

AP English Literature & Composition Summer Assignment

2024 - 2025

Here are my thoughts on summer work: I want it to be meaningful, enjoyable, and reasonable. Overloading you with tedious assignments just to “set the tone” for the class isn’t my style and doesn’t really benefit you or me (remember this when we’re writing lots of essays next year).

You have two major tasks to complete this summer. They are due on the first day of class. These assignments will refresh your skills and activate your mind but will also prepare you for what is coming this upcoming school year.

Task Number One: Draft a college admissions essay based on one of this year’s common app prompts.

Task Number Two: Select a short story from the three options given to read and annotate for character and setting. You will also be preparing for a discussion the first week of school. **If you need me to print the story for you, please come see me before the end of the school year.*

Our over-arching essential question for the school year will be *what does fiction teach us about the human condition?* Our first discussion will be centered around coming of age as all of the short story options are about an adult reflecting on a specific moment in their childhood that caused them to have some kind of epiphany.

On the first day of class, we will discuss the following ideas:

What is the human condition? How does it connect to growing up?	Who is the main character and what does he/she learn?	How does the setting impact the main character’s growth? What effect does culture and family have on a child?	Is growing up finite (having a definite end) or perpetual?
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There are rubrics for your college essay, annotations, and in-class discussion to help you understand what I’m looking for and how you will be evaluated.

If you need to get in touch with me over the summer, feel free to email me at terwile@gcsnc.com, and I’ll be happy to answer any questions. Have a great summer and a wonderful first semester. I can’t wait to meet you!

All the best!

Mrs. Terwilliger

The College Admissions Essay – to be submitted on Canvas by 8/26/2025 for both A and B day

Many colleges across the United States use Common App for their admissions process. Even schools that do not use Common App tend to use similar admissions essay prompts. Thus, to prepare for the coming college admissions season, you will select one of this year's Common App essay prompts and draft a full admissions essay in response. Common App's essay word limit is 250-650 words. Most student writing starts off as verbose and needs cutting, so the word count for this assignment is 500-650 words. Note that if you are in the process of applying for a school that uses a prompt other than those given by Common App, you can submit it through Prompt 7, which is an essay of your choice.

1. Prompt Choices:

Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

Need some examples? Check out the [“Essays that Worked”](#) portion of the Johns Hopkins University college planning page.

Writing Checklist:

Hook: A specific incident (including narrative details like description, dialogue, setting, etc.) begins the essay and conveys the writer's personality and/or point

Focus: the essay addresses the prompt without meandering off topic

Voice: the writer's voice is personal and appropriate for the audience and purpose; diction, syntax, and choice of detail reflect purposeful attention

Organization: the essay follows a logical progression of ideas, free of extraneous information; the paragraph breaks make sense in the organizational structure, and sensible transitions move the essay along without being formulaic

Sentence Structure: the essay features varied sentence structures including some complex sentences with phrases and clauses; it is free of fragments and run-ons

Conventions: the essay is mostly free of errors in spelling, capitalization, pronoun usage, verb tense, and punctuation

Procedures: the draft is typed in the correct font (Times New Roman, 12 point, double-spaced), includes a header and a word count and it was submitted on time

