

# AP English Language and Composition

## Summer Reading 2024

Dear Rising Junior:

Welcome to AP English Language! AP English Language is a course that is different from your other English classes in that we will read mostly nonfiction and focus on how authors convey their message to the audience. It also requires intentional argumentation and a broad knowledge of the world around you. This summer reading assignment has been designed to support all three of these aspects of the course, and it is vital that you spend adequate time on the assignment in order to be as successful as possible.

At **Harding Charter Preparatory High School**, we firmly believe that learning should not stop when school ends. Thus, we require students to read books during the summer in order to:

- build vocabulary
- maintain and improve reading skills
- read a variety of literary forms
- broaden their knowledge base for taking the Advanced Placement tests
- and develop the habit of reading to become lifelong learners.

This assignment has three parts: reading, note taking, and essay writing. Each part is detailed more fully below.

**Part 1 — Pick a book to read.** You have several options to choose from. They represent different styles, lengths, and topics, so take the time to research these classic works in order to pick the one that interests you most. *It is strongly recommended that you purchase a copy of the book for yourself so that you can annotate as you read. Some books are available in our library. All books are available in any library or bookstore, though Amazon may be the cheapest option.* You may choose from:

- **Walden by Henry David Thoreau**
- **Pilgrim at Tinker Creek by Annie Dillard**
- **Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass by Frederick Douglass**
- **In Cold Blood by Truman Capote**
- **Silent Spring by Rachel Carson**
- **The Autobiography of Malcolm X by Malcolm X**
- **A Room of One's Own by Virginia Woolf**
- **Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI by David Grann**
- **There, There by Tommy Orange**

**Part 2 — Take notes as you read.**

- A. Your notes should be in C-Note format and should be no fewer than 5 handwritten pages in ink (each side of your paper counts as a page). I will not accept typed notes; nor will I give credit for excessively large handwriting or spacing. Also: your notes should cover the whole book; use your best judgment on the amount of notes necessary for each chapter.
- B. On the left side of your C-Notes, I expect to see thoughtful questions based on / extended from the questions below (rather than simple headings), which are answered in detail on the right side. For example, instead of simply writing "Metaphor" on the left side, you should ask, "How does Dillard's use of metaphor illustrate her experience of winter?" and then answer the question on the right side, including direct quotes / paraphrases / summaries, page numbers, and analysis / explanation to support your answer. You are rising juniors, and your grade will reflect the level of thought that you display.

### Questions to Address:

In order to read more deeply and prepare for your essay most efficiently, your notes should focus on the following:

- What is the main subject of this book? What topic is it about? (You only need to answer this question once.)
- As you read and also after finishing the book, what seems to be the author's overall message about that subject? What does s/he want us to understand about it? **Spend time on this part!**
- How does each chapter help develop and contribute to that message? Why include that chapter?
- How or why might elements of this book be considered propaganda?
- What specific techniques do you notice the author using in each chapter to further enhance his/her message, and how do they work in each example?
  - Refer to the list of literary terms attached for suggestions. Look up any that are unfamiliar.
  - It is not enough to merely identify 'metaphor' or 'anecdote'; rather, you must explain the significance of each. No author uses these techniques just for the fun of it: explain *why*.
  - Avoid freshman-level analysis; i.e. "The author uses imagery because he wants us to be able to picture the scene." Instead, consider the specific words and images used, what tone they suggest or atmosphere they create, and then explain why. For example, "Kidder uses cheerful imagery in order to contrast the happy setting of the medical compound with the surrounding squalor and misery in Haiti."
- What are your own reactions to the information and message(s) presented in each chapter and at the end of the book? (Consider this part to help you understand the author's overall message.)

*Failure to address these questions will result in a poor grade on your notes, and you will find yourself wholly unprepared for the essay, which is your first (and only) writing grade for the first few weeks.*

CAUTION: Although you are reading nonfiction, **your notes should not be a series of facts that you have learned.** The facts serve as evidence that supports the author's main message, but they are secondary to the overall purpose of the text and to your analysis. Additionally, please know ahead of time that SparkNotes and other online services will be useless for this assignment.

