



## A.P. English Language and Composition Summer Reading Information

Welcome to A.P. English Language and Composition! We congratulate you for signing up for a challenging course designed to make you a stronger reader, writer, and thinker.

What does this course entail specifically? According to the College Board, the organization that oversees advanced placement courses, it enables “the development of interpretive skills as students learn to write and read with increasing complexity and sophistication...” (*College Board AP English Course Description*, Fall 2010. p. 9). How does it do this? It “engages students in becoming skilled readers of prose written in a variety of rhetorical contexts, and in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Both their writing and their reading ...make students aware of the interactions among a writer’s purposes, audience expectations, and subjects, as well as the way genre conventions and the resources of language contribute to effectiveness in writing.”

Put simply, we read a wide variety of literature and nonfiction *very* closely as examples of clarity and style to improve our writing. This approach provides opportunities for students to build upon their composition capabilities; making this process a more conscious evolution in which students explore their ideas, formulate their strategies for written analysis, compose their written reasoning and then revise their work.

As a college-level course, this class is intended as a *rigorous* course of study and “as in the [equivalent] college [freshman] course, the purpose of the AP English Language and Composition course is to enable students to read complex texts with understanding and to write prose of sufficient richness and complexity to communicate effectively with mature readers” (*College Board AP English Course Description*, Fall 2010. p. 7). To achieve the AP College Board’s course purpose, performance expectations are high and the workload is *significant*. A minimum of six to seven hours of work outside of class per week will be needed to complete assignments that will include long-term writing and reading. The completion of this work is necessary to the success of the student’s in-class work, which will include timed writing assessments and class discussion, among other activities.

To take this class, it is recommended that the student *has held at least a B average* in his/her previous English classes. Please be advised that it is *HIGHLY* suggested that a student has previously completed at least one credit in an Honors English prior to taking this college-level class, as this coming year will be a *rigorous* one.

The purpose of summer reading for this course is to help you begin the shift from formal analysis of *literary* texts to rhetorical analysis of *nonfiction* texts. Everything you do this summer is meant to prepare you to be more successful in this course next year and on the exam that you will eventually take. Our goal is that every student in our classes has the best chance to pass this demanding exam and receive college credit for the considerable work invested in the course.

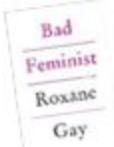
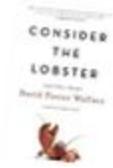
We have tried to make the instructions for your summer reading assignments as clear as possible. But if you have any questions at all, please send ONE email to BOTH portermi@clearviewregional.edu AND willisni@clearviewregional.edu. We will both be checking our email regularly throughout the summer, so you can expect a quick response to any questions or concerns.

Although it is not required, and we can provide a copy of an essay collection, we suggest that students purchase their own copy. Doing so will allow students to make any appropriate notations directly within their text, which will aid in the students' responses as well as in their ability to closely read assigned texts.

We hope that you will love taking this course as much as we love teaching it. Starting this summer and continuing throughout the school year, you will be encountering some of the most original, thought-provoking, articulate, inspirational, outrageous, infuriating, profound writers you will ever read. If all goes well, they will make you a better reader and writer. Who knows, some of them might even make you a better person.

Welcome and Happy Reading!  
Mr. M. Porter & Ms. N. Willis

### Materials Needed for Summer Reading

			
Composition notebook	Any essay book of your choice.		Timed Essay prompt (link below)

**Assignment One:** Timed, essay response to an AP prompt. This counts as a MINOR ASSESSMENT (QUIZ) grade for the first marking period.

One of the skills we will be working on this year to prepare for the AP Lang. exam is timed writing. On the day of the exam you will need to write **three** different timed essays in two hours and fifteen minutes.

To give yourself and us an idea of your starting skill set, you will be writing a response to an actual AP prompt under actual AP time constraints.

Please choose a time when you are rested, focused, and non-distracted. Open the prompt in the link below and give yourself **forty minutes ONLY** (set a timer) to write an essay response to the prompt. You may write a brief opening and closing paragraph: your focus should be on writing convincing, well-developed body paragraphs.

Your essay should be hand-written on lined paper, **not typed**.

To reiterate, you should simulate the task you will face on the AP exam: use only forty minutes to plan and write the essay. Your essay will be assessed as a rough draft, not a finished product.

[LINK TO ESSAY PROMPT](#)

**Assignment Two:** Read 100 pages from a collection of essays, selected by you. This counts as a MINOR ASSESSMENT (QUIZ) grade for the first marking period.

Throughout the school year, we will be reading and analyzing essays on a wide variety of topics such as education, politics, the environment, and pop culture. To become more comfortable with this kind of text, we'd like you to choose a book of essays to read, think about, and analyze. You can choose a collection of essays by a single author or by a number of different authors. Ideally you will seek out a book you will enjoy reading.

