AP Language and Composition
2026 Summer Reading and Writing Assignments

Questions? Please read the assignment directions in full first.
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Congratulations rising Juniors on accepting the challenge of AP Language and Composition**!**

Reading Assignment #1: *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

- Read *The Scarlet Letter* and be prepared for a 50-point test upon your return to school. The test will occur during the first week of the school year and will be based on the novel's plot, characters, literary elements, settings, and important quotations. As you read, take notes, annotate, write questions, draw conclusions, TALK to the text…draw pictures! Do what you must to actively engage in the text, and I promise you will understand the story much better.

- You may purchase a copy of the book (used or new), borrow it from the library or the library's digital loan service (Libby), or download a free pdf at: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/25344/25344-h/25344-h.htm

Reading Assignment #2: *On Writing* by Stephen King

• *On Writing*, as its title suggests, is Stephen King'**s** book on how to write. He narrates the story of his life in a series of vignettes displaying his characteristic wit and pathos in telling the humorous and bittersweet story of his genesis as an author. King also offers plenty of writing strategies for getting through the difficult parts. This is part memoir, part writing guide.

• You may purchase a copy of the book (used or new), borrow it from the library or the library's digital loan service (Libby), or download a free pdf (use website below):

chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/http://biblioteka.teatr-obraz.ru/files/file/English_cinema/Stephen_King_On_Writing.pdf

Reading Assignment #3: *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life* by Barbara Kingsolver

Writing Assignment #1: Analytical Argument Essay

• Please compose a 3-page essay in third person analyzing Barbara Kingsolver's purpose and message in her book, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*. You will need to make a claim about her purpose and message in this book and support that claim with evidence from the text. You will then need to provide commentary about that textual evidence and how it relates to and supports Kingsolver's purpose and message.

Besides the book, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*, you do not need to use outside sources for this essay. Use MLA format (12-point font, double spaced throughout, MLA heading; consult OWL at Purdue University for MLA guidelines). Please include an interesting title, something other than the title of the book. Also incorporate three to five textual examples to support your line of reasoning and cite each according to MLA format. Provide commentary and analysis of your textual examples as well.

Writing Assignment #2: Double-Entry Journal

• We will be analyzing Stephen King's use of rhetorical strategies to communicate his purpose and reach his audience. The double-entry will help you to establish how King does what he does with language. Do your best to pay attention to how King uses language for certain effects and note down what you notice in your double-entry journal. See below for more detailed instructions on the double- entry journal.

****In the end you should have a total of 15-20 double entries for this book. The entries should be spread across the book, some from the beginning, middle, and end.**

Double-Entry Journal Format Instructions:

Annotating a text takes time because it forces you to read actively, think critically, and respond. In double-entry journals, you will use two pages at a time. Facts, quotations, summaries, paraphrases, images, metaphors, figurative language, and/or interesting phrases are written on the left page, and interpretations or reactions are written on the right page. Use a double spread to do this so that the author's text is on the left page and your personl response to that same piece of text is on the right page.

Reflections should be more than just "I like this idea," or "I've never met a person who could live up to this." Comments should reflect thoughtful views on the implications of what the author is saying. The WHY and HOW should be explored rather than the WHAT. Be sure to title and date each entry.

Below are some possible prompts for how to address/respond to the left side author pages of your double-entry journal:

- Speaker: Consider who the writer is and what s/he wants to communicate. Use this to determine the writer's credibility within certain passages.
    - Occasion: Determine what prompted or motivated the author to write the text and factors such as time, context, place and setting. Evaluate whether the writer's motivations are valid.
    - Audience: Who is the writer trying to address primarily? Who is the intended audience here? Gauge whether the writer effectively communicates this.
    - Purpose: Think about the reasons the writer composed the text: Persuasion? Comparison? To entertain? Explanation? Information? Some other purpose?
    - Subject: Explain what a passage is about beyond the surface level.
    - Tone: Assess the writer's attitude with which the author addresses the subject. Use diction, the writer's choice of words, to determine the attitude toward the subject. Connotation of words matter, so define and explain the impression of all words you do not understand.
    - Assertion: Identify the writer's main claim, the overarching thesis of the text. More specific than the subject, the assertion is the point the writer makes about the topic.
    - Claims: Identify the main points the writer makes to prove the assertion.
    - Appeals: How does the writer appeal to reader's emotions (pathos)? How does the writer prove the assertion with logic (logos)? How does the writer establish credibility on the subject? Consider the pathos, logos, and ethos of the passages you select as you read.
    - Rhetorical Strategies: Evaluate the writer's techniques in delivery and how effective these techniques are for rhetorical purposes.
    - How does this tie in with my experience, previous readings, class discussions, expectations?
    - What do I not understand? What questions do I have?
    - Do I agree/disagree with the author? Why?
    - What impressed me/annoyed me about the reading or just this passage?

- What do I notice about the author's techniques—how does he or she emphasize a point or evoke a reaction? (Consider mood, tone, foreshadowing, irony, figurative language devices, sound devices, rhetorical devices like diction/word choice, connotation, tone, syntax and other literary devices. Figurative language devices include simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, synecdoche, metonymy. Sound devices include rhyme, alliteration, assonance, consonance, euphony, cacophony. How is the writer using language to achieve a purpose?
- How does this new information fit with my beliefs, my philosophy, prior knowledge?
- Where have my ideas been challenged, changed, confirmed? Or how does this passage challenge one of my beliefs or personal experience?
- Assertion: Identify the writer's main claim, the overarching thesis of the text. More specific than the subject, the assertion is the point the writer makes about the topic.
- Claims: Identify the main points the writer makes to prove the assertion.
- Appeals: How does the writer appeal to reader's emotions (pathos)? How does the writer prove the assertion with logic (logos)? How does the writer establish credibility on the subject? Consider the pathos, logos, and ethos of the passages you select as you read.
- Rhetorical Strategies: Evaluate the writer's techniques in delivery and how effective these techniques are for rhetorical purposes.
- Bias: Evaluate the perspective of the writer that may influence the assertion and claims. Evaluate your bias as a reader.