AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

Summer/Fall 2026 – Course Introduction Assignment

Welcome to AP English Language! We look forward to spending next year with you!
Students are expected to complete the following writing assignments in order to prepare for the course in the fall. Details for each assignment are included in this document and appear in our **Google Classroom - use the code iv3yeuq4 to join.**

You must obtain HARD COPIES of the following 3 texts, not digital or loaned versions. You will be required to turn in your books & have them available in class.

1. **Read 5 (self-selected) essays from John Green's *The Anthropocene Reviewed* and write annotations.**
   In preparation for the fall, students planning to take AP Language and Comp are expected to read and annotate 5 essays from this non-fiction text. Directions are on the following pages.

2. **Read all of Malcom Gladwell's *Outliers* and write annotations.**
   In preparation for our Socratic Discussions and flash essays in the fall, students taking AP Language and Comp are expected to read and annotate the entirety of this non-fiction text. Directions are on the following pages.

3. **Read *Thank You For* Arguing (4th Edition) by Jay Heinrichs and create an Argument Notebook**
   A large part of our course will be examining, unpacking, and employing different rhetorical strategies in writing. In order to better prepare for this task, read and take notes on the text above.
   - For CHAPTERS 1-14 (Open Your Eyes - Make a Connection), you must have notes on the main ideas and key terms.
   - Each chapter should have AT LEAST ONE PAGE of notes.
   - AT LEAST 3 of these chapter notes must be organized as SketchNotes.
     - Several guides for SketchNotes are available in the attached packet.
   - **These notes must be handwritten**.

HARD COPIES of all assignments due: Monday, August 24th (first day of school)

They will be graded and used as an assignment at the start of the school year.

1. **Annotations for 5 (self-selected) essays *The Anthropocene Reviewed***
2. **Annotations for *Outliers***
3. **Argument Notebook for *Thank You for Arguing***

We will be returning to all three of the outlined texts in the first semester of school.

This assignment will be posted on our websites for your reference. If you have questions about this information, contact Ms. Bolinger, Ms. Kranz or Ms. Chinoski by email: jbolinger@rochester.k12.mi.us, akranz@rochester.k12.mi.us or kchinoski@rochester.k12.mi.us

Annotation Guidelines

As you read, you should record a minimum of 50 annotations for *Outliers* and 20 annotations for your 5 self-selected essays from *The Anthropocene Reviewed* (4 per essay).

- ☐ Use sticky notes to clearly mark the passage of text to which each annotation responds.
- ☐ Annotations should not respond to entire chapters or paragraphs, but brief passages.
- ☐ Each chapter must have, at minimum, one sticky note annotation.
- ☐ On the sticky note, write your brief commentary. Commentary can include the following:
    - analyzing a literary technique used in the passage
    - analyzing the significance of the passage in its context
    - analyzing the author's purpose in the passage.

Aim for variety in your annotations, so that you show knowledge of many different techniques.

The Anthropocene Reviewed by John Green

The Anthropocene is the current geologic age, in which humans have profoundly reshaped the planet and its biodiversity. In this remarkable symphony of essays, bestselling author John Green reviews different facets of the human-centered planet on a five-star scale—from the QWERTY keyboard and sunsets to Canada geese and Penguins of Madagascar. Funny, complex, and rich with detail, the reviews chart the contradictions of contemporary humanity.

John Green's gift for storytelling shines throughout this masterful collection. The Anthropocene Reviewed is an open-hearted exploration of the paths we forge and an unironic celebration of falling in love with the world.

