

# 2026 AP Language and Composition Summer Reading Assignment

## Journalist Journey

### Goal:

Select a professional journalist to observe throughout the summer and consider how their unique voice and specific writing strategies over time are meant to influence their audience's perspective on current events.

### Purpose:

This gives you practice reading the medium-length texts like you will see on the AP exam, it gets you beginning to think about a process called rhetorical analysis, and it provides you with a bank of contemporary evidence for AP argumentative essays.

### Step One: Pick a Source

Click the following [link to the "Media Bias Chart"](#) ("Media Bias Chart - U.S. Main Chart"). Choose a news source from ANY column **EXCEPT** for the "Very Left" and "Very Right" columns.

### Step Two: Pick a News Topic

Go to the website of the news source you have selected.

If the source has a paywall or requires membership to view their materials, return to Step One and select a different source.

Most news websites have categories such as politics, business, health, pop culture, food, sports, etc. Select a topic from your chosen news website in which you are interested and scroll through articles until you find a couple that seem intriguing.

### Step Three: Pick a specific journalist

When you click on the articles that pique your interest, look for the name of the author who wrote it.

Click on the author's name to pull up more articles that the author has written.

If the author publishes regularly (at least one article every two weeks), then you may select them for your summer reading assignment.

*The articles you select for this summer reading assignment should all be written by the same author.*

## Step Four: Select articles

You will read five long-form (at least 1,000 words) articles published by your selected journalist throughout the summer. Ideally, you'll work on this assignment every couple of weeks. However, if you wait until the end of summer to do your assignment, the long-form articles you select must be published within the publishing windows indicated in the graphic organizer below.

## Step Five: Analyze

For each article, write an analytical paragraph (200–300 words) in the provided graphic organizer that identifies:

What does your journalist want his/her audience to think/feel/believe/do after reading the article?

You might be inclined to say “to inform his audience about X.” You need to go deeper than that, though. Take a moment to think about any biases your author might possess about the issue and how someone with different beliefs or opinions about the subject might talk about the subject.

Who do you think is the journalist's primary audience?

What does your journalist seem to do intentionally to influence his/her specific audience's thoughts/feelings/beliefs/actions?

Listed below are some choices you might look out for in your article. You do not need to answer all the questions below. They're just there to help you if you're stuck or are unsure what to do.

What is the author's tone? Are they formal, informal, serious, light-hearted, etc.? How does their tone impact the way their audience might think about the subject?

What information do they choose to highlight (statistics, data, facts)? What information do you think they might be leaving out? How does this impact their audience's perception of their subject?

Whose voices do they include? Do they quote ordinary people or experts in the field? Why?

Do they include any narrative anecdotes (personal stories, emotional accounts)? What effect might they hope this has on the audience?

Do they reference other current events, popular figures, or cultural moments that their audience might be familiar with? If so, why do you think they make these references?

How is the article organized? Do they start with shocking information at the top, or is it buried in the article? When do they arrive at their purpose? How do they conclude their article, and why do you think they choose to end their article this way?

### Step Six: Cite

Create an MLA citation for your source and include it in the graphic organizer below. Utilize [Purdue OWL](#) for help with MLA citations if you do not know how to create one.

### Step Seven: Reflect

After completing analysis for each of your articles, write a short essay (350-500 words) in the provided graphic organizer that addresses one of the following prompts:

Option 1: Looking back at all five articles, what is one 'signature move' your journalist consistently makes? For example, do they always start with a personal story, rely heavily on data and statistics, or use a specific tone (like humor or urgency)? Explain how this recurring pattern helps them connect with their readers. Utilize evidence from at least two of your reviewed articles.

Option 2: After following this journalist all summer, how has their style of writing shaped the way you view the topics they cover? Identify a specific way they structure their writing or choose their words that made you trust—or question—their perspective. Utilize evidence from at least two of your reviewed articles.

Option 3: Think about the different ways your journalist tried to engage and influence his or her audience throughout the summer. What patterns did you notice in how they tried to make you care about a topic? Utilizing evidence from at least two of your reviewed articles, explain why your journalist's approach worked (or did not work) to change your mind or teach you something new.

## Journalist Journey – Graphic Organizer Template

|                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Journalist Journey   Graphic Organizer                          |
| Article One   Published between June 1st and June 13th          |
| Insert your MLA Citation (per step six) for this article below: |
| Analytical Paragraph (follow instructions from Step Five):      |
| Article Two   Published between June 14th and June 27th         |
| Insert your MLA Citation (per step six) for this article below: |
| Analytical Paragraph (follow instructions from Step Five):      |
| Article Three   Published between June 28th and July 11th       |
| Insert your MLA Citation (per step six) for this article below: |
| Analytical Paragraph (follow instructions from Step Five):      |
| Article Four   Published between July 12th and July 25th        |
| Insert your MLA Citation (per step six) for this article below: |
| Analytical Paragraph (follow instructions from Step Five):      |
| Article Five   Published between July 26th and August 8th       |
| Insert your MLA Citation (per step six) for this article below: |
| Analytical Paragraph (follow instructions from Step Five):      |
| Final Reflection (350-500 words)                                |
| Final Reflection (follow instructions from Step Seven):         |

## Works Cited

“Media Bias Chart - U.S. Main Chart.” Biasly, 26 Apr. 2026, [www.biasly.com/media-bias-chart/](http://www.biasly.com/media-bias-chart/).