how many can get through you* -- how many you can make your own.

***With books, a few friends are better than a thousand acquaintances.***





## *Educated by Tara Westover*



### **Before Reading: The Argument**

1. Write a paragraph explaining what education is and what being educated looks like. In your response, consider both the denotative and connotative aspects of the word education, aspects that are important to being educated, what education looks like, and what education does not look like.
2. View Fareed Zakaria's [commencement address](#) "The Importance of the Liberal Arts" (12 minutes) and write a paragraph that identifies the following:
  - What is his argument regarding education?
  - What evidence does he use to support his argument?
  - To what extent do you agree or disagree with his argument and why?
3. View Gavin McCormack's [TEDxSydney talk](#) "How Education Can Save the World" (8 minutes) and write a paragraph that identifies the following:
  - What is his argument regarding education?
  - What evidence does he use to support his argument?
  - To what extent do you agree or disagree with his argument and why?



### **During Reading: Annotation**

Using the guidelines in "How to Mark a Book," as well as the four video examples, purposely annotate the book with a specific focus on:

1. Westover's understanding of what it means to be educated. Consider how her definition and understanding of what being educated is morphs and develops.

### **After Reading: Application**

Come to class ready to use your annotations for discussions and writings as needed.



## *Lone Survivor by Marcus Luttrell*



### **Before Reading: The Rhetoric**

1. Watch the [animated book story](#) of Tim O'Brien's novel "The Things They Carried" (4 minutes) and write a paragraph that identifies the following:
  - What literal and figurative items do the soldiers "carry" and why?
  - How does Tim O'Brien convey his message to an audience? How does he craft his novel?
2. View the [video](#) "Lone Survivor (2013) – Will of a Warrior (Making Of)" (28 minutes) and write a paragraph that identifies the following (note: this video will help you visualize many parts of the book):
  - What fears about making this film did Luttrell have and what was his role in making it?
  - What responsibilities did the writer/director and actors have in the making of the film?



### **During Reading: Annotation**

Using the guidelines in "How to Mark a Book," as well as the four video examples, purposely annotate the book with a specific focus on:

1. Luttrell's way of crafting his story for a given audience.
  - Ethos (credibility): How does he build credibility and when does he detract from his credibility?
  - Pathos (emotion): When does he use emotion to develop his story?
  - Logos (logic): When does he logically present his argument and how does it develop his story?
2. What he and his Navy SEALs Team "carry" as soldiers and what he alone "carries" as being the "lone survivor."

### **After Reading: Application**

Come to class ready to use your annotations for discussions and writings as needed.