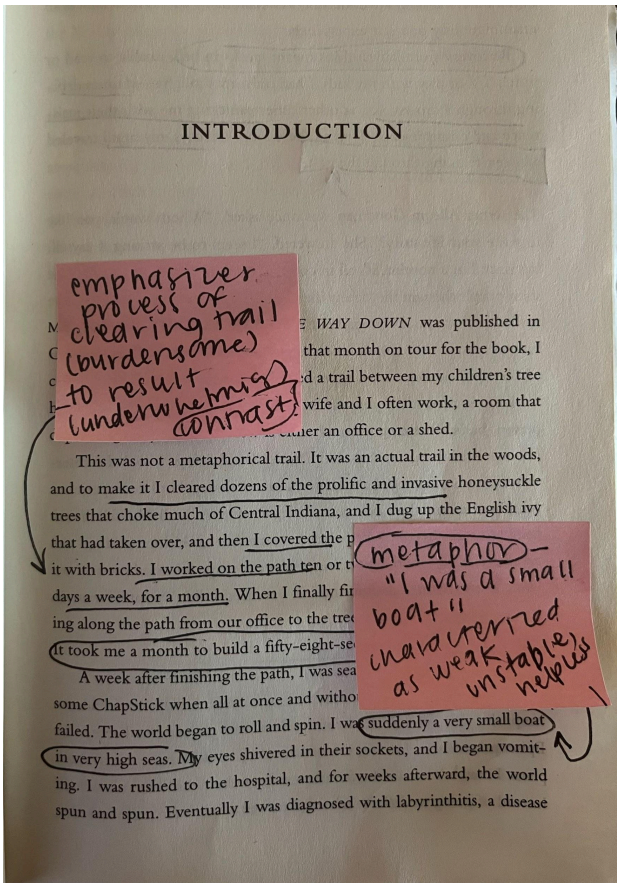
Outliers by Malcom Gladwell

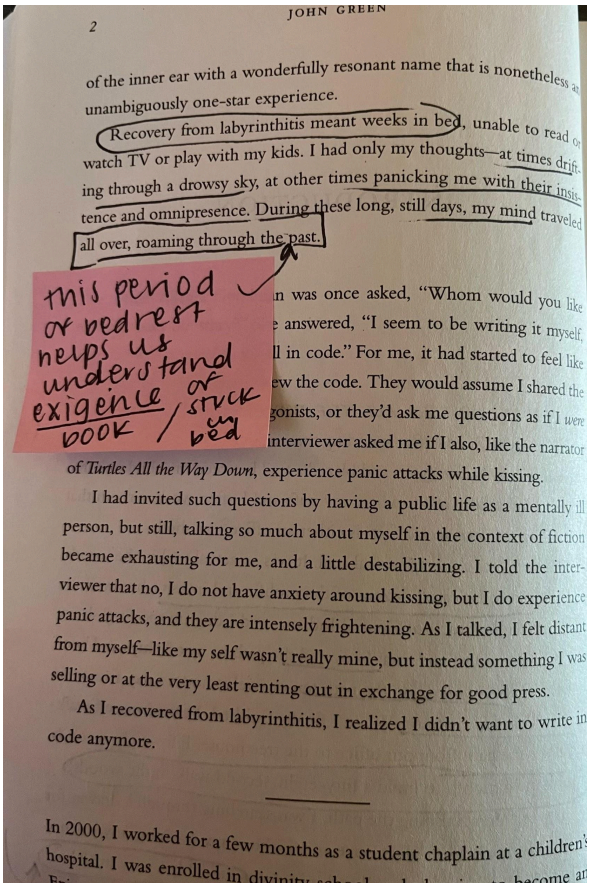
Gladwell takes readers on an intellectual journey through the world of the "outliers"—the best and the brightest, the most famous and the most successful. He asks the question: what makes high-achievers different? Secrets of software billionaires, what it takes to be a great soccer player, etc. are explained.

Please refer to the attached handouts ("Literary Terms" for the techniques that authors may employ). You will need to study these handouts before you begin reading and you should review them occasionally as you read, so that you can vary your comments.

A note on Academic Integrity: For these assignments, as for all assignments in AP Language, it is expected students will do their own work. It is NOT permissible to "work with" another student on the annotation, reading log, or essay. While students may consult supplements (Cliff's Notes, Spark Notes, Book Rags, etc.) for clarification, it is NOT permissible to use any ideas or information gained from these sources—including "Important Quotes" and analysis—without correct MLA documentation and Works Cited. Any work that is deemed to be plagiarized in these ways or any other way will earn NO credit

Sample Annotations - *The Anthropocene Reviewed*





Annotation Description

passage	*text on sticky note*	*explanation of choice (not required for you- meant to guide)*
"I cleared dozens of the prolific & invasive…" (Green 1).	emphasizes the process of clearing trail (burdensome) to result (underwhelming) - contrast!	Example of an annotation that **notices a feature about the writing** - this one focuses on the contrast between clearing the forest and the resulting trail - notices contrast in process v. result
"…suddenly a very small boat in very high seas" (Green 1).	metaphor - "I was a small boat…" characterized as weak, unstable, helpless	Example of an annotation that **notices a literary technique** - includes the direct quote of the metaphor & explains the purpose of the metaphor - to characterize Green as weak
"I was diagnosed with labyrinthitis…" (Green 2).	this period of bedrest helps us understand exigence of book - stuck in bed	Example of an annotation that **notices the significance of the passage in context** - connects Green's narrative about being diagnosed with labyrinthitis to its purpose in the book (the inciting moment for Green)