**Notes will be due at the beginning of class on the first day of school. Late work will be penalized 10% per day.**

**Part 3 — In-Class Essay.** On the second day of school, you will compose an in-class essay over the book you read. You will have 40 minutes to respond to the prompt. This is your first writing grade of the semester, which comprises 25% of your overall grade. How you do on this essay will dictate your grade in the class for several weeks of school, so take care to prepare as fully as possible.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me over the summer. Although I will check my email periodically, I will not be checking it daily, so don't procrastinate.

*Please note:* emails should be formal, beginning with "Dear Mr. Walsh," identifying yourself early on, and ending with a salutation of some kind, such as, "Sincerely, your name". Do not simply send a question without introduction; I will not respond to those. Again, you are juniors now; let your communication reflect that maturity.

I look forward to meeting you in a few short months!

Happy Reading,

Mr. Walsh  
[dwalsh@hisd.org](mailto:dwalsh@hisd.org)

# Helpful Literary Terms and Rhetorical Devices

Below are a number of terms to assist you in your analysis and C-Notes. You should be familiar with the majority of them, but look up those that are new to you. You do not need to use all of them; this list is for your reference only.

Again, remember that it's not enough to simply identify these elements; you must also explain why the author chose to use them and what impact they have.

Additionally, avoid freshman-level analysis; i.e. "The author uses imagery because he wants us to be able to picture the scene." Instead, consider the specific words and images used, what tone they suggest or atmosphere they create, and then explain why.

<b>Alliteration</b>	<b>Flashback</b>	<b>Proverb / aphorism</b>
<b>Allusion</b>	<b>Foil</b>	<b>Rebuttal</b>
<b>Anecdote</b>	<b>Foreshadowing</b>	<b>Satire</b>
<b>Authorial intrusion</b>	<b>Hyperbole</b>	<b>Simile</b>
<b>Characterization</b>	<b>Imagery</b>	<b>Slang</b>
<b>Charged language</b>	<b>Irony - dramatic, verbal,</b>	<b>Style</b>
<b>Charts/graphs/visuals</b>	<b>situational</b>	<b>Symbol</b>
<b>Claim</b>	<b>Jargon</b>	<b>Syntax (always include an</b>
<b>Concession</b>	<b>Juxtaposition</b>	<b>adjective to describe</b>
<b>Counterargument</b>	<b>Metaphor</b>	<b>syntax; ex: staccato)</b>
<b>Description</b>	<b>Motif</b>	<b>Theme</b>
<b>Dialect</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Tone (always include an</b>
<b>Euphemism</b>	<b>Parallelism</b>	<b>adjective to describe tone;</b>
<b>Figurative language</b>	<b>Personification</b>	<b>ex: haunted)</b>
		<b>Understatement / Litotes</b>

Criteria for Grading Notes	
<b>Excellent Notes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 full handwritten pages that cover the whole book</li> <li>- Thoughtful questions on the left side demonstrate above-average analysis</li> <li>- The left side addresses all required questions provided</li> <li>- Analysis on the right side is <u>thoughtful</u>, cites specific examples, makes connections, and thoroughly explains the significance of the literary elements present</li> <li>- Notes are neatly organized and easy to read</li> </ul>
<b>Average Notes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 full handwritten pages that cover the whole book</li> <li>- Questions on the left side demonstrate attempt at deeper analysis but may feel vague or perfunctory</li> <li>- The left side addresses all required questions provided</li> <li>- Analysis on the right side is <u>effective</u>, cites examples, makes some connections, and attempts to explain the significance of the literary elements present</li> <li>- Notes are organized and easy to read</li> </ul>
<b>Poor Notes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 full handwritten pages that cover only part of the book</li> <li>- Few or no questions on the left side</li> <li>- The left side addresses only a few of the required questions provided</li> <li>- Analysis on the right side is <u>sloppy or basic</u>; it may contain only evidence from the reading and very little commentary or inaccurate analysis,</li> <li>- Notes are poorly organized and sloppy</li> </ul>
Failure to address any area required will result in significant loss of points.	