

Summer Reading: AP English Language and Composition

The Grade 11 AP course focuses on understanding, analyzing, and writing non-fiction prose, rhetoric, and argumentation, and using multiple sources to develop and support your own arguments. *Reading thoughtfully from a range of challenging texts is one of the biggest contributors to success in English courses.*

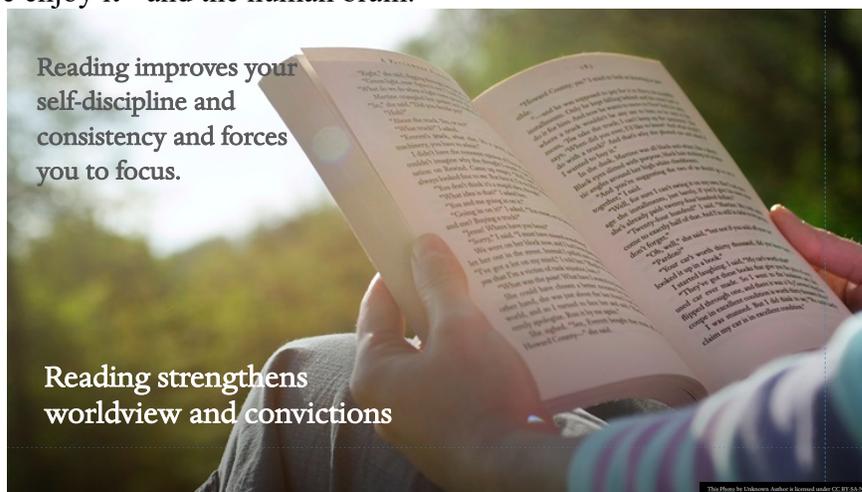
The required preparatory reading for Grade 11 AP English Language includes:

- a literary memoir/book of advice on writing from a highly successful author,
- a book on understanding and reading non-fiction, and
- at least one relatively challenging non-fiction book from the list of suggestions at the end of this handout (of course feel free to read them all! ;))

1. ***On Writing* by Stephen King (any edition):** Annotate and highlight as you read.
2. ***How to Read Nonfiction Like a Professor: A Smart, Irreverent Guide to Biography, History, Journalism, Blogs, and Everything in Between* by Thomas C. Foster:** Annotate and highlight as you read
3. **Choose one of the following non-fiction books to read. You will use this for a writing assignment given in September:**

- ***Becoming* by Michelle Obama | |Pages: 421**
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.
- ***Freakonomics* by Levitt, Steven D. and Stephen J. Dubner | Pages: 320**
Highly acclaimed, *Freakonomics* is considered readable, interesting, and ground-breaking. Levitt studies the riddles of everyday life— from cheating and crime to parenting and sports—and reaches conclusions that turn conventional wisdom on its head. Economics is, at root, the study of incentives—how people get what they want or need, especially when other people want or need the same thing.
- ***Outliers: The Story of Success* by Malcolm Gladwell | Pages: 309**
Outlier is a scientific term to describe things or phenomena that lie outside normal experience. Gladwell is interested in people who are outliers—in men and women who, for one reason or another, are so accomplished and so extraordinary and so outside of ordinary experience.
- ***Plastic* by Susan Freinkel | Pages: 336**
Plastic built the modern world. Where would we be without bike helmets, baggies, toothbrushes, and pacemakers? But a century into our love of plastic, we’re starting to realize it’s not such a healthy relationship. Plastics draw on dwindling fossil fuels, leach harmful chemicals, litter landscapes, and destroy marine life. Journalist Susan Freinkel offers a balanced, engaging, and eye-opening book.

- ***Silent Spring*** by Rachel Carson | Pages: 378
The outcry that followed its publication spurred revolutionary changes in the laws affecting our air, land, and water. Carson's passionate concern for the future of our planet reverberated powerfully throughout the world, and her eloquent book was instrumental in launching the environmental movement. It is without question one of the landmark books of the twentieth century.
- ***Profiles in Courage for our Time*** by Caroline Kennedy | Pages: 374
Nearly half a century after then-Senator John F. Kennedy was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for *Profiles in Courage*, the Kennedy family continues to keep alive the tradition of honoring selfless public service with its Profiles in Courage Award. Now in paperback, *Profiles in Courage for Our Time* pays tribute to 13 such heroes in the same spirit as the original collection.
- ***King of the World: Muhammad Ali and the Rise of an American Hero*** by David Remnick | Pages: 330
On the night in 1964 that Muhammad Ali (then known as Cassius Clay) stepped into the ring with Sonny Liston, he was widely regarded as an irritating freak who danced and talked way too much. Six rounds later Ali was the new world heavyweight champion: He was "a new kind of black man" who would shortly transform America's racial politics, its popular culture, and its notions of heroism.
- ***This Is Your Brain on Music: The Science of a Human Obsession*** by Daniel J. Levitin | Pages: 314
What can music teach us about the brain? What can the brain teach us about music? And what can both teach us about ourselves? In this groundbreaking union of art and science, rocker-turned-neuroscientist Daniel J. Levitin explores the connection between music - its performance, its composition, how we listen to it, why we enjoy it - and the human brain.