LITERARY TERMS FOR AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE 2026

Allegory: The device of using character and/or story elements symbolically to represent an abstraction in addition to the literal meaning. In some allegories, for example, an author may intend the characters to personify an abstraction like hope or freedom. The allegorical meaning usually deals with moral truth or a generalization about human existence. Ex: *Lord of the Flies, 1984*.

Alliteration: The repetition of sounds, especially initial consonant sounds in two or more neighboring words (as in "she sells seashells"). You can look for alliteration in any essay passage. The repetition can reinforce meaning, unify ideas, and/or supply a musical sound.

Allusion: A direct or indirect reference to something which is presumably commonly known, such as an event, book, myth, place, or work of art. Allusions can be historical, (like referring to Hitler), literary (like referring to Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness*), religious (like referring to Noah and the Flood), or mythical (like referring to a centaur). There are of course many more possibilities, and a work may simultaneously use multiple layers of allusions.

Ambiguity: The multiple meanings, either intentional or unintentional, of a word, phrase, sentence, or passage.

Analogy: A similarity or comparison between two different things or the relationship between them. An analogy can explain something unfamiliar by associating it with or pointing out its similarity to something more familiar. Analogies can also make writing more vivid, imaginative, or intellectually engaging.

Antithesis: An observation or claim that opposes or directly contradicts one that is already stated; parallel structure that juxtaposes contrasting ideas.

Aphorism: A terse statement of known authorship which expresses a general truth or a moral principle. (If the authorship is unknown, the statement is generally considered to be a folk proverb.) An aphorism can be a memorable summation of the author's point.

Apostrophe: A figure of speech that directly addresses an absent or imaginary person or a personified abstraction, such as liberty or love. The effect may add familiarity or emotional intensity. William Wordsworth addresses John Milton as he writes, "Milton, thou shouldst be living at this home: England hath need of thee."

Atmosphere: The emotional mood created by the entirety of a literary work, established partly by the setting and partly by the author's choice of objects that are described. Even such elements as a description of the weather can contribute to the atmosphere. Frequently, the atmosphere foreshadows events. See *mood*

Colloquial/colloquialism: The use of slang or informalities in speech or writing. Not generally acceptable for formal writing, colloquialisms give a work a conversational, familiar tone. Colloquial expressions in writing include local or regional dialects.

Conceit: A fanciful expression, usually in the form of an -[extended metaphor or surprising analogy between seemingly dissimilar objects. A conceit displays intellectual cleverness due to the unusual comparison being made.

Connotation: The nonliteral, associative meaning of a word; the implied, suggested meaning. Connotations may involve ideas, emotions, or attitudes. See *denotation*

Denotation: The strict, literal, dictionary definition of a word, devoid of any emotion, attitude, or color. See *connotation*

Diction: Related to style, diction refers to the writer's word choices, especially with regard to their correctness, clearness, or effectiveness. For the AP exam, you should be able to describe an author's diction (for example, formal or informal, ornate or plain) and understand the ways in which diction can complement the author's purpose. Diction, combined with syntax, figurative language, literary devices, etc, creates an author's style. See *syntax*

Didactic: From the Greek, didactic literally means "teaching." Didactic works have the primary aim of teaching or instructing, especially the teaching of moral or ethical principles.

Euphemism: From the Greek for "good speech," euphemisms are a more agreeable or less offensive substitute for a generally unpleasant word or concept. The euphemism may be used to adhere to standards of social or political correctness or to add humor or ironic understatement. Saying "earthly remains" instead of "corpse" is an example of euphemism.

Extended metaphor: a metaphor developed at great length, occurring frequently in or throughout a work. See *metaphor*

Figurative Language: Writing or speech that is not intended to carry literal meaning and is usually meant to be imaginative and vivid. See *figure of speech*

Figure of speech: A device used to produce figurative language. Many compare dissimilar things. Figures of speech include, for example, apostrophe, hyperbole, irony, metaphor, metonymy, oxymoron, paradox, personification, simile, symbolism, and understatement.