Below is a list of suggested authors and titles. Feel free to use it or find your own. You can find essay collections in Barnes & Noble stores at the end of the Fiction & Literature section; they are also easily searchable on Amazon.com. And, of course, your local library has a sizable selection of essay collections you may borrow. We have also placed a sizable selection of books you may borrow in the Guidance Office.

Please be sure that you are reading a collection of **essays**. Short stories are not essays: essays are texts that express an author's opinions on a given topic. While a collection of essays may be autobiographical, a full-length autobiography does not count as a collection of essays. If you're not sure whether the book you'd like to read is an essay collection, contact us by email and we'll let you know.

You should read a minimum total of 100 pages. Some of the suggested titles exceed 300 pages, so you will not need to read the entire book. You should peruse the table of contents or the book itself and select the essays in the book that you find most interesting.

### **Recording your Reading/Analysis**

1. On the first page of your composition, list the book's author and title, along with the titles and page totals for ALL of the essays you read in the book. Remember, the number of pages you read needs to total at least one hundred.

2. For any **FOUR** of the essays that you read, please write a journal entry in your notebook as follows:

- List the title of the essay and, in a word or two, its subject
- In ONE sentence, identify the author's claim or purpose in the essay.
- In a short paragraph (6-8 sentences), discuss which of the three appeals (ethos, logos, and pathos) the author primarily used. If you're not sure what these mean, look [here](#).
- In a short paragraph (6-8 sentences), discuss your reaction to the author's claims. Did the author convince you? Why or why not? Move you emotionally in some way? Why or how?
- Copy verbatim a brief quotation from the essay that you find interesting, appealing, or well-written, then describe in a few sentences what you liked about the quotation and how it represents the author's writing style.

### **Suggested Titles (in no particular order)**

*The Best American Essays*

*The Best American Sports Writing*

*The Best American Science and Nature Writing*

*The Best American Travel Writing*

*The Fire This Time*, edited by Jesmyn Ward

*Pulphed: Essays* By John Jeremiah Sullivan

*Me Talk Pretty One Day* By David Sedaris (or any other book by this author)

*Traveling Mercies* By Anne Lamott

*Otherwise Known As The Human Condition* By Geoff Dyer

*We Gon' Be Alright: Notes on Race and Resegregation* By Jeff Chang

*The Book of My Lives* By Aleksandar Hemon

*When I Was A Child I Read Books* by Marilynne Robinson

*How To Be Alone: Essays* By Jonathan Franzen

*The Boys of My Youth* By Jo Ann Beard

*A Supposedly Fun thing I'll Never Do Again* or *Consider the Lobster* By David Foster Wallace

*This Is Running For Your Life* By Michelle Orange

*My Misspent Youth* By Megham Daum

*Thirteen Ways of Looking At a Black Man* By Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

*Uproot: Travels in Twenty-First-Century Music & Global Digital Culture* By Jace Clayton

*I Was Told There'd Be Cake* By Sloane Crosley

*Everything We Don't Know* by Aaron Gilbreath

*A Field Guide to Getting Lost* By Rebecca Solnit

*Some Remarks* By Neal Stephenson  
*You'll Grow Out of It* By Jessi Klein  
*Against Everything: Essays* By Mark Greif  
*The Size of Thoughts* By Nicholson Baker  
*The Empathy Exams* By Leslie Jamison  
*Living, Thinking, Looking* By Siri Hustvedt  
*The Next American Essay* By John D'Agata  
*Known and Strange Things* By Teju Cole  
*The White Album* By Joan Didion  
*Notes of a Native Son* By James Baldwin  
*The Abundance: Narrative Essays Old and New* By Annie Dillard  
Any collection of essays by Malcolm Gladwell  
Any collection of essays by E.B. White  
Any collection of essays by George Orwell

**\*\*Note: Some of the collections above may contain some objectionable material or language. Look over the table of contents and scan a few of the essays before purchasing/reading the book. Use your discretion and by no means read any essays/books that make you uncomfortable.**

### **Due Dates**

Your journal and your hand-written essay are both due in class on **Friday, September 6<sup>th</sup>**

Completing your summer reading assignments on time will be your first demonstration to us of your ability and willingness to handle the workload involved in this class. **Late assignments will not be accepted.**

### **Getting Help**

If you have any questions, feel free to send ONE email to BOTH of us at portermi@clearviewregional.edu and willisni@clearviewregional.edu. We will be checking our email at least weekly throughout the summer.

We know that these summer assignments are challenging. Please keep in mind, however, that we have an **extremely** challenging test to take next May and your success on that test may gain you college credit.

The assignments we're asking you to complete will give you an excellent start on the road we travel toward success on the AP exam. We hope, and believe, that when all is said and done, you will look back on the time you spent on these assignments was a very good investment in your future.

Enjoy your summer: we look forward to seeing you in September!