

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition for Juniors

Welcome to Advanced Placement English! This course is an introduction to college-level work. If you are eager to learn, ready to argue and to listen, committed to increasing your skills as a reader and writer to empower you for success at any college you choose, this is your class. I look forward to your comments and insights about the texts we read and the ideas we explore, and I will do my best to give you the guidance and support you need to meet the challenges of A.P. work. I know I will learn much from each of you.

Please Note: Summer homework that is not turned in, incomplete or scored at a failing level may result in student being waived out of the AP program.

Summer Reading

**Article: “Coach Fitz’s Management Theory” by Michael Lewis
and
One of the choice books listed below.**

Read and annotate both texts. Digital copies of the books are not recommended. Students cannot use technology during in-class writing.

- All books are available in audio format on Amazon Audible for free with a 30-day free trial.

Choice #1: *Everything Bad is Good for You: How Today’s Popular Culture is Actually Making Us Smarter* by Steven Johnson

Forget everything you’ve ever read about the age of dumbed-down, instant-gratification culture. In this provocative, unfailingly intelligent, thoroughly researched, and surprisingly convincing big idea book, Steven Johnson draws from fields as diverse as neuroscience, economics, and media theory to argue that the pop culture we soak in every day—from Lord of the Rings to Grand Theft Auto to The Simpsons—has been growing more sophisticated with each passing year, and, far from rotting our brains, is actually posing new cognitive challenges that are actually making our minds measurably sharper. After reading *Everything Bad is Good for You*, you will never regard the glow of the video game or television screen the same way again.

Choice #2: *Breaking Night: A Memoir of Forgiveness, Survival, and My Journey from Homeless to Harvard* by Liz Murray

Liz Murray never really had a chance in life. Born to a drug-addicted father who was in and out of prison, and an equally dependent mother who was in and out of mental institutions, she seemed destined to become just another tragic statistic. Another life wasted on the brutal streets of New York. By the age of 15, Liz found herself homeless with nowhere to turn but the tough streets, riding subways all night for a warm place to sleep and foraging through dumpsters for food. But when her mother died of AIDS a year later, Liz’s life changed forever. With no education, with no chance at a job or a home, she realized that only the most astonishing of turnarounds could stop her heading all the way down the same path her parents took. And so, she set her mind to overcoming what seemed like impossible odds - and in the process, achieved something extraordinary. Told with astounding sincerity, "Breaking Night" is the breathtaking and inspirational story of how a young woman, born into a world without hope, used every ounce of strength and determination to steer herself towards a brighter future. Beautifully written, it is a poignant, evocative and stirring portrait of struggle, desperation, forgiveness and survival.

Choice #3: *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi

At the age of thirty-six, on the verge of completing a decade’s worth of training as a neurosurgeon, Paul Kalanithi was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer. One day he was a doctor treating the dying, and the next he was a patient struggling to live. And just like that, the future he and his wife had imagined evaporated. *When Breath Becomes Air* chronicles Kalanithi’s transformation from a naive medical student “possessed,” as he wrote, “by the question of what, given that all organisms die, makes a virtuous and meaningful life” into a neurosurgeon at Stanford working in the brain, the most critical place for human identity, and finally into a patient and new father confronting his own mortality.

What makes life worth living in the face of death? What do you do when the future, no longer a ladder toward your goals in life, flattens out into a perpetual present? What does it mean to have a child, to nurture a new life as another fades away? These are some of the questions Kalanithi wrestles with in this profoundly moving, exquisitely observed memoir.

Paul Kalanithi died in March 2015, while working on this book, yet his words live on as a guide and a gift to us all. “I began to realize that coming face to face with my own mortality, in a sense, had changed nothing and everything,” he wrote. “Seven words from Samuel Beckett began to repeat in my head: ‘I can’t go on. I’ll go on.’” *When Breath Becomes Air* is an unforgettable, life-affirming reflection on the challenge of facing death and on the relationship between doctor and patient, from a brilliant writer who became both.

Annotation Domination Guide

Annotation Guide: Margin notes and color marking

Mandatory: Margin notes (can be on sticky notes if you prefer) in which you do the following (the list is not exhaustive):

- Write your personal response to the text.
- Note implications of the text.
- Note the author’s purpose as well as his/her technique.
- Explain the significance of the text.
- Define unknown vocabulary.

Annotation Tips

What Not to Do:

- **Don't use a highlighter**—Quality marking isn't done with a fat-tipped highlighter. You can't write, which is an important part of marking the text, with a larger marker. Get yourself some fine point colored pens to do the job.
- **Don't mark large volumes of text**—You want important points to stand out. Although we all know that everything can't be important, we often highlight all of the text on the page. Avoid this to help the key points stand out.

What to Do:

- **Mark the text with a pencil, pen, or even better, colored fine-tipped pens**—Remember, you are not highlighting, you are writing.
- **Underline sentences that contain a main idea or important new piece of information/development.**
- **Write the passage topic in the margin as a reminder**—Just a word or two.
- **Write questions in the margin**—When you don't understand something or when you don't understand the author's thought process on a particular topic, write the question in the margin as a reminder to settle the question.
- **Circle new and unfamiliar words**—Look them up as soon as possible.
- **Add your or other authors' perspectives in the margins**—Other authors have surely written on the same subject. What do they say? Do they agree with this author? If not, what do they say? Add these ideas in the margins.
- **Draw arrows to related ideas**—or unrelated ideas....

Annotate for repetition, shifts, tone, and author's purpose.