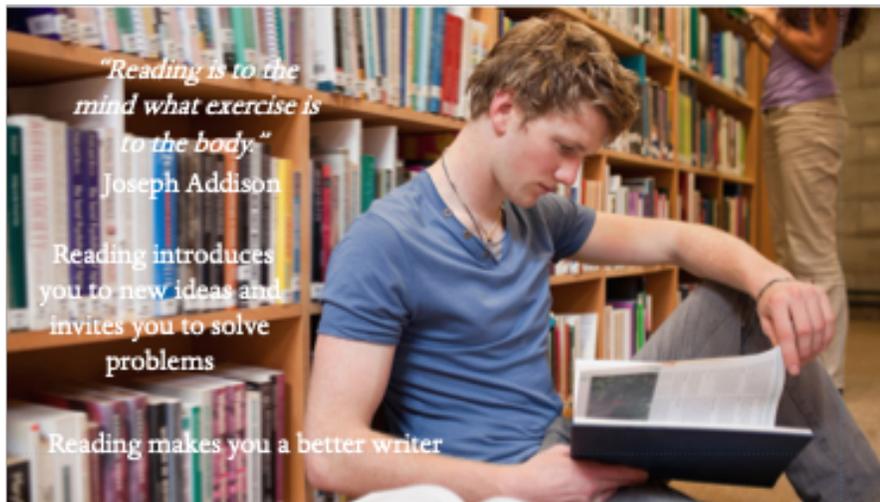
Be ready to discuss the following questions when we launch the 2020-2021 school year:

- What is the writer asserting?
- What am I being asked to believe or accept? Facts? Opinions? Some mixture?
- What reasons or evidence does the author supply to convince me? Where is the strongest or most effective evidence the author offers -- and why is it compelling?
- How has your thinking been altered by this reading? How has it affected your response to the issues and themes addressed in the book?
- Why/How is this book still relevant?

You will be tested within the first week of school on the books you read, and a writing assignment will be assigned in September as well. Annotate, highlight, take notes- actively read each book. Follow the guidelines recommended on the “...”

I'm looking forward to a great year with you all- have a wonderful summer!

Ms. Foley



How to Annotate While Reading – Adapted from “Interrogating Text” from

<https://guides.library.harvard.edu/sixreadinghabits>

Unlike "highlighting," which might be a passive activity, the process of annotating text helps you to stay focused and involved and to get much more out of your reading. You may find that the process of taking notes, asking questions, looking up unclear words, terms or information, and recording your reactions all help you to concentrate better.

1. Look over the text quickly to:

- Preview main ideas (including the title)
- Locate the name and credentials of the writer (might involve a quick Google)
- See when and where the work was published
- Preview main ideas (including the title)
- Notice any other distinguishing features of the text (unusual format, section headers, lists, and so on).

2. Actively reading the text and annotating while reading:

- Locating and marking the thesis, supporting points, significant ideas.
- Underlining important terms and explaining them in the margins.
- Writing key words, meanings, and definitions in the margin.
- Signaling where important information can be found with key words or symbols in the margin
- Identifying any ideas that challenge the knowledge, beliefs or attitudes of the audience.
- Noting any personal experience with or reflection on the topic.
- Marking, circling, or underlining any words that define voice, tone, attitude or diction and describing what type it seems to be.
- Identifying any information or evidence that defines the text’s historical, biographical, or cultural context.
- Identifying any connections to other sources you have already read on the topic (compare and contrast).
- Writing down any ideas for the essay or questions that develop while reading a source.

How to Annotate While Reading, Part Two – Adapted from “The Handout that Harvard Uses”

1. **Adding to your highlighter:** Highlighting can seem like an active reading strategy, but it can actually distract from the business of learning and dilute your comprehension. Those bright yellow lines you put on a printed page one day can seem strangely cryptic the next, unless you have a method for remembering why they were important to you at another moment in time. Pen or pencil will allow you do to more to a text you have to wrestle with.
2. **Mark up the margins of your text with words and phrases:** ideas that occur to you, notes about things that seem important to you, reminders of how issues in a text may connect with class discussion or course themes. This kind of interaction keeps you conscious of the reasons you are reading as well as the purposes your instructor has in mind. Later in the term, when you are reviewing for a test or project, your marginalia will be useful memory triggers.
3. **Develop your own symbol system:** asterisk (*) a key idea, for example, or use an exclamation point (!) for the surprising, absurd, bizarre. Your personalized set of hieroglyphs allow you to capture the important -- and often fleeting -- insights that occur to you as you're reading. Like notes in your margins, they'll prove indispensable when you return to a text in search of that perfect passage to use in a paper or are preparing for a big exam.
4. **Get in the habit of hearing yourself ask questions:** “What does this mean?” “Why is the writer drawing that conclusion?” “Why am I being asked to read this text?” etc. Write the questions down (in your margins, at the beginning or end of the reading, in a notebook, or elsewhere. They are reminders of the unfinished business you still have with a text: something to ask during class discussion, or to come to terms with on your own, once you’ve had a chance to digest the material further or have done other course reading.



