

AP Language and Composition Essential Readings Summer Assignment 2024-2025

This assignment will prepare you for the essentials of AP Language. You'll develop foundational skills so you can be successful in this class. You'll also read famous, fascinating, incredible, seminal texts and essays by wonderful authors that will pique your curiosity about society, humanity, technology, and identity.

You'll have a chance to show what you've learned when you take an assessment on all the texts (assigned below), as well as on the vocabulary, in the first week of September. Are you ready for an incredible journey into rhetoric? Let's go!

1. Learn your Tone Words (See attached list, pages 2-6).

We will use these tone words again...and again...and again. Learn them. Know them. These are awesome adjectives you should start to use during your conversations this summer! We recommend making flash cards or using Quizlet to learn them.

2. Read the following Essays

Have you ever wondered what it even means *to learn*? How would you feel if you were thrown in jail, just for standing up for your rights? What if the way you see yourself is different from the way others see you? How does technology impact our society and relationships?

Even if you've never asked yourself these questions, check out these incredible essays. You won't be disappointed. All of these essays can be found online, for free. Annotate them using your best annotation skills. Consider summarizing and paraphrasing, making connections, and asking questions. You can print the essays and annotate on the page or take organized notes on a separate piece of paper. All of these are acceptable ways to demonstrate that you're interacting with the text as you read.

- Francis Bacon, "Of Studies" (1625)
- Henry David Thoreau, "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience" (1849)
- Frederick Douglass, "What to a Slave is the Fourth of July?" (5 July 1852)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (1963)
- Amy Tan, "Mother Tongue" (1990)
- Judith Ortiz Cofer, "The Myth of the Latin Woman: I Just Met a Girl Named Maria" (1992)
- Jonathan Haidt and Greg Lukianoff "The Coddling of the American Mind" - ARTICLE in *The Atlantic Magazine* (NOT the full book).

3. Critically think (see attached questions, page 6). **For each essay, answer the page 6 questions on a separate document.** These questions should become second nature to you – like the tone words, they will appear again...and again...and again throughout the course. Constant practice will help you form a solid foundation for the course.

We look forward to meeting you in September!

Sincerely,

Your AP Language Teachers

Ms. DeMella, Ms. Fahey, and Ms. Livingston

Name and Date: _____

English 3AP: Vocabulary List

Directions: *As part of your 3AP summer reading assignment, you must learn the following words and definitions. These words will appear on the reading assessment quiz to be given in the first week of the school year in September, and they are crucial background knowledge for this collegiate level course.*

Mood and Tone Words

1. **Ambivalent** - having or showing very different feelings (such as love and hate) about someone or something at the same time

- He felt *ambivalent* about his job. [=he both liked and disliked his job]
- He has an *ambivalent* relationship with his family.
- She has a deeply/very *ambivalent* attitude about/to/toward religion.
- The senator is *ambivalent* about running for president. [=the senator has not decided whether or not to run for president]

2. **Apathetic** - not having or showing much emotion or interest

- Young people are becoming increasingly *apathetic*.
- a politically *apathetic* [=indifferent, uninterested] generation
- the *apathetic* attitude of the public

3. **Baffled** - completely confused

- a *baffled* look [=a look that shows confusion]
- His explanation left me feeling even more *baffled*[=*confused*] than I had felt before.

4. **Belligerent** - angry and aggressive :feeling or showing readiness to fight

- a *belligerent* remark
- He was drunk and *belligerent*.

5. **Cynical** - believing that people are generally selfish and dishonest

- *Cynical* people say there is no such thing as true love.
- People are so *cynical* nowadays.
- She's become more *cynical* in her old age.

— often + *about*

- He's *cynical about* marriage.
- Many young people today are *cynical about* politics.

6. **Contemplative** - involving, allowing, or causing deep thought

- She's in a *contemplative* mood today. [=she is quiet and thoughtful today]
- He has lived a quiet, *contemplative* life.

- A *contemplative* book

7. **Diffident** - lacking confidence : not feeling comfortable around people

- He becomes *diffident* [=shy, timid] around girls.
- She has a *diffident* [=reserved] manner.

8. **Didactic** - designed or intended to teach people something

- *didactic* poetry

Connotation - *usually disapproving* — used to describe someone or something that tries to teach something (such as proper or moral behavior) in a way that is annoying or unwanted

- Audiences were turned off by the movie's *didactic* quality.

9. **Disdainful** - feeling strong dislike or disapproval for something or someone you think does not deserve respect : feeling or showing disdain

- He looked at the waiter with a *disdainful* glare.
- a *disdainful* attitude toward authority

— often + *of*

- a critic who is *disdainful of* all modern art

10. **Dejected** - sad because of failure, loss, etc.

- The *dejected* players left the field.
- She's been so *dejected* [=depressed, unhappy] since her sister moved away.

