To the rising stars of AP Language & Composition,

Welcome! Just a quick note to reassure you of two things —

Reassurance #1: I do not want the summer work to crush you.
The summer work is meant to provide the opportunity to think freely and creatively about a variety of compelling American voices. It is meant to stimulate your original intellect, and to help prepare you for a great junior year. Please do not be concerned with giving the "right" answers. Your work will prove either to be effective or ineffective, interesting or uninspired; "rightness" and "wrongness" are of little concern to me. Take risks. Be original. Don't be boring. Nothing bad is going to happen to you if you make a mistake. But please, DO READ the material, and DO TRUST that your own responses to it are valuable.

Reassurance #2: We will have a great time learning together.
The beauty of our class is that it will always be a safe space to geek out. It's a place where we value original ideas and where we seek perspectives that are not our own. We will prioritize *why* we think and *how* to think, not *what* to think. In our class, the way that you listen to others is as important as the way that you speak to others. The quiet brilliance of the introvert is celebrated, just as is the charisma of the extrovert. Our class is a place where you can thrive.

The remainder of this document contains the course description and instructions for your summer work. I have tried to be straightforward, and hope you find the work to be engaging and worth your time.

Know that I am genuinely excited for our time together.
Wishing you a restorative and happy summer!

Sincerely,
Mr. Nulf
(Props to Dr. Dardani! Much of this summer packet was derived from her prior work on the AP Lang/Comp course.)

AP Language & Composition
Fairfield Ludlowe High School

Course Description

Advanced Placement Language & Composition (2 credits)

The course provides students with a comprehensive experience in studying American literature and prepares them for the Advanced Placement Language and Composition exam. Students will read a wide variety of American prose styles from many disciplines and historical periods and consider how selections of American fiction and non-fiction highlight stylistic decisions. Students learn to understand and appreciate the diverse ways that American authors make meaning in oral, written, and visual texts. Students also identify elements of literary and rhetorical style and use them in their own writing. Through the process of reading, writing, and discussing texts, students become skilled in composing for different audiences and purposes. The course is designed to enable students to analyze complex American texts and to write highly effective and stylistically sophisticated expository writing. AP Language and Composition emphasizes the teaching of writing strategies and requires students to write essays that proceed through several stages or drafts, with revision aided by teacher and peers. Students write in forms such as narrative, exploratory, expository, and argumentative and on a variety of subjects such as personal experiences, public policies, imaginative literature, and pop culture. As the course progresses, students become aware of their own writing process through self-assessment against AP standards for writing, and assessments by their peers and their teacher. Completion of assigned summer reading and writing is a course requirement.

Summer Work Instructions

Part 1: Falling in love with your journal

I challenge you to become, if you aren't already, someone who journals regularly. More, I challenge you to make your journal an important part of your day. You'll know that you've met the challenge when you can't bear to go more than a day or two without writing or drawing in it.

To set you on your love affair, I'll ask you to do almost all of your summer work in your journal. Know, though, that your journal need not be reserved for our English class. I encourage you to mark down your thoughts from all aspects of your life. Such an approach will only strengthen your bond and increase the likelihood that you will continue in journaling bliss for the rest of your days, well beyond the close of this class. **I promise never to collect your journal, to make you tear anything out of it, to read it without permission, to write in it, or to do any disrespect to your sacred book.**

The way your journal looks is entirely up to you. Lines. Dots. Graph paper. No lines at all. The choice is yours. All I care about is that you love it. Please keep a paper journal that requires you to write by hand. Handwriting does amazing things to the brain and for your fine motor skills. It doesn't matter if your handwriting is horrendous. You won't get demerits for poor handwriting. Maybe your handwriting will accidentally improve. Who knows?

Once the school year begins, please bring your journal to class. Like I said, I will not collect it, but we will regularly use it in class to help you think on paper.

