

AP Language and Composition Summer Reading Assignment

2023-2024

The focus of AP English your senior year is to analyze and discuss the rhetorical strategies used by writers, particularly in non-fiction writing. As such, your summer reading assignments may be a bit different from the reading you've done in the past, though I hope you find it enjoyable and interesting.

All assignments are due within the first week of school. Assignments will be submitted digitally. Editorials must include links to the full text of the editorial you are responding to and should be written using MLA format. As these assignments are my first introduction to you as a student and a writer, I look forward to seeing what you are able to produce and expect you to put your best "pen" forward.

Part One: Common Reader

Like all NDA students, you are required to read the 2023 Common Reader selection, *Between Shades of Gray* by Ruta Sepetys. You will have no written work to do for this text BUT you will need to be prepared to participate in the group discussions on Common Reader day.

Part Two: Nonfiction Selection/ SOAPSTone

Please select one of the following nonfiction works. Please note that some of these selections include "mature" topics. Remember that this is a college level course and as such these selections are presented to force you to think critically (and not just to blindly agree or disagree). That said, please spend some time looking up some background info on the texts and select the book that most appeals to you. Book summaries are provided below from Amazon. GoodReads and Amazon are good places to look for additional reviews and summaries. **"YOUNG READER" EDITIONS ARE NOT ALLOWED!**

◆ ***All You Can Ever Know: A Memoir by Nicole Chung***

Nicole Chung was born severely premature, placed for adoption by her Korean parents, and raised by a white family in a sheltered Oregon town. From childhood, she heard the story of her adoption as a comforting, prepackaged myth. She believed that her biological parents had made the ultimate sacrifice in the hope of giving her a better life, that forever feeling slightly out of place was her fate as a transracial adoptee. But as Nicole grew up—facing prejudice her adoptive family couldn't see, finding her identity as an Asian American and as a writer, becoming ever more curious about where she came from—she wondered if the story she'd been told was the whole truth.

With warmth, candor, and startling insight, Nicole Chung tells of her search for the people who gave her up, which coincided with the birth of her own child. *All You Can Ever Know* is a profound, moving chronicle of surprising connections and the repercussions of unearthing painful family secrets—vital reading for anyone who has ever struggled to figure out where they belong.

◆ ***Becoming* by Michelle Obama**

In a life filled with meaning and accomplishment, Michelle Obama has emerged as one of the most iconic and compelling women of our era. As First Lady of the United States of America—the first African American to serve in that role—she helped create the most welcoming and inclusive White House in history, while also establishing herself as a powerful advocate for women and girls in the U.S. and around the world, dramatically changing the ways that families pursue healthier and more active lives, and standing with her husband as he led America through some of its most harrowing moments. Along the way, she showed us a few dance moves, crushed Carpool Karaoke, and raised two down-to-earth daughters under an unforgiving media glare.

In her memoir, a work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her—from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work, to her time spent at the world’s most famous address. With unerring honesty and lively wit, she describes her triumphs and her disappointments, both public and private, telling her full story as she has lived it—in her own words and on her own terms. Warm, wise, and revelatory, *Becoming* is the deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has steadily defied expectations—and whose story inspires us to do the same.

◆ ***Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah**

Trevor Noah’s unlikely path from apartheid South Africa to the desk of *The Daily Show* began with a criminal act: his birth. Trevor was born to a white Swiss father and a black Xhosa mother at a time when such a union was punishable by five years in prison. Living proof of his parents’ indiscretion, Trevor was kept mostly indoors for the earliest years of his life, bound by the extreme and often absurd measures his mother took to hide him from a government that could, at any moment, steal him away. Finally liberated by the end of South Africa’s tyrannical white rule, Trevor and his mother set forth on a grand adventure, living openly and freely and embracing the opportunities won by a centuries-long struggle.

