

AP Lang Summer Project 2025/2026

Welcome to AP English Language and Composition (AP Lang)! An important component of the English program is the Summer Reading assignment (SRA). The overall goal of the SRA is to introduce students to nonfiction readings – biography – to give students opportunities to identify and explain an author’s use of rhetorical strategies and techniques. Ultimately, students will be able to understand world events from the writer’s perspective through the use of annotation and discussion.

“The AP English Language and Composition course focuses on the development and revision of evidence-based analytic and argumentative writing, the rhetorical analysis of nonfiction texts, and the decisions writers make as they compose and revise. Students evaluate, synthesize, and cite research to support their arguments. Additionally, they read and analyze rhetorical elements and their effects in nonfiction texts—including images as forms of text— from a range of disciplines and historical periods” (College Board).

As this is a college-level course, some texts will cover more mature content and language, so an appropriate level of maturity is expected from students.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at arainey1@jocombs.org or at 480-256-2441, so I can assist you.

AP Lang Summer Project Google Classroom Join Code: **qmmohilj**

Summer Assignment

Part 1: Read and annotate the book *How to Argue with a Cat*, by Jay Heinrichs, and come to class prepared for an assessment on the reading in the first week after the break. As you read, annotate thoroughly and keep a top ten list of your favorite argumentative strategies.

Part 2: Pick a Memoir from the following list to read and annotate. In particular, notice what sorts of arguments the author makes and track both beautiful, shocking, and well-written sentences and phrases. You need to read one but feel free to read more!

1. **Born a Crime** – *Memoir, Autobiography, Social Commentary*
Focuses on Trevor Noah's life growing up under apartheid in South Africa.
2. **The Glass Castle** – *Memoir, Autobiography*
Jeannette Walls recounts her unconventional and poverty-stricken upbringing.
3. **Educated** – *Memoir, Autobiography, Bildungsroman (coming-of-age)*
Tara Westover's journey from isolation to academic achievement.
4. **Angela's Ashes** – *Memoir, Autobiography*
Frank McCourt's recollection of growing up in poverty in Ireland.
5. **Just Mercy** – *Memoir, Social Justice, Nonfiction, Legal Narrative*
Bryan Stevenson's personal account of defending the underserved in the justice system.
6. **The Things They Carried** – *Historical Fiction, War Literature, Metafiction*
A blend of fact and fiction about soldiers in the Vietnam War.
7. **The Devil in the White City** – *Historical Nonfiction, True Crime, Biography*
Dual narrative combining architecture and crime in 1890s Chicago.

8. **Night** – *Memoir, Holocaust Literature, Autobiography*

Elie Wiesel's firsthand account of surviving Nazi concentration camps.

9. **Where Men Win Glory: The Odyssey of Pat Tillman** – *Biography, Investigative Journalism, War Narrative*

Jon Krakauer explores Pat Tillman's life and the U.S. military's handling of his death.

10. **Is Everyone Hanging Out Without Me?** – *Memoir, Autobiography, Humor*

Mindy Kaling shares funny and reflective essays on growing up, relationships, and her rise in comedy, offering a lighthearted yet insightful look at modern identity and ambition.

*** If you want to choose your own non-fiction text, please reach out to me to discuss your choice. ***

Part 3: Reading Rainbow Video

Create a video encouraging others to read your book. Mention the title, author, and what message your book sends to the reader. DO NOT spoil the book. Be sure to explain why others should read it. Your video should be creative and thoughtful. This is modeled after a Reading Rainbow video. If you need to review, [watch this Reading Rainbow video of Jumanji](#).

Your video should be 3-5 minutes long and in addition to the directions above have clear video and narration.

Part 4: Synthesis

Write a reflection considering what the sources say about society, identity, or truth. Why are these insights worth remembering—and curating—for the future? This is **not** an essay, so please do not write one; you can write a paragraph, create a one pager or infographic, or any other form to convey **YOUR** perception of the insights.