Narrative Essay Rubric

	Opening Hook	Narration	Characterization	Reflection	Voice & Style	Procedures
Superlative ("A" Range)	Captivates the reader's interest with a gripping hook, as by dropping the reader into a scene filled with tension; uses mystery or suspense to keep the reader's interest	Sustains the reader's interest by expanding the hook into a compelling story, as by drawing on narrative techniques such as suspense, humor, irony, and/or foreshadowing	Uses precise description, sensory details, and/or punchy dialogue to evoke a vivid picture of the characters; these elements "show" their complex feelings and motives	Constructs an organized and distinctive narrative persona who demonstrates a capacity for in-depth and nuanced self-reflection; establishes a clear distinction between past self and present self	Cultivates a writing voice that reveals an additional side of one's personality: a keen observational intelligence, a sense of humor, a lively energy, or what have you.	Student is prepared with an essay on time that is typed in the correct font. The essay includes a header. The essay meets the word requirement.
Excellent	Engages the reader by opening with an interesting situation, scene, or observation	Uses narrative elements like exposition, conflict, rising action, and so on; combines all story elements in a manner that supports a larger purpose	Uses precise description and dialogue to evoke an image of distinctive personalities undergoing complex experiences	Constructs a narrator who exhibits a capacity for critical self-reflection and seems willing to learn or grow from his or her experiences	Utilizes a wide variety of sentence patterns; chooses words that are not only precise and persuasive but vivid and compelling	Student is prepared with an essay on time that is typed in the correct font. The essay includes a header. The essay meets the word requirement.
Very Good ("B" range)	Engages the reader by opening with a mildly interesting hook; includes some details that seem unnecessary or redundant	Sequences events such that they build on one another to create a coherent whole; includes some details that may be extraneous to the whole	Uses concrete details to make the characters and experiences seem real and convincing; may neglect to fully disclose external and/or internal conflicts and tensions	Provides a clear and convincing account of how the narrator has been changed by his or her experiences	Builds sentences that are grammatically correct yet simple; chooses words that are accurate yet plain; could develop a more personal voice; could take more risks in one's prose	Student is prepared with an essay on time that is typed in the correct font. The essay includes a header. The essay meets the word requirement.
Good	Orients the reader by opening with background information that sets the stage for the narrative; could do more to capture the reader's interest	Sequences story elements to build toward a specific outcome; pacing may be choppy; transitions may be awkward	Neglects to "show" what the characters think and feel; relies exclusively on "telling" what they think and feel	Reflects thoughtfully on one's experiences but doesn't establish how the present self (narrator) differs from the past self (character)	Constructs sentences that may be clunky, choppy, or wordy; chooses words that are sometimes vague or inexact; commits some punctuation errors	Student is prepared with an essay on time that is typed in the correct font. The essay includes a header. The essay meets the word requirement.
Fair ("C" Range)	Opens with a hook that is relevant to the narrative but that may be dull, trivial, or commonplace	Constructs a story that has little narrative propulsion; the narrative point of view is unclear or inconsistent;	Describes the characters' personalities but neglects to disclose the ongoing fluctuations in their thoughts, feelings, or motivations	Arrives at a canned or clichéd conclusion about the meaning of one's experiences	Makes many grammatical errors; uses language that is overly colloquial; struggles with verb tenses, subject-verb	Student did not fully follow procedural instructions

		times or locations are not clearly differentiated			agreement, and/or passive voice	
Poor ("F" Range)	Opens with a paragraph that contributes little to or remains disconnected from the rest of the essay	Describes a haphazard series of events that seem unconnected	Constructs characters that are underdeveloped and/or two-dimensional	Fails to include more than a few sentences of reflection	Commits egregious mechanical errors; chooses words that are not just imprecise but inaccurate	Student did not follow procedural instructions

The Short Story -- to be checked the first day of class

The first unit of the AP Literature and Composition course is on short fiction. To gauge where your skills are before we start the unit, you will select one short story to read, annotate, and analyze. After the short story options, you will find a chart using the verbiage of the AP Literature and Composition course framework. Our course focuses on six major categories: **character, setting, structure, narration, figurative language, and literary argumentation** and leads us through enduring understandings, skills, and essential knowledge related to each. For the summer assignment, we analyze our text considering the first two categories: **character** and **setting**. Complete the performance tasks section of the chart for this assignment. For annotations, you may come to me before the end of the school year and I will give you a copy of the story. If you do not, you will be on your own to get a copy of the story so you can annotate it. You will submit pictures of your annotations.

Story Choices:

[*The Scarlet Ibis*](#), by James Hurst

[*Two Kinds*](#), by Amy Tan

[*Marigolds*](#), by Eugenia Collier

Overview of Tasks:

1. Read the story.
2. Annotate for character using one color.
3. Read the story again.
4. Annotate for setting using another color.
5. Prepare for an in-class discussion based on your story, the ideas prevalent, and the discussion questions provided.