Born a Crime is the story of a mischievous young boy who grows into a restless young man as he struggles to find himself in a world where he was never supposed to exist. It is also the story of that young man’s relationship with his fearless, rebellious, and fervently religious mother—his teammate, a woman determined to save her son from the cycle of poverty, violence, and abuse that would ultimately threaten her own life.

◆ ***Educated* by Tara Westover**

Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education, and no one to intervene when one of Tara’s older brothers became violent. When another brother got himself into college, Tara decided to try a new kind of life. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if she’d traveled too far, if there was still a way home

◆ ***Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Secret Life of Everything* by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner**

Which is more dangerous, a gun or a swimming pool? Which should be feared more: snakes or french fries? Why do sumo wrestlers cheat? In this groundbreaking book, leading economist Steven Levitt—Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago and winner of the American Economic Association’s John Bates Clark medal for the economist under 40 who has made the greatest contribution to the discipline—reveals that the answers. Joined by acclaimed author and podcast host Stephen J. Dubner, Levitt presents a brilliant—and brilliantly entertaining—account of how incentives of the most hidden sort drive behavior in ways that turn conventional wisdom on its head.

◆ ***How to Be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram X. Kendi**

Antiracism is a transformative concept that reorients and reenergizes the conversation about racism—and, even more fundamentally, points us toward liberating new ways of thinking about ourselves and each other. At its core, racism is a powerful system that creates false hierarchies of human value; its warped logic extends beyond race, from the way we regard people of different ethnicities or skin colors to the way we treat people of different sexes, gender identities, and body types. Racism intersects with class and culture and geography and even changes the way we see and value ourselves. In *How to Be an Antiracist*, Kendi takes readers through a widening circle of antiracist ideas—from the most basic concepts to visionary possibilities—that will help readers see all forms of racism clearly, understand their poisonous consequences, and work to oppose them in our systems and in ourselves.

Kendi weaves an electrifying combination of ethics, history, law, and science with his own personal story of awakening to antiracism. This is an essential work for anyone who wants to go beyond the awareness of racism to the next step: contributing to the formation of a just and equitable society.

◆ ***Into the Wild* by John Krakauer**

In April, 1992, a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. His name was Christopher Johnson McCandless. He had given \$25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself. Four months later, a party of moose hunters found his decomposed body. How McCandless came to die is the unforgettable story of *Into the Wild*.

Immediately after graduating from college in 1991, McCandless had roamed through the West and Southwest on a vision quest like those made by his heroes Jack London and John Muir. In the Mojave Desert he abandoned his car, stripped it of its license plates, and burned all of his cash. He would give himself a new name, Alexander Supertramp, and, unencumbered by money and belongings, he would be free to wallow in the raw, unfiltered experiences that nature presented. Craving a blank spot on the map, McCandless simply threw away the maps. Leaving behind his desperate parents and sister, he vanished into the wild.

◆ ***Outliers* by Malcom Gladwell**

In this stunning new book, 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?

His answer is that we pay too much attention to what successful people are like, and too little attention to where they are from: that is, their culture, their family, their generation, and the idiosyncratic experiences of their upbringing. Along the way he explains the secrets of software billionaires, what it takes to be a great soccer player, why Asians are good at math, and what made the Beatles the greatest rock band.

◆ ***Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* by Annie Dillard**

Dillard's personal narrative highlights one year's exploration on foot in the Virginia region through which Tinker Creek runs. In the summer, she stalks muskrats in the creek and contemplates wave mechanics; in the fall, she watches a monarch butterfly migration and dreams of Arctic caribou. She tries to con a coot; she collects pond water and examines it under a microscope. She unties a snake skin, witnesses a flood, and plays King of the Meadow with a field of grasshoppers. The result is an exhilarating tale of nature and its seasons.

◆ ***Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* by Susan Cain**

At least one-third of the people we know are introverts. They are the ones who prefer listening to speaking; who innovate and create but dislike self-promotion; who favor working on their own over working in teams. It is to introverts—Rosa Parks, Chopin, Dr. Seuss, Steve Wozniak—that we owe many of the great contributions to society.

In *Quiet*, Susan Cain argues that we dramatically undervalue introverts and shows how much we lose in doing so. She charts the rise of the Extrovert Ideal throughout the twentieth century and explores how deeply it has come to permeate our culture. She also introduces us to successful introverts—from a witty, high-octane public speaker who recharges in solitude after his talks, to a record-breaking salesman who quietly taps into the power of questions. Passionately argued, impeccably researched, and filled with indelible stories of real people, *Quiet* has the power to permanently change how we see introverts and, equally important, how they see themselves.

◆ ***Soul Full of Coal Dust: A Fight for Breath and Justice in Appalachia* by Chris Hamby**

Decades have passed since black lung disease was recognized as a national disgrace and Congress was pushed to take legislative action. Since then, however, not much has changed. Big coal companies—along with their allies in the legal and medical professions—have continually flouted the law and exposed miners to deadly amounts of coal dust, while also systematically denying benefits to miners who suffer and die because of their jobs. Indeed, these men and their families, with little access to education, legal resources, and other employment options, have long been fighting to wrench even modest compensation and medical costs from our nation's biggest mining interests—all to combat a disease that could have been eradicated years ago.

Tracing their heroic stories back to the very beginning, Chris Hamby, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting on this issue, gives us a deeply troubling yet ultimately triumphant work

that promises to do for Black Lung what Beth Macy did for the opioid epidemic. From corporate offices and mine shafts, to hospital beds and rural clinics, *Soul Full of Coal Dust* becomes a legal and medical thriller that brilliantly traces how a powerless band of laborers-alongside a small group of lawyers and doctors, often working out of their homes or in rural clinics and tiny offices-challenged one of the world's most powerful forces, Big Coal, and won.

Additional Instructions

Please take careful notes as you read. I expect to see annotations in your book. After reading your selection, you should discuss the following elements of the piece. Please fill out the graphic organizer linked below. This is part of what you'll be turning in the first week of school. There is probably not enough space included here, so you make take additional notes as you'd like.

Please take thorough notes on each of the areas:

<https://d3jc3ahdjad7x7.cloudfront.net/>

[MOI1HRmZ1DPqGpN3dVzvIkcdUv59a5aaiGxwiDUN8UevkzSc.pdf](https://d3jc3ahdjad7x7.cloudfront.net/MOI1HRmZ1DPqGpN3dVzvIkcdUv59a5aaiGxwiDUN8UevkzSc.pdf)

You should also incorporate some of the ideas below:

The College Board's 'SOAPSTone' Reading Strategy

Subject

The general topic, content, and ideas contained in the text. You should be able to state the subject in a few words or a phrase.

Occasion

The time and place of the piece, the context that encouraged the writing to happen. What is the rhetorical occasion of the text? Is it a memory, a description, and observation, an argument, a diatribe, a declaration, a critique, etc.? Note the larger occasion, the broad issue that is the center of ideas and emotions.

Audience

The group of readers to whom this piece is directed. Does the author identify an audience? Is it one individual, a group, many groups? What assumptions can you make about the intended audience?

Purpose

The reason behind the text. Considering the purpose is important so that the reader can examine the writer's argument and the logic of it. In what ways does the author convey the message of the purpose? What is the message? How does the speaker try to spark a reaction in the audience? How is the text supposed to make the audience feel? What is its intended effect? You should ask yourself, "What does the speaker want the audience to think or do as a result of reading this text?"

Speaker

The voice that tells the story. Is someone identified as the speaker? What assumptions can you make about the speaker (e.g., age, gender, class, emotional state, etc.)? The author and the speaker are not necessarily the same. The author may tell the story from many different points of view. So who is telling the story? How do you know this? How does the writer present his/her narration? Assess the character of the speaker. These are crucial considerations. Are the author and speaker a different gender. Do not be confused by the gender of the author and assume the speaker must be the same. Let the facts lead you to the speaker. What does the speaker believe? Do not assume that the author believes what the speaker believes.

In non-fiction texts, do not simply identify the speaker/author by name. Include important facts about the speaker that will help the reader (the audience) make judgments about the speaker's position (the speaker's point of view).

Tone

The attitude of the author. What emotional sense do you take from the piece? The *spoken word* can convey the speaker's attitude and help impart meaning through tone of voice. However, with the *written word*, tone extends meaning beyond the literal. Tone can be determined by examining the author's diction (choice of words), syntax (sentence construction), and imagery (vivid descriptions that appeal to the senses). Examples of tone words: angry, bitter, complimentary, defensive, detached, dramatic, humorous, inflammatory, joyful, matter-of-fact, provocative, urgent, upset.

Additionally, we should ask:

HOW does the speaker/writer try to achieve his/her purpose? Are these choices EFFECTIVE?

- Which persuasive appeals are used? Identify key examples. Are they effective? Why/why not?
 - Logos (facts, statistics, hard evidence)
 - Pathos (emotion)
 - Ethos (trustworthiness, common values)
- What rhetorical devices are used? Identify key examples. Are they effective? Why/why not? (e.g. alliteration, anaphora, antithesis, apostrophe, assonance, chiasmus, euphemism, hyperbole, irony, litotes, metaphor, metonymy, onomatopoeia, oxymoron, paradox, personification, pun, simile, synecdoche, understatement, etc.)

Part Three: Editorials

Read and analyze 5 editorials (NOT NEWS ARTICLES) from a reputable journalist/columnist published in a reputable newspaper or magazine. You may certainly read more than 5 (and are encouraged to do so), but you will be required to submit the 5 responses total during the first week of school. We live in a world in which the term "fake news" is thrown around haphazardly. Part of what you will be assessed on is your selection of appropriate, thoughtful, and relevant editorials.

You must copy and paste your selected article or provide a link (so I can read it), and because of the nature of the questions asked (see below), you should select an editorial with some meat to it. Your first editorial has been selected for you:

<https://nj01001216.schoolwires.net/cms/lib/NJ01001216/Centricity/Domain/82/i-know-why-the-caged-bird-cannot-read.pdf>

The remaining 4 editorials are up to you, and hopefully will reflect *your* interests and ideas.

For each selection, answer the following questions as they apply to the editorial (numbers 1-10). Provide specific examples and quotes to prove your points. Do not reply in an essay format. I may only select one or two of your responses to grade, so make sure each response is thoughtful and complete.

1. What is the main purpose of the article? What is the author's intent? What is the author trying to accomplish?
2. What is the author's point of view? What is your response to his/her overall argument?
3. The most important information in the article is _____. Identify the key information used to support the main arguments.
4. What assumptions does the author make in the reasoning?
In other words, what is the author taking for granted? The assumptions are generalizations that the author does not think need to be defended within the context of the article, and they are usually unstated. For example, if the article discusses the need to strengthen the laws regulating development in sensitive environmental areas, the author may assume that you, the reader, agree that nature should be protected, and not go into basic detail about why nature needs to be protected.
5. What are the implications or the conclusions of the author's reasoning? What is the likely result the author foresees?
6. Does the author present other points of view? Discuss them.
7. What is the author's tone (attitude)? (The author's choice of words helps to convey tone.)
8. Does the author use imagery? Similes? Metaphors? Symbols? Allusions? Irony? Does the author appeal to your emotions, ethics, or logic?
9. Find 3-5 words within the article that you are uncertain of the precise definition. Copy the sentence the word is used in (or copy a portion of it if it is extremely lengthy). Look up and write out the dictionary definition for the word as it is used within the context of the article.
10. How effective is this article? Do you believe the author has accomplished his/her goal? As you think about the answer to this question, consider the following:
 - a. Does the author provide precise, relevant support and stay on topic? Is the author consistent or contradictory?
 - b. Does the author show how complex the issue is? Or is the author just being trivial and shallow?
 - c. Is the author's reasoning accurate?

Have a great summer!