

## AP English Language & Composition (Grade 11) Summer Reading 2021

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 writing 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. There will be an objective test and an in-class essay on the reading in September.)**

**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. **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://obhsaplang.weebly.com> Password: purpleknights

**Part II: Major Text and Schema Building Activity: (There will be a test and an in-class essay on all the readings in September.)**

- A. Read and take notes on **Just Mercy** by Bryan Stevenson. The text addresses several issues that are part of daily news and political discourse. While reading, be sure to think about the Stevenson's argument, purpose, evidence presented, and the moves he makes to support his position.

### ***Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson**

"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 brinksmanship—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](http://www.bn.com)).

- B. Identify **ONE** of the major issues discussed in the text (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 you identified. (You should take some notes.)
  2. Select, read, and annotate a **current** news article or op-ed piece 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. **The article/op-ed needs to provide another point of view on Stevenson's argument.**
  3. **Note: Bryan Stevenson cannot be the main speaker or author of the two schema builder texts.**

## **STRONGLY SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES TO PREPARE FOR AP LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION:**

- 1. READ. READ. READ. AND READ SOME MORE.**
- 2. 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.
- 3. Read and digest Stunk and White's *The Elements of Style*.** AP Language and Composition is a writing course. 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/>

**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.**