AP Seminar Summer Assignment 2025

Congratulations on making it to sophomore year! You worked hard and are ready for the challenge of the first class of the AP Capstone program, AP Seminar. While the course will build on many of the skills that you developed freshman year, some new components might seem unfamiliar to you. Additionally, it is important that we, as a class, stay cognizant of current debates on global issues. This summer assignment is designed to do just that. Please note there are two parts: Part 1 is due July 31, 2025 and Part 2 is due August 31, 2025.

Each assignment will be worth 100 points, and late work will not be accepted.
You will receive an invitation to the summer Google Classroom, so please check your email. If you have any questions, please email Mrs. Pro at jpro@bergenfield.org.

Part 1: For part one of your summer assignment, determine two issues that you want to learn more about. These could have come to mind from something you learned last year, something you wish we learned more about in school, or something you read outside of school. If you are struggling, the following websites may spark ideas:

- https://www.un.org/en/global-issues
- https://sdgs.un.org/goals
- https://www.procon.org/

For each of these two themes, you must identify a real-world problem or issue, and convince the reader that this issue should be researched and discussed. For each issue, complete a 500 word response that answers the following:

a. What is the issue?
b. Why is it relevant?
c. What are two competing perspectives on this issue?
d. What is a solution to resolve this issue, and what are the limitations and implications of that solution. To clarify, the limitations are potential obstacles with your solution and the implications are outcomes if the solution were to be implemented. Please keep in mind any solution should be realistic and feasible.

You must cite at least two sources in your response (APA format) that you find and identify on your own, and will be submitted electronically. If you need help with APA, Purdue Owl is an excellent resource.

Part 2: You will need to read one of the non-fiction books below and complete a SOAPSTone text analysis.

Choose one of the following books:

- Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace…One School at a Time by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin

- Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner
- The Gatekeepers: Inside the Admissions Process of a Premier College by Jacques Steinberg
- The Great Influenza: The Epic Story of the Deadliest Plague in History by John M. Barry
- I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up For Education and Was Shot by the Taliban by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb
- Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal by Eric Schlosser

As you read, remember that good readers read closely and interact with their texts by annotating. Follow the attached guidelines, "Twelve Ways to Mark Up a Book," to aid in your annotations. If you do not literally mark up your text, then please use Post-It notes (if you do not own the book, you should never make marks in it). Remember, good readers are active readers, and annotation is a requirement for all texts read in AP Seminar.

For this book selection, you will be using SOAPSTone to analyze the text. SOAPSTone (Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject, Tone) is an acronym for a series of questions that a reader must first ask themselves, especially when reading nonfiction. Read the descriptions below and complete the assignment for each bulleted prompt.

Who is the **S**peaker?
The voice that tells the story.
As you are reading, consider the authority and credibility of the writer. How does the writer establish his or her credibility in the text?

- Find 3 specific passages that establish the writer as a trustworthy and/or qualified speaker.
- Below each quote, explain how the passage establishes the writer's credibility.

What is the **O**ccasion?
The context that prompted the writing.
As you are reading, analyze the reason(s) the writer is choosing to approach the topic at this particular moment in time. Is he/she writing in reaction to a specific event or person? Discuss how the occasion is revealed in the text.

- Why did the author choose to write this text at this time?
- How do you know?

Who is the **A**udience?
The group of readers to whom this piece is directed.
As you are reading, determine to whom this piece is directed. How do you know who the audience is? How is the audience defined? Discuss how the writer demonstrates understanding of the audience and how he or she uses that understanding to accomplish his or her goals.

- Who is the audience?
- How do you know?

What is the **P**urpose?
The reason behind the text.
As you are reading, analyze the purpose/argument/claim of the writer. Explore the purpose beyond its basic informative nature. Discuss how the purpose is revealed in the text.

- Are the purpose and occasion similar or different in this piece? Explain your reasoning.

What is the **S**ubject?
Students should be able to state the subject in a few words or phrases.
As you are reading, consider the general topic, content, and ideas contained in the text. Does the writer explicitly state the subject, or is it implied?