Hyperbole: A figure of speech using deliberate exaggeration or overstatement. Hyperboles often have a comic effect; however, a serious effect is also possible. Often, hyperbole produces irony at the same time.

Imagery: The sensory details or figurative language used to describe, arouse emotion, or represent abstractions. On a physical level, imagery uses terms related to the five senses; we refer to visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, or olfactory imagery. On a broader and deeper level, however, one image can represent more than one thing. For example, a rose may represent visual imagery while also representing the color in a woman's cheeks. An author, therefore, may use complex imagery while simultaneously employing other figures of speech, especially metaphor and simile. In addition, this term can apply to the total of all the images in a work. On the AP exam, pay attention to how an author creates imagery and to the effect of that imagery.

Inference/Infer: To draw a reasonable conclusion from the information presented. When a multiple choice question asks for an inference to be drawn from a passage, the most direct, most reasonable inference is the safest answer choice. If inference is implausible, it's unlikely to be the correct answer. Note that if the answer choice is directly stated, it is not inferred and is wrong.

Invective: An emotionally violent, verbal denunciation or attack using strong abusive language.

Irony/Ironic The contrast between what is stated explicitly and what is really meant. The difference between what appears to be and what is actually true. In general, there are three major types of irony used in language: (1) in verbal irony, the words literally state the opposite of the writer's true meaning. (2) In situational irony, events turn out the opposite of what is expected. What the characters and readers think ought to happen is not what does happen. (3) In dramatic irony, facts or events are unknown to a character in a play or a piece of fiction but known to the reader, audience or other characters in the work. Irony is used for many reasons, but frequently, it's used to create poignancy or humor.

Juxtaposition: Placement of two contrasting ideas or phrases side by side for emphasis.

Metaphor: a figure of speech using implied comparison of seemingly unlike things or the substitution of one for the other, suggesting some similarity. Metaphorical language makes writing more vivid, imaginative, thought provoking and meaningful. See *simile*.

Metonymy: A term from the Greek meaning "changed label" or "substitute name," metonymy is a figure of speech in which the name of one object is substituted for that of another closely associated with it. A news release that claims "the White House declared" rather than "the president declared" is using metonymy.

Mood: This term has two distinct technical meanings in English writing. (1)The first meaning is grammatical and deals with verbal units and a speaker's attitude, the *indicative* mood is used only for factual sentences. For example, "Joe eats too quickly." The *subjunctive* mood is used for a doubtful or conditional attitude. For example, "If I were you, I'd get a job." The *imperative* mood is used for commands . for example, "shut the door!" (2)The second meaning of mood is literary, meaning the prevailing atmosphere or emotional aura of a work. Setting, tone, and events can affect the mood. In this usage, mood is similar to tone and atmosphere.

Narrative: The telling of a story or an amount of an event or series of events.

Onomatopoeia: A figure of speech in which natural sounds are imitated in the sounds of words. Simple examples include such words as buzz, hiss, hum, crack, whinny and murmur. If you identify examples of onomatopoeia in an essay passage, note the effect.

Oxymoron: From the Greek for "pointedly foolish," an oxymoron is a figure of speech wherein the author groups apparently contradictory terms to suggest a paradox. Simple examples include "jumbo shrimp" and "cruel kindness." You may see it used by an author in an essay passage or find it useful in your own essay writing.

Paradox: A statement that appears to be self contradictory or supposed to be common sense but upon close inspection contains some degree of truth or validity. The first scene of Macbeth, for example, closes with the witches' cryptic remark "fair is foul, and foul is fair...."

Parallelism: Also referred to as parallel construction or parallel structure, this term comes from Greek roots meaning "beside one another." It refers to the grammatical or rhetorical framing of words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs to give a structural similarity. This can involve, but is not limited to, repetition of a grammatical element such as a preposition or verbal phrase. A famous example of parallelism begins Charles Dickens's novel *A Tale Of Two Cities:* "*It* was the best of times it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity...." The effects of parallelism are numerous, but frequently, they act as an organizing force to attract the reader's attention, add emphasis and organization, or simply provide a musical rhythm.