Enduring Understanding #1	
Character: Characters in literature allow readers to study and explore a range of values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, and cultural norms represented by those characters.	
Skills	Essential Knowledge
1.A Identify and describe what specific textual details reveal about a character, that character’s perspective, and that character’s motives.	CHR-1A Description, dialogue, and behavior reveal characters to readers.

CHR-1B Descriptions of characters may come from a speaker, narrator, other characters, or the characters themselves.

CHR-1C Perspective is how narrators, characters, or speakers understand their circumstances, and is informed by background, personality traits, biases, and relationships.

CHR-1D A character’s perspective is both shaped and revealed by relationships with other characters, the environment, the events of the plot, and the ideas expressed in the text.

1. Annotation:
 In the short story you chose, annotate the story by highlighting portions of the text that exemplify the essential knowledge above and proving marginal commentary.
- Note significant instances of:
- Characterization
 - Dialogue
 - Character action or inaction
 - Relationships among characters
 - Characterization which reveals background, personality traits, and/or biases

Enduring Understanding #2

Setting: Setting and the details associated with it not only depict a time and place, but also convey values associated with that setting.

Skills

Essential Knowledge

2.A Identify and describe specific textual details that convey or reveal a setting.

SET-1A Setting includes the time and place during which the events of the text occur.

Annotation:
 In the short story you chose, annotate (in a different color than you used for characterization) the story by highlighting portions of the text that exemplify the essential knowledge above and proving marginal commentary.

- Note details about the story’s:
- Time (When and how long and at what pace does the story take place)
 - Place (Where does the story take place? Are there setting changes? Mark those shifts.)
 - Situational Context (What is occurring in the background of the story? Think historical movements, wars, social movements, elections, famines, etc. BIG details)
 - Values (What cultural values are associated with the time period/society? How are women, children, and men valued? How is the class system valued? How is religion valued? Etc.)

AP English Literature Annotation Homework Rubric

100---Student has followed instructions. Homework is complete -- All key lines and important ideas/quotes are highlighted. Student fully reacts to text in margins by questioning, analyzing,

defining, drawing connections. Student shows evidence of attempting to use notes given by teacher.

90---Student has followed instructions. Homework is complete. Most key lines and important ideas/quotes are highlighted. Student mostly reacts to text in margins by questioning, analyzing, defining, drawing connections.

80---Student has attempted to follow instructions, but there is evidence of some lack of comprehension of the task. About half of the key lines and important ideas/quotes are highlighted. Student somewhat reacts to text in margins by questioning, analyzing, defining, drawing connections.

70---Student has made an attempt but did not understand the task. Work is incomplete. A few of the key lines or important ideas/quotes are highlighted. Student reacts to text in the margins very little.

60---Work is incomplete. There is little evidence that the student put any effort into understanding and completing the assignment.

0---Work is not turned in to the instructor.

- As per the syllabus, a late HOMEWORK assignment may be taken only ONE DAY late yet may earn no grade higher than a 60/D. Students may turn in work after one day, but they will not receive credit.

AP Literature and Composition Discussion Rubric

	Meets/Exceeds Expectations 3	Approaches Expectations 2	Needs Improvement 1
Preparation	I came fully prepared to our discussion. This means I completed all of the reading and annotations.	I came somewhat prepared to our discussion. This means I completed some of the reading and some of the annotations.	I was not prepared for today's discussion because I did not read or annotate.
Listening	I listened carefully and respectfully to my classmates at all time. My phone was away.	I listened carefully and respectfully to my classmates some of the time. I was on my phone occasionally.	I spaced out during our discussion, was on our phone, or interrupted the speaker.
Speaking	I contributed several meaningful comments to the whole group discussion based on	I contributed one meaningful comment to the whole group	I did not contribute to the group discussion at all.

	evidence from the text, without hogging all the talking time/points.	discussion based on evidence from the text.	
Depth of Thought	All questions and comments showed deep understanding and original, profound thought.	Some questions and comments showed deep understanding and original, profound thought.	My questions and comments did not show very deep, original thinking.
Expectations/Norms	I followed all of our class expectations (One speaker at a time, looking at the speaker, respecting others' points of view, cell phones away).	I followed some of our expectations but broke some, too.	I did not follow many or most of the expectations.