

AP Language and Composition: Summer Assignment

Welcome to AP English Language and Composition for the 2023-24 school year! We'll spend a great year together reading classic American fiction along with a wide variety of historical and current non-fiction. **To start the course off right, every student is asked to read at least one non-fiction book during the summer AND complete an analysis assignment.**

This book list includes a range of topics, themes, and ideas. Choose a book you care about and enjoy. If you start the book, and you don't love your choice, pick something else from this list or contact me with another great idea. I'm open to relevant suggestions. 😊

Looking for more this summer? Find a podcast, listen to a TED talk, watch a documentary, or read. Try to read anything related to current events. Then, read a little more after that. Just read and learn. The more you know in general, the better you'll do in this class. I promise.

The book options are listed below. **Please check out or purchase a copy of your selected book. While only one book is required, more are certainly encouraged.**

Have questions? Email them to Mrs. Byrne at ashleyby@spokaneschools.org

Required Assignment:

Please come to the first day of school with a thorough and typed response to the 10 questions listed below. This is your first collected assignment for AP English Language and Composition, and it will be scored based on completion and evidence of thoughts that extend beyond the superficial, the shallow, or the obvious. You should focus on *analysis*, not just summary. Demonstrate your brilliant, complex, and unique thoughts.

1. What is the **primary setting/occasion** of this text? Why might this be important, and how does it contribute to your understanding of the context?
2. Why is this topic **relevant/urgent**? How do you know? Use 1 piece of textual evidence to prove this and explain how this quote supports your claim.
3. Who is the **writer**? What do you know about them? How does this knowledge impact the way you understand the text and their agenda in writing it?

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4. Who is the **primary audience** of this book? How do you know? Use 1-2 pieces of textual evidence to prove this and explain how the quotes support this.
5. What is the **author's claim**? How do you know? What leads you to believe this is their intended goal? Use 1-2 pieces of textual evidence to prove this and explain how the quotes support this.
 - A: Do you agree or disagree with this claim? Explain your reasoning.
 - B. What type of evidence does the author use to establish his/her claim? (Scientific proof, anecdote, opinion, historical facts, statistics, emotional appeal?) Are these effective? Why or why not?
5. Consider the **rhetorical triangle**: Authors use logos (logic/facts), ethos (ethical appeal) and/or pathos (emotion) to persuade. Describe which of these techniques this author relies on most heavily. Use 1 piece of textual evidence to prove this and explain how this quote supports your claim.
6. What is the author's **intended goal/purpose** in writing this text? How do you know? Use 2-3 pieces of textual evidence to prove this and explain how the quotes support the Claim.
7. How would you summarize the **author's style/and tone**? Is it formal and scholarly? Is it familiar and casual? Bitter? Angry? Harsh? Objective or biased? Decide on the style and explain whether it was effective at conveying the author's message.
8. Describe **an important event or passage** from the book—one that stuck with you after you finished reading. This is usually the one you find yourself sharing with others. Why did it stick out to you? Use 1 piece of textual evidence to demonstrate your choice.
9. Describe **one effect** the book had on your beliefs, thoughts, or preconceived ideas. What was this, and why was this the case?
10. Would you **recommend** this book to others? Why or why not?

Non-Fiction Book Options

*If the book has an asterisk, it is available for check out from the NC book room. **All other books can be checked out from Mrs. Byrne in room N317 BEFORE the summer break.** If you don't check out a book before summer, you will need to check one out from the public library or purchase your own copy. Here are your awesome options!

1. Boys in the Boat by Daniel James Brown

Out of the depths of the Depression comes an irresistible story about beating the odds and finding hope in the most desperate of times—the improbable, intimate account of how nine working-class boys from the American West showed the world at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin what true grit really meant.

2. Outliers by Malcolm Gladwell

Malcolm Gladwell takes us on an intellectual journey through the world of "outliers"—the best and the brightest, the most famous and the most successful. He asks the question: what makes high-achievers different? He uses multiple examples and data points to prove that being special might have more to do with circumstance than just ability.

3. *Hidden Figures by Margot Lee Shetterly

Before John Glenn orbited the earth, or Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, a group of dedicated female mathematicians known as "human computers" used pencils, slide rules, and adding machines to calculate the numbers that would launch rockets, and astronauts, into space. This book tells their hidden story.

4. The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls

The Glass Castle is a remarkable memoir of resilience and redemption, and a revelatory look into a family at once deeply dysfunctional and uniquely vibrant. When sober, Jeannette's brilliant and charismatic father captured his children's imagination, teaching them physics, geology, and how to embrace life fearlessly. But when he drank, he was dishonest and destructive. Her mother was a free spirit who abhorred the idea of domesticity and didn't want the responsibility of raising a family. The Walls children learned to take care of themselves. They fed, clothed, and protected one another, and eventually found their way to New York. Their parents followed them, choosing to be homeless even as their children prospered. The Glass Castle is truly astonishing—a memoir permeated by the intense love of a peculiar but loyal family.

5. *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains by Nicholas Carr

"Is Google making us stupid?" When Nicholas Carr posed that question, in a celebrated *Atlantic Monthly* cover story, he tapped into a well of anxiety about how the Internet is changing us. He also crystallized one of the most important debates of our time: As we enjoy the Net's bounties, are we sacrificing our ability to read and think deeply?

6. The Big Burn by Timothy Eagan

On the afternoon of August 20, 1910, a battering ram of wind moved through the drought-stricken national forest of Washington, Idaho, and Montana, whipping the hundreds of small blazes burning across the forest floor into a roaring inferno. Forest rangers had assembled nearly ten thousand men—college boys, day workers, immigrants from mining camps—to fight the fire. Equally dramatic is the larger story he tells of outsize president Teddy Roosevelt and his chief forester, Gifford Pinchot. Pioneering the notion of conservation, Roosevelt and Pinchot did nothing less than create the idea of public land as our national treasure, owned by and preserved for every citizen.