

Summer Reading – English 5-6AP 2009-2010

The AP Language and Composition exam focuses primarily on nonfiction and the rhetorical strategies a writer uses to develop ideas. You will be tested on your ability to analyze nonfiction selections and to construct a persuasive argument; therefore, we have developed the summer reading list and activities below. These books are available at the public library or can be purchased at local bookstores. ***A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson is required.** You also need to choose any one of the books from the list below.

The Right Stuff

Fast Food Nation

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Tom Wolfe

Eric Schlosser

Maya Angelou

You will be expected to keep a dialectic journal with at least thirty entries for EACH book. These quotations should show a careful reading of the entire book. (Look at the requirements and example below for details.) **Both dialectic journals will be due the first day back to school, Monday August 17th.** You will be tested over both books during the first week of the school year, and you will also write an in-class essay in which you correctly incorporate quotations or parts of quotations from your journal into your response using MLA style documentation. You will attach your completed journal to your essay when you turn it in; therefore, do not use a spiral to keep this journal. Also during the first semester, you will be asked to decide on an aspect of one of the books you read to develop into a research paper, using the book as one of your sources.

Dialectic Journal

Divide your sheet down the middle. In the left-hand column, you will write a quotation from the novel that strikes you as being particularly noteworthy in some way. This does NOT have to be a conversation but should be something that gives insight into the plot, characters, setting, themes, or other literary elements of the novel. Be sure to include the page number on which you found the quotation because this will be required in your parenthetical documentation for your in-class essay. In the right-hand column, you will add your own commentary about why you chose this quotation, how it fits with the rest of the book, what it made you think about, what it shows about characters, setting, themes, or what literary terms you think it especially exemplifies. You should have a minimum of 30 journal entries that ***show honesty, integrity, quality of thinking and maturity of original thought as well as completion on the entire novel.*** In order to receive an A on your journal, your commentary responses must be at least five sentences each. Study the example below.

Quotation

“Floyd’s granny was sitting in her lawn chair next to me looking right into the camera with the same flat expression mother had, as though she could see something farther on and out of sight” (King 216).

*Notice that the period follows the documentation.

Commentary

(This shows that) Will recognized the depths of other people around him. His mother had been a strong focus in his life, and although he may have taken her for granted when he was a child, he does, as an adult, begin to appreciate both her pain and her strength. He is even beginning to see what it is that is “farther on and out of sight.” (This also shows that) Will himself is a rich, full character who, through his own insight, can see deeply into people. Perhaps this is what makes him so tolerant. Will’s struggle to understand himself and his own relationships continues.

*The commentary carries more weight in grading than the quote selection.

On the reverse, you will find the scoring rubric used for all Honors and AP writing. You must score at least “6” to remain in the program.

9-8

- Excellent use of thoughtfully chosen, apt, and specific concrete details and references to the text

- Response to the prompt and/or topic is cogent (convincing); insightful, and perceptive commentary and interpretation--free of plot summary; ideas are expressed with clarity and skill; skillfully addresses the “what,” the “how,” and the “why” in the prompt.
- Well organized with careful development; excellent thesis; logically ordered, strong conclusion; smooth transitions (not “First...Second...)
- Well-written, with pleasing sentence variety, sound sentence structure (no fragments, run-ons), precise and fresh diction (word choice) Uses third person (if necessary) and few “to be” verbs.
- Virtually no errors in conventions such as spelling, grammar, usage, and mechanics.

A 9 essay is above the pack--fresh, sophisticated, marked with stylistic finesse.

7-6

- Effectively uses well-chosen and specific concrete details and references to the text
- Commentary and analysis are thoughtful and convincing, but less insightful and less developed than 9-8. Effectively addresses the “what” and the “how,” but may miss the “why.”
- Sound organization, intelligent, but less effective thesis, logically ordered, effective conclusion, good use of transitions.
- Well-written, with some sentence variety; good sentence structure, high-level and varied diction. Uses third person (if appropriate) .
- Few errors in conventions--spelling, grammar, usage, and mechanics.

A 7 paper will have more developed analysis and development and have better control over sentence structure, diction, and conventions. A 6 is a “safe” paper; carefully done, but needs more.

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- Contains and uses concrete details and textual references correctly, but it may be superficial, obvious, and/or vague
- Commentary is generic, but contains some analysis. Writing displays writer’s ideas in an overly generalized fashion.
- Paper is organized, adequate thesis, but may not address the complexity of the question; logically ordered, adequate conclusion, contains transitions
- Little sentence variety, but adequate sentence structure; diction is adequate and correct, but may be repetitive or generic. May lapse into inappropriate voice (ex. going from 3rd person to 1st)
- May have some, but not serious, errors in conventions-- spelling, grammar, usage, mechanics

A 5 paper meets the assignment, but seems general and mechanical

4-3

- Contains some supporting evidence, but is weak, paraphrased, vague, or inaccurate.
- Analysis and commentary are weak, misguided, and/or inaccurate and unclear. Response paraphrase and plot summary opposed to analysis. Writing does address the topic and conveys the writer’s ideas, but is underdeveloped. Response fails to address the question adequately.
- Paper shows some sense of organization, imprecise thesis or merely a restatement of the question; ideas may drift from or are not connected to the thesis; weak conclusion; may lack transitions and topic sentences.
- Little sentence variety; sentence structure errors, generic and/or repetitive diction-- overuse or misuse of “I” and/or “you”
- Weak control over conventions--spelling, grammar, usage, mechanics

A 3 paper compounds the weakness of a 4: weaker writing skills, less organization, misinterpretations, inadequate development, serious omissions

2-1

- Very little, if any, concrete detail and textual support; if present, it is unacceptably vague
- Plot summary and/or paraphrase substitute for commentary and analysis; some attempt to answer the question, but with very little clarity or coherence
- Lack of control over organization and development; may ramble; thesis is weak or nonexistent; a restatement of the question or absent altogether
- Little sentence variety; may have distracting errors in sentence structure and diction
- Weak control and distracting errors in conventions-- spelling, grammar, usage, mechanics

A 1 paper is unacceptably brief or incoherently long, full of mechanical errors, and/or missed the focus of the topic

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F A response that is no more than a reference to the task