Welcome to AP Language and Composition. Feel free to contact me via email if you have pressing questions/concerns with the summer homework. The following is expected to be completed on the first full day of school.

COURSE INFORMATION

AP Language and Composition is a year-long, college-level course designed to engage you in the study of language and rhetoric through the reading and analysis of rich and diverse texts written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts. Simultaneously you will be engaged in becoming skilled writers who effectively compose for a variety of purposes. Our study will be focused on making you aware of the interactions among a writer’s purposes, audience expectations, and subjects as well as the way generic conventions contribute to effective writing.
PURPOSE FOR READING

The summer reading assignment is designed to familiarize you with the material covered on the AP English Language and Composition exam, as well as some of the authors we will be studying this year. As AP students studying language and composition, your purpose is not to study the novel as a work of fiction or the nonfiction work as a source of information, but as masterpieces of language. Your purpose for reading is to discover which elements of language these authors use and to what effect. You are ultimately studying style and the components that comprise it. Style involves the author's choice and arrangement of words in sentences (diction and syntax), the use of sensory and/or figurative language, the tone and the mood. Look for such things as length and complexity of the sentences; the use of words that are unusual, sophisticated or colloquial, and the use of elements such as allusion and irony.

All assignments are due on the first full day of school. Be prepared for an exam during the first week of school which may include identification, quotations, discussion and analysis. This can only be accomplished by READING the books. Online plot summaries are a fine supplement but CANNOT be substituted for the book if you wish to be successful in this Course. Failure to submit the summer assignment on the FIRST FULL DAY of class is probably not the way you want to start the year and/or introduce yourself to me.

Enjoy the summer - Dziuk

Read the excerpt below on “Why to Annotate a Book.” We will be using this system throughout the year.

Due to our unique situation at the end of this past school year, I have modified the summer homework. Carefully Read and Annotate both To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee AND Into the Wild by Jon Krakauer. You will be tested on both of these books within the first week or two of school. I WILL BE CHECKING BOOKS FOR ANNOTATIONS. THEY SHOULD BE BUSY!!! By this I mean they should be full of the literary and rhetorical devices that you encounter. Obviously, this does not mean that EVERY page will have a ton of information. Still, if you notice any literary or rhetorical strategies, make note of it. Questions within the margins are also very appropriate and necessary.

Also, please define (IN YOUR OWN WORDS) every term. This will be your only “written” assignment. You will know these terms frontwards and back by October. Your can simply copy and paste the terms and type in the definitions OR handwrite the assignment. Either way, again, please make the definitions something YOU can understand.
Annotating Books

Why annotate a book?

From the looks of a lot of home libraries I've seen, it would be presumptuous of me to start right in with "how to annotate a book." I might as well start in with "how to destroy your garden." Most people would never mark a book. Most people teach their children not to color in books. (I think that coloring books are meant to wean us of this habit. They're a kind of nicotine patch for preschoolers.) Schoolchildren must lug around books all day and read them, but they must never mark in them. At the end of the school year, students are fined if the books have marks. So we have a nation that equates marking in books with sin and shame.

To most adults, I think, books are rarefied or holy, perhaps too holy to write in. Books crouch on shelves like household gods, keeping ignorance at bay. But the presence of a book may have nothing to do with its impact on its owner. A lot of people never really get mad at a book. Few people ever throw a book, kiss a book, cry over a book, or reread a page in a book more than once or twice if that. Some people never use a dictionary to find out what a big word in a book means. As a species, people don't interact with books much.

I'm not suggesting that you mark every book you own, any more than I would suggest that my dog mark every tree he sniffs. But you should be free to mark up most books in the most worthwhile core of your collection. My dog has his favorites, and so should you.

Marking books (also known as annotating books) is one of the biggest skills you'll learn in AP Language this year, so you'll need to annotate the books and other texts you read for AP Language.

Why annotate a book? I annotate a book for four reasons. First, I annotate a book to create trails like the first person to hike through a particular forest. In AP Language, we'll read our texts more than once. During my second reading, my first reading's marginal comments and summaries quickly give me the gist of my first reading so I can take full benefit of my second. It's like I've blazed a trail for my future self.

Second, I annotate a book to interact with the writer - to hold up my end of the conversation. Without annotating, books are like lectures. I make reading a conversation instead by jotting down my reactions as well as new thinking a passage leads me to.