11. **Derisive** - *formal*

: the feeling that people express when they criticize and laugh at someone or something in an insulting way

- *derisive* [=scornful] laughter
- a *derisive* [=derogatory] term

12. **Droll** - having an odd and amusing quality

- a *droll* little man with a peculiar sense of humor
- a book of *droll* stories

13. **Empathetic** - understanding and sharing another person's experiences and emotions

- He was very *empathetic*. He felt great *empathy* with/for/toward the poor.

14. **Fawning** - *disapproving*

: trying to get the approval of an important or powerful person by giving that person praise, special attention, etc.

- a sports star surrounded by *fawning* fans

15. **Flippant** -

: lacking proper respect or seriousness

- He made/gave a *flippant* response to a serious question.

16. **Furtive** -

: quiet and secret; trying to avoid being noticed

- He cast a *furtive* glance in our direction.
- We exchanged *furtive* smiles across the table.
- *furtive* movements

17. **Harried** - bothered by many problems or worries : very worried or anxious

- *harried* shoppers/travelers

18. **Indignant** -

: feeling or showing anger because of something that is unfair or wrong : very angry

- She wrote an *indignant* letter to the editor.
- He was/got/became very *indignant* about/over the changes.
- an *indignant* tone of voice

19. **Morose** - *of a person* : very serious, unhappy, and quiet

- He became *morose* and withdrawn and would not talk to anyone.

2: very sad or unhappy

- *morose* song lyrics
- *morose* thoughts

20. **Obsequious** - *disapproving*

: too eager to help or obey someone important

- She's constantly followed by *obsequious* assistants who will do anything she tells them to.

21. **Patronizing** - *disapproving*

: showing that you believe you are more intelligent or better than other people

- She spoke to us in a *patronizing* [=condescending] tone.

- a *patronizing* smile

22. **Pedantic** - *disapproving*

: annoying other people by correcting small errors and giving too much attention to minor details

- a *pedantic* teacher
- a *pedantic* insistence on following the rules exactly

23. **Pessimistic** - having or showing a lack of hope for the future : expecting bad things to happen

- I'm *pessimistic* about our chances of winning. [=I don't think we'll win]
- Most doctors were *pessimistic* that a cure could be found.
- The film gives a very *pessimistic* view of human nature.
- He has an extremely negative and *pessimistic* attitude.

— opposite [OPTIMISTIC](#)

24. **Plaintive** - *formal*

: expressing suffering or sadness : having a sad sound

- a *plaintive* [=mournful, sorrowful] sigh
- We could hear the *plaintive* cry of a wounded animal in the woods.

25. **Pompous** - *disapproving*

: having or showing the attitude of people who speak and behave in a very formal and serious way because they believe that they are better, smarter, or more important than other people

- a *pompous* [=self-important] politician
- a *pompous* remark
- She found it difficult to talk about her achievements without sounding *pompous*.

26. **Sardonic** - *formal*

: showing that you disapprove of or do not like someone or something : showing disrespect or scorn for someone or something

- The movie is a *sardonic* look at modern life.
- *sardonic* humor/comments
- a *sardonic* expression/smile

27. **Sadistic** -

: enjoyment that someone gets from being violent or cruel or from causing pain

— compare [MASOCHISM](#)

- *sadistic* behavior
- a *sadistic* criminal

28. **Supercilious** -

: having or showing the proud and unpleasant attitude of people who think that they are better or more important than other people

- a *supercilious* professor
- a *supercilious* tone/attitude
- *supercilious* behavior

AP Language and Composition Essential Readings Summer Assignment

Critical Thinking Questions

Directions: For each of the essays, answer the following questions in a separate document. Identify the title and author for each set of question.

1. Identify the **speaker**. Identify or infer the speaker's age, gender, class, and education. What can you tell or what do you know about the speaker that helps you understand the point of view expressed?
2. Describe the **purpose**. (What is the purpose behind the text? Why did the author write it? What is his/her/their goal? (To find the purpose, ask, "What did the author want his/her/their audience to think or do as a result of reading this text?") What is the message? How does the speaker convey this message?)
3. Describe the **audience**. (Who are the readers to whom this piece is directed? It may be one person or a specific group. Does the speaker specify an audience? What assumptions exist in the text about the intended audience?)
4. Describe the **context**. (What was going on in the world when the text was produced? What were the biggest issues on the speaker's mind? How would this same text be received differently by a different audience or in a different time?)
5. Describe the **exigence**. (Why NOW for the speaker? What was the spark or catalyst that moved the speaker to act? Note that an event usually serves as exigence.)
6. Describe the writing **choices** the speaker makes. (What literary devices do you notice? What do you notice about the sentence structure? What else is interesting or unique about the writing style?)
7. Describe the **subject**. (What topic, content, and ideas are included in the text? State the subject in a few words or a short phrase. Is there more than one subject? How does the author present the subject? Does s/he/they introduce it immediately or do you, the reader, have to make an inference?)
8. Describe the **tone**. (What is the attitude of the author? Is the author emotional, objective, neutral, or biased about this topic? What types of details "tell" the author's feelings about the topic? What types of diction (choice of words), syntax (sentence structure), and imagery (metaphors, similes, and other types of figurative language) help reflect the tone? How would you read the passage aloud if you were the author?)

