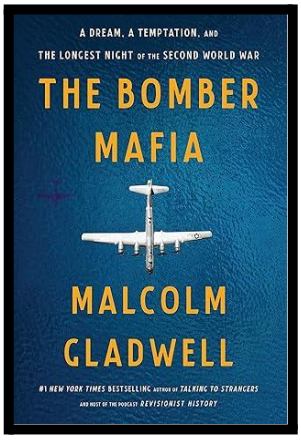
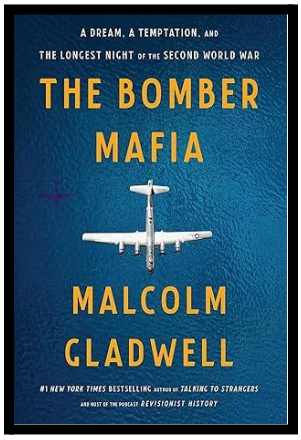


AP Language & Composition

Summer Work / 2026



The Bomber Mafia
By Malcolm Gladwell (2021)

Description:

In *The Bomber Mafia,* Malcolm Gladwell weaves together the stories of a Dutch genius and his homemade computer, a band of brothers in central Alabama, a British psychopath, and pyromaniacal chemists at Harvard to examine one of the greatest moral challenges in modern American history.

Most military thinkers in the years leading up to WWII saw the airplanes as an afterthought. But a small group of idealist strategists, the 'Bomber Mafia,' asked: What if precision bombing could cripple the enemy and make war far less lethal? In contrast, the bombing of Tokyo on the deadliest night of the war was the brainchild of General Curtis LeMay, whose brutal pragmatism and scorched-earth tactics in Japan cost thousands of civilian lives, but may have spared even more by averting a planned US invasion. In this book, Gladwell asks: Was it worth it? *The Bomber Mafia* is a riveting tale of persistence ,innovation, and the incalculable wages of war.

*Please check-out or purchase a hard copy of *The Bomber Mafia* and understand that you will need to bring your copy of the book with you to class each day the first few weeks of the course.

Summer Work expectation:

1. Read and annotate the book - identifying key themes, main ideas, making connections throughout the book.
2. During the first week of school be prepared for a closed book ***Multiple-Choice Test*** (25 questions), as well as an open book ***Timed Write***.
3. We will reference the book (and use it) throughout the school year and you will be reminded on when to bring the book to school.