Third, I annotate a book to learn what the book teaches. (To return to my dog and the trees, you might say I annotate to establish territory.) By the time I break in certain books, I've gone beyond just the book's facts and opinions. I've learned more about subjects that interest me, and maybe I've learned more about myself. By annotating, the book becomes my territory. In fact, the book becomes part of me in some way.

Finally, I annotate my books to learn to write, or at least to learn how a book was written. My improvement in writing and in literary analysis involves close readings of writers I admire. There are patterns in the use of nouns, pronouns, verbs and other parts of speech; there are patterns in syntax and insentence variation; and there are patterns in sound devices, such as alliteration and assonance. I mark these with different symbols or colors, and I connect these dots. Patterns emerge, and style emerges from patterns. To read like a writer, I have to annotate like one, too.

How to annotate a book

Speaking of style you'll develop your own annotation style very quickly. But like a writing style, your annotating style can always be improved even if your style works for you. In AP Language, you'll be required to annotate in certain ways because those ways help everyone. Here are some ideas to improve your annotating.

First off, let's be clear: where does one annotate? In the book's text and in its margins. Interlineations are notes you insert between the text's lines (difficult to do in most books). Marginalia are notes you write in the text's margins.
Use marks. Use question marks to show what is unclear or confusing. Use exclamation marks or smiley faces to show your agreement or delight. Invent other marks with their own significance!

Marginal comments serve many purposes. Summarizing a passage's information in the margins can help you find information quickly and can help you go beyond a first-draft reading quickly the next time you read a passage. (Summarizing in the margins means you'll never accidentally separate your summaries from the book summarized, as you might if you wrote your summaries in a notebook or somewhere else.) Stating your agreements and disagreements with the text helps keep your reading more conversational and may give you material for use in later assignments - essays and class discussions, for instance. Reflecting on associations you're making with the text • associations such as other books and movies, personal memories, and current events the text reminds you of - makes the reading more personal and more valuable to you in the long run. Your book's margins may begin to resemble a shorthand journal or diary! Associations, such as a song, a dream, or a stray memory, may seem random, but they may carry more psychic weight than you may realize at first. When you connect the dots during a subsequent reading, those connections can be powerful!

Highlight, bracket, or underline text you think will be the most significant to you when you read those pages again later. Consider labeling the text that you highlighted, bracketed, or underlined: you'd be leaving a better trail for yourself for subsequent readings.

Circle words you're not familiar with, look them up, and write their definitions in the margins beside them. Consider creating on a blank page in the book's front or back matter a running glossary complete with the page numbers where the new words can be found in context.

Mark and label a work's literary and rhetorical devices. This will assist you in any assignment involving literary analysis by helping you to discover how the author gets across his material. It may also lead to an appreciation of the writer's craft that could improve your own writing style! You may wish to use different shapes (triangles, rectangles, ovals) or colors to mark different literary devices. Draw a quick legend to later remind yourself of what each shape or color stands for.

Make impromptu graphic organizers - tables, diagrams, and the like - in the margins to summarize your understanding of complicated passages. That way, you won't have to learn the material all over again in subsequent readings.

Cross-reference topics and ideas that recur in the text. If you're interested in references to tragedy in a book about the history of theater, for instance, write the page number of the most important text on tragedy in the margins beside the book's other references to tragedy. That most important reference to tragedy would also be a place to jot down the page numbers where all of the other references to tragedy you've discovered can be found. (You might even put letters such as T, M, or B after those page numbers to indicate that the information is at the top, middle or bottom of the page in question.) You'll be able to quickly find related material the next time you use the book.
Complete List of Terms for AP Language and Composition

Allegory:
Alliteration:
Allusion:
Anaphora:
Antithesis:
Aphorism:
Appeals to... authority, emotion, logic:
Apostrophe:
Assonance:
Asyndeton:
Attitude:
Begging the question:
Canon:
Chiasmus:
Colloquial:
Conceit:
Connotation:
Consonance:
Critique:
Deductive reasoning:
Dialect:
Diction:
Didactic:
Elegy:
Epistrophe:
Epitaph:
Ethos:
Eulogy:
Euphemism:
Exposition:
Tone:
Voice:
Zeugma: