

11th Grade AP English Language and Composition

Summer Reading 2020-2021

AP English Language and Composition is quite different from the English classes you have taken over the years. Instead of analyzing the literary aspects of a work, we will be discussing the rhetorical strategies the author employs to convey his or her message. Instead of focusing on fiction, poetry, and drama, we will focus primarily on non-fiction essays and speeches. Instead of looking at a work of literature as a product, we study writing as a process. Ideally, by the end of the course you will be highly proficient, highly persuasive writers.

To prepare for the course this summer, you will read one non-fiction book from the list below. If you need any help choosing, please email me. You will write a rhetorical analysis on the book the first week of class, so it is a good idea to annotate as you read.

In addition to the non-fiction book, you will also read several essays about the craft of writing. You will choose three texts from the choices below and write a synthesis essay, using these sources to support your argument.

Assignment #1: Rhetorical Analysis Essay

The first week of class, you will be writing a rhetorical analysis essay on your choice non-fiction book (see list below). You do not need to start this over the summer, but here are some elements to think about as you read. I strongly suggest that you annotate your book to make it easier in the fall when you will write the essay. Think about identifying the audience of the book, the writer's purpose in writing the book, and the main message of the book. What is the primary argument the text is making? Some of these books have a very clear argument, while others put forth a more subtle argument, but each text seeks to persuade the reader to think, feel, believe or act upon something. Additionally think about how the author achieves his or her purpose. What kind of writing strategies does the author use to convey his or her message? Some strategies you might consider include how the author uses emotion to persuade the reader; how the author uses facts, statistics and logic to persuade; and how the author uses his/her own character to build connection and trust with the reader. Mark in your book specific examples to illustrate the strategies you are thinking about.

Assignment #2: Synthesis Essay

Many authors have written about their writing process; some focus on what inspires them, while others discuss the formal aspects of their work.

Now it is your turn to write about your own writing process. Carefully read the following seven essays listed below, then **synthesize** information from three of these essays. Incorporate the information you have chosen from the three texts into a coherent, well-developed essay that identifies the key issues that you should consider in your own writing. Keep in mind that you are reflecting on your own personal writing, not advising others how to write.

Your argument should be the focus of your essay. Use the sources to develop your argument and explain the reasoning for it. Avoid merely summarizing the sources. Indicate clearly which sources you are drawing from, whether through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary.

Essays:

Orwell, George. "Why I Write."

Didion, Joan. "Why I Write." (Alternate source)

Gilbert, Elizabeth. "Thoughts on Writing."

King, Stephen. "Everything You Need to Know About Writing Successfully - in Ten Minutes"

Gaiman, Neil. "Where do You Get Your Ideas?"

Letham, Jonathan. "The Ecstasy of Influence."

Smith, Zadie. "The Rise of the Essay."

Choice Books: (*If you need help finding the right book for you, please email me)

- *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other* by Sherry Turkle
- *Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup* by John Carreyrou
- *Bad Feminist* by Roxane Gay
- *Barbarian Days: A Surfing Life* by William Finnegan
- *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women* by Naomi Wolf
- *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* by Katherine Boo
- *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- *The Big Short: Inside the Doomsday Machine* by Michael Lewis
- *Black Boy* by Richard Wright
- *The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics* by Daniel James Brown
- *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation* by Jeff Chang
- *Consider the Lobster and Other Essays* by David Foster Wallace

- *Columbine* by Dave Cullen
 - *Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation* by Michael Pollan
 - *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair That Changed America* by Eric Larson
 - *Dreamland: The True Tale of America's Opiate Epidemic* by Sam Quinones
 - *Educated* by Tara Westover
 - *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* by Hannah Arendt
 - *The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer* by Siddhartha Mukherjee
 - *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* by Mathew Desmond
 - *Essays of E.B. White* by E.B. White
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- *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal* by Eric Schlosser
 - *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner
 - *Friday Night Lights*. By H.G Bissinger
 - *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls
 - *The Great Influenza: The Story of the Deadliest Pandemic in History* by John M. Barry
 - *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* by Jared M. Diamond
 - *H Is for Hawk* by Helen Macdonald
 - *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* by Dave Eggers
 - *Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race* by Margot Lee Shetterly
 - *Hidden Valley Road* by Robert Kolker
 - *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* by J. D. Vance
 - *How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy* by Jenny Odell

- *How To Survive A Plague: The Inside Story of How Citizens and Science Tamed AIDS* by David France
- *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot
- *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote
- *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz
- *The Innovators: How a Group of Hackers, Geniuses and Geeks Created the Digital Revolution* by Walter Isaacson
- *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens* by Danah Boyd
- *Kids of Kabul: Living Bravely Through a Never-ending War* by Deborah Ellis
- *Lab Girl* by Hope Jahren
- *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead* by Sheryl Sandberg
- *The Lost City of Z: A Tale of Deadly Obsession in the Amazon* by David Grann
- *Man's Search for Meaning* by Viktor E. Frankl
- *Me Talk Pretty One Day* by David Sedaris
- *A Moveable Feast* by Ernest Hemingway
- *My Losing Season* by Pat Conroy
- *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel* by Ari Shavit
- *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander
- *Nickel and Dime: On (Not) Getting by in America* by Barbara Ehrenreich
- *The Night of the Gun: A Reporter Investigates the Darkest Story of His Life. His Own* by David Carr
- *Notes of a Native Son* by James Baldwin
- *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* by Stephen King
- *Overdressed: The Shockingly High Cost of Cheap Fashion* by Elizabeth L. Cline
- *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell
- *A People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn
- *Prozac Nation* by Elizabeth Wurtzel
- *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that can't Stop Talking* by Susan Cain

- *The Right Stuff* by Tom Wolfe
- *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* by Yuval Noah Harari
- *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* by Elizabeth Kolbert
- *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* by Joan Didion
- *Stiff: The Curious Life of Human Cadavers* by Mary Roach
- *The Source of Self-Regard: Selected Essays, Speeches, and Meditations* by Toni Morrison
- *Thank You for Your Service* by David Finkel
- *These Truths: A History of the United States*, Jill Lepore
- *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate* by Naomi Klein
- *Tribe: On Homecoming and Belonging* by Sebastian Junger
- *Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand
- *Under the Banner of Heaven* by Jon Krakauer
- *The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming* by David Wallace-Wells
- *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* by Isabel Wilkerson
- *Wave* by Sonali Deraniyagala
- *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* by Cheryl Strayed
- *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* by Maxine Hong Kingston

Any non-fiction book by:

James Baldwin

Malcolm Gladwell

Sebastien Junger

Erik Larson

Michael Lewis

Michael Pollan

Mary Roach

Questions? Email Mrs. Handwerger handwerger@rasg.org