Once you have selected your journal, here's what you do:

A. Read the embedded "Famous Authors on the Value of Keeping a Journal"
B. After you read each author's thoughts on keeping a journal, spend a few minutes writing in your own journal. Write down words or phrases from the excerpt that you find to be beautiful, clever, or provocative. Note the degree to which you agree or disagree with what the author is saying. How does the author's experience of journaling compare with your experience of journaling? **Don't read and respond to all of the excerpts at once. That would cause a swift end to your love for journaling, I'm afraid. Instead, read and journal about one excerpt in a day so that the entire assignment takes you at least 10 days in total.**
C. After you have read and reflected on all of the excerpts, write a short reflection about which excerpt(s) you identify with the most.

Part 2: Read this required book - Tara Westover's 2018 memoir - *Educated*

I love fiction. Don't stop reading fiction. We will read plenty during the school year. This summer, though, read Westover's highly popular and engaging non-fiction memoir, and spend time thinking and journaling about it.

Be aware that this memoir does contain some adult themes. As part of her story, the author describes abusive and sometimes violent trauma inflicted upon her by her own family members. As you read, write in your journal using *at least some of the following* as starting points.

1. What essential questions emerge from this book?
2. How does this book make you think about these essential questions: How important is family background to one's identity and perspective on the world? How important are such things as gender, class, and race to one's identity and perspective on the world? What does this book reveal about contemporary America that you may not have otherwise thought about? What does this book convey about education? About abusive relationships?

3. What does this book have in common with other books you've read, films you've seen, talks you've heard, and art you've viewed or listened to? In what ways is this book a unique work?
4. How has your experience of reading this book made you think about your role in or contributions to your own family and community?
5. Are you enjoying this book? What do you notice about how it is written?
6. Is there anything else you find noteworthy?

Your journal entries should be thoughtful, but **they do not have to be long. There is no length requirement. Ideally, you should write a short journal entry after each occasion on which you read for an extended period of time. If that doesn't happen, aim for at least four thoughtful reflections in all.**

NOTE: There will be an assessment at the beginning of the year about *Educated*. Please make sure you have read it well, and are ready to do some on-demand writing about it.

Part 3: Read cool stuff. Write cool stuff.

Embedded here are three short readings and their corresponding writing prompts. Please read all three readings and prompts, and then choose one prompt to respond to. Your one-page response is the only bit of summer work that I would like for you to type. **It is due on the first day of class.**

PLEASE - Do your own reading, thinking, and writing.

Summer Work Prompt #1: Brian Blanchfield on the Day as a Literary Unit
Summer Work Prompt #2: "Letter to a Photojournalist Going-In" by Tracy K. Smith
Summer Work Prompt #3: "Living Like Weasels" By Annie Dillard

Supplemental -

If you are looking for more books… here are some other recommended (not required) non-fiction titles which complement our course-work well:

Spirit Run by Noe Alvarez

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote

American Like Me: Reflections on Life Between Cultures by America Ferrera

Barbarian Days: A Surfing Life by William Finnegan

Eating Animals by Jonathan Safran Foer

Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead by Brene Brown

Me Talk Pretty One Day by David Sedaris

Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis by JD Vance

Lab Girl by Hope Jahren

Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry Into Values by Robert M. Pirsig

Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo" by Zora Neale Hurston

Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know About the People We Don't Know by Malcolm Gladwell

The Soul of an Octopus: A Surprising Exploration Into the Wonder of Consciousness by Sy Montgomery

The Splendid and the Vile: A Saga of Churchill, Family, and Defiance During the Blitz by Erik Larson

The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals by Michael Pollan

Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster by Jon Krakauer

The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates by Wes Moore

The Devil in the White City by Erik Larson

Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal by Eric Schlosser

Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking by Susan Cain

A Voyage Long and Strange: Rediscovering the New World by Tony Horwitz

A House of My Own: Stories from My Life by Sandra Cisneros

The Woman Warrior by Maxine Hong Kingston

How the Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America by Clint Smith

The Light Eaters: How the Unseen World of Plant Intelligence Offers a New Understanding of Life on Earth by Zoë Schlanger

Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI by David Grann

The Forest Unseen: A Year's Watch in Nature by David Haskell

The Lonely Land by Sigurd Olson

The River of Doubt: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey by Candice Millard

Coyote America: A Natural and Supernatural History by Dan Flores