

May 22, 2017

Future AP student,

Congratulations on enrolling in AP Language and Composition! The English course you take next year will be among the most rigorous, stimulating, and rewarding classes you will take in high school. The workload for this course will be intense; however, this course will thoroughly prepare you for the work that you will do in college.

All students enrolled in AP Lang & Comp are expected to complete a summer reading assignment. Students are expected to read, annotate, and take notes on their reading. Furthermore, the books you will read require deep consideration and ample reflection, so resist the temptation to put off the assignment until just before school starts. Students are responsible for obtaining these books on their own; you can pick up copies from a bookstore, a local library, or an online retailer like Amazon. Please see the attached sheet for your specific assignment.

This course will require extensive reading throughout the year as well. AP students will be required to purchase most or all of the books read in class (1 or 2 per semester). You are advised to prepare for the potential cost that taking an AP class entails.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Welcome to the AP program; I look forward to working with you next year!

Sincerely,

Mr. Eric Beard

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AP Language and Composition Summer Reading Assignment

All students taking AP Language and Composition are expected to read two books over the summer. Please choose one book from each category:

Category 1: General Nonfiction

The Working Poor - David Shipler (352 pages)

A look at those living in poverty in America and the various problems they face.

Outliers - Malcolm Gladwell (336 pages)

A discussion of the intriguing factors that lead to success.

The Last Child in the Woods - Richard Louv (416 pages)

A book about the increasing disconnect between our children and nature.

Quiet - Susan Cain (368)

A book about the importance of introverts in a society that rewards extroversion.

Musicophilia - Oliver Sacks (425 pages)

A look at the effects of music on the brain.

Category 2: Memoir

Between the World and Me - Ta-Nehisi Coates (176 pages)

A man writes to his son about race and racism in America.

Reading Lolita in Tehran - Azar Nafisi (400 pages)

A woman in Iran exposes her female students to forbidden Western classics.

Into Thin Air - Jon Krakauer (332 pages)

A man tells the story of a disastrous experience climbing Mt. Everest.

Just Mercy - Bryan Stevenson (368 pages)

A young lawyer discusses his work with death row inmates.

When Breath Becomes Air - Paul Kalanithi (256 pages)

A young neurosurgeon diagnosed with cancer reflects on mortality.

AP Language and Composition Summer Reading Assignment (continued)

In addition to reading these two books, students should make annotations, take notes, and complete a dialectical journal.

Annotations

Annotating means reading with a pen or pencil in hand and marking the text in a helpful, meaningful way. Here are some suggestions:

- Write comments in the margin especially to ask questions, jot down main ideas/events, make connections, etc.
- Star any passages you think are very important
- Underline any sentences that you found appealing or that made you think
- Circle or highlight words that are unfamiliar to you
- Bracket areas that you were confused about or did not fully understand

Dialectical Journal

A dialectical journal is a written log that you keep, representing a conversation that you have with a text. Your DJ should be broken into two columns: 1) Quotes from the Text and 2) Commentary.

Choose meaningful, powerful, or thought-provoking quotations from the text to include in the left column, and be sure to include page numbers. In the right column, write down your reflections on the quoted passages. You should also use this column to make predictions, ask questions, make connections, and analyze the text for literary devices (tone, structure, style, imagery, etc.).

You should include at least 15 entries for each book. See to it that your entries are distributed evenly throughout the text (in other words, make sure that you don't just include quotations from the first few chapters of the book). Be sure to include page numbers with your quotes.

Look at the example below for help.

Quotes from the Text	Commentary
"The culture we belong to and the legacies passed down by our forbears shape the patterns of our achievement in ways we cannot begin to imagine. It's not enough to ask what successful people are like, in other words. It is only by asking where they are <i>from</i> that we can unravel the logic behind who succeeds and who doesn't" (Gladwell 19).	This passage identifies the major premise of Gladwell's book—that individual success is not determined by personality and intelligence as much as it is by culture and experience. By saying "It's not enough..." the author suggests that we often ask the wrong questions when analyzing success. Additionally, by italicizing the word "from," Gladwell emphasizes that it's a person's background that makes all the difference.

If you have any questions, contact Mr. Beard at ebear@highland.k12.in.us