ACTIVE READING: INTERROGATING TEXTS

Reading Habits to Develop in Your First Year at Fenwick (adapted from Harvard Library Resources)

Critical reading--active engagement and interaction with texts--is essential to your academic success and to your intellectual growth. Research has shown that students who read deliberately retain more information and retain it longer.

While the strategies below are (for the sake of clarity) listed sequentially, you can probably do most of them simultaneously. They may feel awkward at first, and you may have to deploy them very consciously, especially if you are not used to doing anything more than moving your eyes across the page. But they will quickly become habits, and you will notice the difference—in what you “see” in a reading, and in the confidence with which you approach your texts.

1. Previewing: Look “around” the text before you start reading.

You’ve probably engaged in one version of previewing in the past, when you’ve tried to determine how long an assigned reading is (and how much time and energy, as a result, it will demand from you). Previewing enables you to develop a set of expectations about the scope and aim of the text. These very preliminary impressions offer you a way to focus your reading. For instance: Is the author known to you already? If so, how does his (or her) reputation or credentials influence your perception of what you are about to read? If the author is unfamiliar or unknown, does an editor introduce him or her (by supplying brief biographical information, an assessment of the author’s work, concerns, and importance)?

2. Annotating: Make your reading thinking-intensive from start to finish.

Annotating puts you actively and immediately in a “dialogue” with an author and the issues and ideas you encounter in a written text. It’s also a way to have an ongoing conversation with yourself as you move through the text and to record what that encounter was like for you. Here’s how:

- **Add to your highlighter:** Highlighting can seem like an active reading strategy, but it can actually distract from the business of learning and dilute your comprehension. Those bright yellow lines you put on a printed page one day can seem strangely cryptic the next, unless you have a method for remembering why they were important to you at another moment in time. Pen or pencil will allow you to do more to a text you have to wrestle with.
- **Mark up the margins of your text with words and phrases:** ideas that occur to you, notes about things that seem important to you, reminders of how issues in a text may connect with class discussion or course themes. This kind of interaction keeps you conscious of the reasons you are reading as well as the purposes your teacher has in mind. Later in the term, when you are reviewing for a test or project, your marginalia will be useful memory triggers.
- **Develop your own symbol system:** asterisk (*) a key idea, for example, or use an exclamation point (!) for the surprising, absurd, bizarre. Your personalized set of hieroglyphs allow you to capture the important -- and often fleeting -- insights that occur to you as you’re reading. Like notes in your margins, they’ll prove indispensable when you return to a text in search of that perfect passage to use in a paper or are preparing for a big exam.

- Get in the habit of hearing yourself ask questions: “What does this mean?” “Why is the writer drawing that conclusion?” “Why am I being asked to read this text?” etc. Write the questions down (in your margins, at the beginning or end of the reading, in a notebook, or elsewhere. They are reminders of the unfinished business you still have with a text: something to ask during class discussion, or to come to terms with on your own, once you’ve had a chance to digest the material further or have done other course reading.

3. Outline, summarize, analyze: Take the information apart, look at its parts, and then try to put it back together again in language that is meaningful to you. The best way to determine that you’ve really gotten the point is to be able to state it in your own words.

Outlining enables you to see the skeleton of an argument: the thesis, the first point and evidence (and so on), through the conclusion. With weighty or difficult readings, that skeleton may not be obvious until you go looking for it.

Summarizing accomplishes something similar, but in sentence and paragraph form, and with the connections between ideas made explicit.

Analyzing adds an evaluative component to the summarizing process—it requires you not just to restate main ideas, but also to test the logic, credibility, and emotional impact of an argument. In analyzing a text, you reflect upon and decide how effectively (or poorly) its argument has been made. Questions to ask:

- What am I being asked to believe or accept? Facts? Opinions? Some mixture?
- What reasons or evidence does the author supply to convince me? Where is the strongest or most effective evidence the author offers -- and why is it compelling?

4. Look for repetitions and patterns:

The way language is chosen, used, positioned in a text can be an important indication of what an author considers crucial and what he expects you to glean from his argument. It can also alert you to ideological positions, hidden agendas or biases. Be watching for:

- Recurring images
- Repeated words, phrases, types of examples, or illustrations
- Consistent ways of characterizing people, events, or issues

5. Contextualize: Once you’ve finished reading actively and annotating, take stock for a moment and put it in perspective. When you contextualize, you essentially "re-view" a text you've encountered, framed by its historical, cultural, material, or intellectual circumstances.

- When was it written or where was it published? Do these factors change or otherwise influence how you view a piece?

Also view the reading through the lens of your own experience. Your understanding of the words on the page and their significance is always shaped by what you have come to know and value from living in a particular time and place.

Susan Gilroy, Librarian for Undergraduate Programs for Writing, Lamont and Widener Libraries 9.12.