- Pick three subjects the author writes about and create a sentence for each subject that reveals the author's message about this subject. Example from Romeo and Juliet:
- Subject: hatred
- Message: Unexamined hatred has far-reaching consequences, often affecting the lives of innocent victims.

What is the **T**one?
The attitude of the author.
As you are reading, analyze the attitude of the writer. Tone extends meaning beyond the literal. Examine the choice of words, emotions expressed, and imagery used.

- Identify 3 tones the author creates in the text
- For each tone, find one example from the text illustrating the tone.
- Explain how the tone affects the effectiveness of each passage.

Sample tone words:
These are just a sample. There are MANY, MANY more tone words you may use.

acrimonious	capricious	detached	hopeful
affectionate	celebratory	diffident	incredulous
ambivalent	colloquial	disdainful	introspective
animated	compassionate	dubious	moralistic
apathetic	concerned	ecstatic	nostalgic
belligerent	condescending	empathetic	optimistic
benevolent	cynical	flippant	patronizing
brusque	depressed	haughty	poignant

Twelve Ways To Mark Up A Book

Books are a fantastic way to gain knowledge. With books, one can learn new techniques, gain new skills, and learn from role models who have been to where one wants to be and can show the way. There are many different ways to read books and just as many ways to remember their salient points. One of the most effective ways to get the most out of a book is to mark it up. There is no standard way to mark up a text, but below are a few ways that students have found effective in marking up a textbook so that one can see the important points quickly, make it more memorable, and make it easy to pick up years later and re-acquaint oneself with the major concepts.

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 large 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 not everything can be important, we often highlight all of the text on the page. You want to find 20% of the text that is important and mark that.
- Don't take the time to mark up items that you read on a daily basis (e.g., magazines, newspapers), unimportant or irrelevant items.
- Don't mark the obvious – Don't waste time marking up things that are already in your knowledge base or skill set. If you already know it, you don't need to mark it.

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.
- Know your preferences – Some of you have an aversion to marking directly in the text. Books are precious things to many people, and they want to protect them from damage and even the wear and tear of everyday use. If this describes you, grab some Post-It brand notes and do your marking and writing on them. This also gives you the advantage to move and reorganize them should you see fit. As for me, I like to mark directly on the page. I find that my books become more valuable to me when I add my contributions to the information that they contain.
- Underline the topic sentence in a passage – Remember, each paragraph has one topic sentence. The rest is supporting information and examples. Identify the topic sentence to find it easier.
- Use codes – Flag text with codes (e.g., Question marks to indicate disagreement, Exclamation marks to note agreement or to flag a strong statement, triangles to indicate a change in thinking, or a star for the topic sentence).
- 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 another author's perspectives in the margins. Other authors have surely written on the subject. What do they say? Do they agree with this author? If not, what do they say? Add these in the margins.
• Add cross-reference notes to other works on the same topic – Use the author's name and a shortened version of the other book's title.
• Add structure to a narrative text – Use 1, 2, 3, 4…or an outline format I. A. B. C. 1, 2, 3, a, b, c…to add a structure that you understand.
• Draw arrows to related ideas – or unrelated ideas…
• Summarize – Add your summary after the last paragraph. That simple exercise will crystallize your thinking on the topic. If you can't write it, you don't understand it.

Extras

Post-It Notes are a great way to mark locations within books, much like bookmarks do. With Post-It Notes, however, you can mark on them so you can see where you are turning before you start flipping through the pages. One can also use colored paper clips to identify pages or chapters that are important.

Conclusion

The idea is to enter, by way of your markings, into a conversation with the author so that his knowledge is added to yours, so that a synthesis occurs and you gain a new understanding. A new — or new-looking — book is a treasure. In my experience, however, I have found that a well-marked book becomes more like a treasured friend — one that you enjoy seeing again and again. It becomes much more enjoyable than a sterile copy that comes straight from the bookstore. Don't be afraid to mark up the books that you love.