

AP English Language & Composition (Grade 11) Summer Reading 2019



Welcome to AP English Language and Composition. AP English Language is a college-level writing course with an emphasis on critical reading of non-fiction prose infused with discussion of politics, history, social sciences, and current events. This class will ask you to analyze writing, develop sound reasoning and argumentation, as well as examine the power of language. Students in AP English Language and Composition must complete the major reading and writing assignments, as well as supplemental readings and writings during summer vacation. This work is particularly intense to ensure students' commitment to the challenge and rigor of the course. It is also designed to demonstrate that students possess the prerequisite reading and writing skills for success in the course.

Remember: AP English Language and Composition is a college-level course. Your summer reading assignment is our first impression of you as a student and should reflect your commitment to the course.

All titles will serve as the foundation for the first marking period and will be discussed throughout the year. Summer assignments will be appointed point value and count as one major assessment. There will also be additional in-class major assessments (objective, essay, and discussion) during the first two weeks of school.

Major assessments in AP English count as 70% of your marking period grade.
Summer reading assignments will be collected on: Friday, September 6, 2019.

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to help you become a more analytical, critical, and reflective reader and writer, as well as become a student of the world by building schema necessary to succeed in the course.

Part I: Read and take notes on Chapters 1 and 2 from *The Language of Composition: Reading. Writing. Rhetoric*. The first two chapters of *The Language of Composition* serve as a foundation for the course. Read and take notes on the material in the chapters. **You should review the activities, but you are not required to complete the activity assignments.** The information in these chapters provides the lens through which to view the Summer Reading assignments and will be tested in September.

- Chapters 1 and 2 from *The Language of Composition: Reading. Writing. Rhetoric* (pdf) PDFs of supplemental readings can be found at: <http://obhsaplant.weebly.com> Password: purpleknights

Part II: Read *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* by Stephen King. Choose **one** of the following prompts and answer in a well-written argument (**2 pages**). **Direct quotes from King should be limited and cannot run more than one line.** Essay should be written in **MLA format** (see Purdue Online Writing Lab <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/>).

Essay Prompt (Choose one):

- Do you agree with King's assertion that "while it is impossible to make a competent writer out of a bad writer, and while it is equally impossible to make a great writer out of a good one, it is possible, with lots of hard work, dedication, and timely help, to make a good writer out of a merely competent one?" To what degree can a writer be made? To what extent can writing be taught? Please defend your choices in a well-written argument. **Do not forget to include textual evidence to support your argument.**
- Stephen King offers advice as well as establishes rules that writers should adhere to when composing. Of all the advice/rules presented, which two ideas challenged your thinking? How might you apply King's rules to your writing (especially as you enter an AP writing course)? Please defend your choices in a well-written argument. **Do not forget to include textual evidence to support your argument.**

Part III: Major Text and Schema Building Activity:

A. Choose **ONE** of the major texts below to read and take notes on. Each text addresses several issues that are part of daily news and political discourse. While reading, be sure to think about the author's argument, purpose evidence presented, and the moves he makes to support his argument.

- ***Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal* by Eric Schlosser**

"Fast food has become a veritable American institution, with restaurants serving a quick bite in every strip mall and roadside rest area across the country. But, according to *Fast Food Nation*, the fast food establishment has been serving up much more than just cheap hamburgers and greasy fries. In compelling fashion, author Eric Schlosser traces the growth of fast food chains after World War II and condemns the industry for giving rise to such cultural maladies as obesity, classism, American global imperialism, and environmental devastation" (www.bn.com).

- ***Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson (DO NOT READ THE YOUNG ADULT VERSION.)**

"Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinkmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever. *Just Mercy* is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer's coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice" (www.bn.com).

B. Identify **ONE** of the major issues discussed in the text you chose (EX: immigration, climate change, minimum wage, racism, death penalty, the justice system, etc.) Then complete the following schema building activities:

1. Watch a documentary, TED Talk, or listen to a podcast on the issue.
2. Select, read, and annotate two news articles or op-ed pieces from a reputable newspaper or issue based magazine such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New Yorker*, etc. **One article/op-ed needs to compliment the author's argument and the other needs to provide a counter argument.**
3. **The Task:** for EACH schema builder you have to:
 - a. **Identify your source** (MLA formatted documentation) and
 - b. **Write (a minimum) one page** thoughtfully answering two or more of the following questions:
 - What do I know/understand now that I didn't before?
 - How did this experience change the way I think about something?
 - What is a thought, idea, or perspective that I might not have considered if I hadn't encountered this material?
 - What connections did you see to the arguments presented in the major text?

STRONGLY SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES TO PREPARE FOR AP LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION:

- 1. Develop an opinion. Global knowledge is integral to success in this class.** AP Language is a college-level course focusing on close and critical reading, mainly of non-fiction texts. Students will also write extensively, mastering three basic types of writing: analysis, argument, and synthesis. In order to prepare for our readings and writings, you should first **become aware of the pressing issues in your larger world**. These issues may be political, environmental, cultural, military, social, global, economic, educational, and scientific, etc. To begin to create a foundation for the course, read quality news sources. Some of the best writers in America today are columnists and journalists whose writings about our world are syndicated by major American newspapers. Examine both sides of the issues, evaluate the rhetoric, and become more than a passive consumer of information.
- 2. Read and digest Stunk and White's *The Elements of Style*.** AP Language and Composition is a course on language and writing. By signing up for this course, you indicate that you have achieved competency at or above grade level in grammar, usage, mechanics, and sentence structure. This little book will help you review and improve any weaknesses that you may have. This book is widely available in bookstores; however, it is also accessible online via: <http://www.bartleby.com/141/>
- 3. READ. READ. READ. AND READ SOME MORE.**

A NOTE REGARDING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

The purpose of this assignment is to encourage the process of reflection. Thus, students can only “find the answers” for this assignment in their own brains. We expect that you utilize the utmost academic integrity when it comes to this and ALL assignments for AP English. Academic integrity is honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Every assignment you do in school is meant to measure your knowledge of something or your ability to do something. The grade you receive on the assignment should reflect that knowledge or ability. But an assignment cannot truly measure your knowledge or ability if you have not done your own work.

The summer reading assignment should be the product solely of **your** thoughts, effort, and ideas. **Do not use websites.** Sites like Wikipedia and Spark Notes serve a purpose, but using them for an assignment like this one is dishonest. Furthermore, your teachers are not interested in what Spark Notes says. We are interested in **your** ideas, interpretations, and arguments. We want to know what **you** think. Your ideas are far more interesting than the ones regurgitated again and again on the Internet, and looking at those websites will color your thinking and prevent you from developing your own ideas.

Although there will doubtless be collaborative assignments throughout the school year, this is not one of them. **Do your own work. You may not in any way work with someone else on this assignment. If your assignments show ANY evidence of having been copied from a website, a classmate, or any other source, you will receive a zero on the assignment. Remember, major assessments in AP English are worth 70% of your grade.**