**AP English Language & Composition (2026-27)**
**Summer Reading Information**

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Welcome to AP Lang! Our focus in AP Lang will be to foster your abilities to read, think, and write. This is *not* a content-driven course. Over the course of the year, you will read widely, exploring essays, speeches, letters, and even a few works of fiction. You will not read these texts *passively*. Instead, you will analyze and discuss each text. You will hone literacy skills that can be applied to future texts you will encounter. It will be challenging, but we look forward to a year of learning and growing for all of us.

***Mandatory* Summer Reading Instructions:**

**1. Please join our Google Classroom using this code: dk5pfbh6**

**2. Then, complete this Google Form to indicate you've received this information**: **https://forms.gle/HrJW2yA5bUgBEnJk8**

**3. Choose *at least* 2 books to read from the list below.**

**4. There will be a scored assessment in the fall based on what you've read, so you should be prepared to discuss, write, and otherwise share your thinking related to at least two of the books below. While reading, you should take notes, flag sections, or track key sections for future reference, especially if you begin reading early on in the summer to ensure you don't forget what you read by the fall. Your voice is valued in our classroom community, so prepare in a way that will make you most confident and ready to share your thoughts.**

**Below is a list of non-fiction texts to choose from**. These books are grouped for your convenience when choosing what might interest you and not due to any ranking or requirement.

**Memoirs:**

*Born a Crime: Stories of a South African Childhood* by Trevor Noah
*Brain on Fire: My Month of Madness* by Susannah Cahalan
*Crying in H Mart* by Michelle Zauner
*A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* by Ishmael Beah
*On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* by Stephen King

**Other Selected Non-Fiction**:

Any book by Malcolm Gladwell
*Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* by Katherine Boo
*Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson
*Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers* by Mary Roach

**Rhetoric and the Art of Persuasion**:

*Thank You for Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson Can Teach Us About the Art of Persuasion* by Jay Heinrichs

* **Note:** Some of these books may contain content or language that you or your parents are not comfortable with, so please exercise choice. However, also consider this message from the College Board related to controversial texts in this class: "*The best response to controversial language or ideas in a text might well be a question about the larger meaning, purpose, or overall effect of the language or idea in context. AP students should have the maturity, skill, and will to seek the larger meaning of a text or issue through thoughtful research.*"

In addition to the books above, **advertisements, speeches, news, songs, and videos (YouTube, TikTok, etc.) are forms of rhetoric that you will likely encounter this summer**. These are other rich opportunities for you to read and engage widely across subject matter and genre. Consider, too, **documentaries, political cartoons, and other forms of visual rhetoric ubiquitous in pop culture and social media**. What do you notice about how the message is being expressed? Why might that be the case?

**Other *recommended* tasks this summer:**

**- Become an independent learner**. Seek your own cultural enrichment. Make a commitment to watch or read the news of the world. You must realize the importance of becoming a global citizen in today's world. Watch documentaries. Discuss current events with your family and friends. Develop opinions and support them. Become confident in the fact that your ideas have value!

**- READ**. It is particularly helpful in AP Lang for you to become accustomed to reading non-fiction, but *any* reading you do this summer would be greatly beneficial! Read a memoir by someone you admire. Try a new genre that is outside of your comfort zone. Think of a time or event in history that interests you and become an expert! To be an interesting person, you simply must have interests. Cultivate them.

**- Think**. In addition to understanding "what" the author's message or purpose is in a given text, you must also attend to how the author crafts this message and why. Why did that *specific* author make use of that *specific* rhetorical choice for that *specific* audience given that *specific* message/purpose? Why does the text unfold in the *order* in which it does, and why or how does it *shift* in focus, tone, or strategy?

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**This summer, you will begin your preparation toward the dual goals of "college success" and "intellectually responsible civic engagement" as outlined in the College Board's official course description for AP Lang.**

**In service of these goals, it is our hope that you will embrace the challenges of fostering your own authentic curiosity, thinking critically about the world around you, and reading widely with an open mind.**

We look forward to meeting you in the fall!
Ms. Frisby (nfrisby@rochester.k12.mi.us) and Ms. Smith (esmith@rochester.k12.mi.us)

District note:
*Summer work is necessary for honors and AP courses in order to help students build prior knowledge that is essential for the curriculum at the beginning of the school year. All summer work must be completed in ONE Google Doc. Any assignments submitted with copied and pasted text will not receive credit. Please see Rochester Community School's Academic Integrity Policy for further clarification regarding expectations for completing summer work.*