Parody: A work that closely imitates the style or content of another with the specific aim of comic effect and/or ridicule. As comedy, parody distorts or exaggerates distinctive features of the original. As ridicule, it mimics the work by repeating and borrowing words, phrases, and or characteristics in order to highlight weaknesses in the original. Well written parody offers enlightenment about the original, but poorly written parody offers only ineffectual imitation. Usually an audience must grasp literary allusion and understand the work being parodied in order to fully appreciate the nuances of the newer work. Occasionally, however, parodies take on a life of their own at any given moment. The third person limited omniscient point of view, as its name implies, presents the feelings and thoughts of don't require the knowledge of the original.

Pedantic: An adjective that describes words, phrases, or general tone that is overly scholarly, academic, or bookish.

Personification: A figure of speech in which the author presents or describes concepts, animals, or inanimate objects by endowing them with human attributes or emotions. Personification is used to make these abstractions, animals or objects appear more vivid to the reader.

Point of View: In literature, the perspective from which a story is told. There are two general divisions of point of view and many subdivisions within those. (1) The first person narrator tells the story with the first person pronoun, "I" and is a character in the story. This narrator can be the protagonist (the hero or heroine), a participant (a character in a secondary role) or an observer (a character who merely watches the action). (2) The third person narrator relates the events with the third person pronouns, "he," she," and "it." There are two main subdivisions to be aware of , omniscient and limited omniscient. In the third person omniscient point of view, the narrator, with godlike knowledge, can reveal what each character feels and thionly one character , presenting only the actions of all remaining characters.
Note: On the essay portion of the exam, the term "point of view" carries a different meaning. When you're asked to analyze an author's point of view, the appropriate point for you to address is the author's attitude.

Repetition; The duplication, either exact or approximate, of any element of language, such as sound, word, phrase, clause, sentence, or grammatical pattern. When repetition is poorly done, it bores, but when it's well done, it links and emphasizes

ideas while allowing the reader the comfort of recognizing something familiar.

Rhetoric: From the Greek for "orator", this term describes the principles governing the art of writing effectively, eloquently, and persuasively.

Rhetorical modes: This flexible term describes the variety, the conventions, and the purposes of the major kinds of writing. The four most common rhetorical modes and their purposes are as follows: (1) The purpose of *exposition* (or expository writing) is to explain and analyze information by presenting an idea, relevant evidence, and appropriate discussion. (2) The purpose of *argumentation* is to prove the validity of an idea, or point of view, by presenting sound reasoning, discussion, and argument that thoroughly convince the reader. *Persuasive* writing is a type of argumentation having an additional aim of urging some form of action. (3) The purpose of *description* is to re-create, invent, or visually present a person, place, event, or action so that the reader can picture what is being described. Sometimes an author engages all five senses in description; good descriptive writing can be sensuous and picturesque. Descriptive writing may be straightforward and objective or highly emotional and subjective. (4) The purpose of *narration* is to tell a story or narrate an event or series of events. This writing mode frequently uses the tools of descriptive writing.
Note:These four writing modes are sometimes referred to as modes of discourse.

Sarcasm: From the Greek meaning "to tear flesh", sarcasm involves bitter, caustic language that is meant to hurt or ridicule someone or something. It may use irony as a device, but not all ironic statements are sarcastic, that is, intending to ridicule. When well done, sarcasm can be witty and insightful; when poorly done, it's simply cruel.

Satire: A work that targets human vices and follies or social institutions and conventions for reform or ridicule. Regardless of whether or not the work aims to reform humans or their society, satire is best seen as a style of writing rather than a purpose for writing. It can be recognized by the many devices used effectively by the satirist, such as irony, wit, parody, caricature, hyperbole, understatement, and sarcasm. The effects of satire are varied, depending on the writer's goal, but good satire, often humorous, is thought provoking and insightful about the human condition.

Semantics: The branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of words, their historical and psychological development, their connotations, and their relation to one another.

Style: The consideration of style has two purposes: (1) An evaluation of the sum of the choices an author makes in blending diction, syntax, figurative language, and other literary devices. Some authors' styles are so idiosyncratic that we can quickly recognize works by the same author (or a writer emulating that author's style.) Compare, for example, Jonathan Swift to George Orwell. Or William Faulkner to Ernest Hemingway. We can analyze and describe an author's personal style and make judgments on how appropriate it is to the author's purpose. Styles can be called flowery, explicit, succinct, rambling, bombastic, commonplace, incisive, or laconic, to name only a few examples. (2) Classification of authors to a group and comparison of an author to similar authors. By means of such classification and comparison, one can see how an author's style reflects and helps to define a historical period, such as the Renaissance or the Victorian period, or a literary movement, such as the romantic, transcendental, or realist movement.

Symbol/symbolism: Generally, anything that represents, or stands for, something else. Usually, a symbol is something concrete—such as an object, action, character, or scene—that represents something more abstract. However, symbols and symbolism can be much more complex. One system classifies symbols in three categories: (1) *Natural* symbols use objects and occurrences from nature to represent ideas commonly associated with them (dawn symbolizing hope or a new beginning, a rose symbolizing love, a tree symbolizing knowledge). (2) *Conventional* symbols are those that have been invested with meaning by a group (religious symbols, such as a cross of Star of David; national symbols, such as a flag or an eagle, or group symbols, such as a skull and crossbones for pirates or the scales of justice for lawyers). (3) *Literary* symbols are sometimes also conventional in the sense that they are found in a variety of words and are generally recognized. However, a work's symbols may be more complicated as is the whale in *Moby Dick* in the jungle in *Heart of Darkness*.

Syntax: The way an author chooses to join words into phrases, clauses and sentences. Syntax is similar to diction, but you can differentiate them by thinking of syntax as the *groups* of words, while diction refers to the individual words. In the multiple-choice section of the AP language exam, expect to be asked some questions about how an author manipulates syntax. In the essay section, you will need to analyze how syntax produces effects.

Theme: The central idea or message of a work, the insight it offers into life. Usually, theme is unstated in fictional works, but in nonfiction, the theme may be directly stated, especially in expository or argumentative writing.

Thesis: In expository writing, the thesis statement is the sentence or group of sentences that directly expresses the author's opinion, purpose, meaning, or proposition. Expository writing is usually judged by analyzing how accurately, effectively, and thoroughly a writer has proven the thesis.

Tone: Similar to mood, tone describes the author's attitude toward his or her material, the audience, or both. Tone is easier to determine in spoken language than in written language. Considering how a work would sound if it were read aloud can help in identifying an author's tone. Some words describing tone are playful, serious, businesslike, sarcastic, humorous, formal, ornate, and somber.

Transition: A word or phrase that links different ideas. Used especially, although not exclusively, in expository and argumentative writing, transitions effectively signal a shift from one idea to another. A few commonly used transitional words or phrases are furthermore, consequently, nevertheless, for example, in addition, likewise, similarly, and on the contrary.

Understatement: The ironic minimalizing of fact, understatement presents something as less significant than it is. The effect can frequently be humorous and emphatic. Understatement is the opposite of hyperbole.

Wit: In modern usage, intellectually arousing language that surprises and delights. A witty statement is humorous, while suggesting the speaker's verbal power in creating ingenious and perceptive remarks. Wit usually uses terse language that makes a pointed statement.

SketchNotes Guide



Chapter 8:

The 1st World War

June 1919: Archduke Franz Ferdinand is killed in Sarajevo.

RIP Archduke Franz Ferdinand

May 1915: German U-boat sinks the Lusitania, killing 128 Americans.

LUSITANIA

January 1918: President Wilson presents his 19-point plan for world peace.

World Peace

Alliances, 1919:
Great Britain, France, Russia — Triple Entente
Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy — Triple Alliance

August 1920: The 19th amendment, giving women the right to vote.

VOTE~
women to vote
women to vote
women to vote

June 1919: The Treaty of Versailles officially ends World War I.

Fighting in the trenches:

- gas mask to protect eyes, nose, & throats
- worked during battles & bombardment to help the endless stream of wounded men.
- tanks could flatten barbed wire, cross enemy trenches & act as shields for the infantry.
- airplanes helped ground units direct artillery fire w/ great accuracy
- hand grenades into no-man's land at advancing troops.

PATRIOTISM

Financing the war:

- all encouraged the purchase of war bonds.

Parades

1918 & 1919: an influenza epidemic killed millions of people including some 675,000 Americans.

2002: respiratory virus called Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) emerged in China.

February 1915: Germany sets up a submarine blockade of England

- Propaganda posters to gain support for the war effort, officials in the U.S. hired skilled artists to create posters that would build public support & increase recruitment.

JOIN NOW ... everyone is doing it!

November 1917: Lenin's Bolsheviks take control of Russia.

Nov. 11, 1918: the allies & Germany sign an armistice