

Welcome to AP Language and Composition! This is an exciting class that will ask you to look closely and question the world around you as you make your way through a variety of nonfiction readings. We have designed this summer reading assignment to give you an introduction to the type of reading you will experience and the degree of close reading you will do in the course.

Please make a careful selection of ONE of the following books and get your parents' approval, as some books do contain mature and/or sensitive material. We selected the following books based on their artistic merit and the author's experience and research. These books represent only the authors' opinions and are not necessarily those of your teachers or the Central Bucks School District.

**\*This assignment is due on the first day of school. Even if your class is scheduled for the second semester, you still must turn in your work to your teacher on the first day of the school year. Seek out your teacher to submit your work. If the school year begins in an online platform, you will need to email your assignment to your teacher by 3:00 PM on the first day of instruction this fall.**

### NONFICTION BOOK SELECTIONS

- ❑ *Unfair: The New Science of Criminal Injustice* by Adam Benforado: Written by a University of Pennsylvania professor, this book examines factors (personal history, angles of camera footage, eyewitness testimony) that often inadvertently create bias in the legal system. Students who were interested in the *Making a Murderer* documentary or whose attention has been captured by the spring protests for racial equality across the country will find this particularly compelling.
- ❑ *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy--and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood--and What That Means for the Rest of Us* by Jean Twenge: Examining the social and work habits as well as belief systems of Gen Z (those born between the mid-90s to mid-2000s), this book will provide an in-depth look at YOUR generation.
- ❑ *On the Clock: What Low-Wage Work Did to Me and How It Drives America Insane* by Emily Guendelsberger: A journalist goes undercover to experience three separate low-wage jobs in an Amazon fulfillment center, a call center, and a McDonald's. Guendelsberger's account of the financial, physical, and emotional harm that accompanies these jobs is searing. Do know that raw reporting does include harsh profanity, in case that conflicts with your reading preferences or values.
- ❑ *Pandemic: Tracking Contagions, from Ebola to Cholera and Beyond* by Sonia Shah: Scientists agree that a pathogen is likely to cause a global pandemic in the near future. But which one? And how? Shah explores the origins of contagions, drawing parallels between cholera, one of history's most deadly and disruptive pandemic-causing pathogens, and the new diseases that stalk humankind today. By delving into the convoluted science, strange politics, and checkered history of one of the world's deadliest diseases, *Pandemic* reveals what the next global contagion might look like— and what we can do to prevent it. Please note that this piece was published PRIOR to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- ❑ *Andy Warhol Was a Hoarder: Inside the Minds of History's Great Personalities* by Claudia Kalb: Was Andy Warhol a hoarder? Did Einstein have autism? This meticulously researched look at the evolution of mental health gives readers a glimpse into the lives of high-profile historic figures through the lens of modern psychology. From Marilyn Monroe's borderline personality disorder to Charles Darwin's anxiety, Kalb provides compelling insight into a broad range of maladies, using historical records and interviews with leading mental health experts, biographers, sociologists, and other specialists.
- ❑ *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson: A Harvard-educated lawyer, Stevenson recounts his experiences defending those unfairly convicted and sentenced to death row as well as children who, sentenced as adults, face life in prison. With his belief in equity and the commitment to a need for change to the justice system, Stevenson asks his readers to question what a nation's system of punishment says about its very nature and character.

## ★ ASSIGNMENT

Typically we require that students annotate their selected book with sticky notes. However, due to the current circumstances caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, whether you obtain a physical copy or a digital/e-reader copy of your book is up to you, and all of you will complete your assignment digitally by typing up your annotations instead.

The expectation of at least 20 annotations through the entirety of your reading is the minimum (20 typed notes that include page numbers/specifics/analysis). While bullet points/fragments are acceptable, remember to attach a meaning/significance rather than just identifying an element.

These annotations should be typed up chronologically (meaning that your digital “sticky notes” should be typed up in the order in which they take place in the text and should include either the direct quotation to which you are responding (followed by the write-up of your response), or, if you are referring to something more general in the text, should include a brief summary or paraphrase of what it is you are responding to (followed by the write-up of your response).

Utilize the areas/techniques below to construct your responses, and be sure have several responses from each; there should not be too many in any one category at the expense of the others. **SEE THE EXAMPLE FOLLOWING THIS LIST.**

- READER RESPONSE:** Consider insightful, sophisticated reactions:
  - Your reactions/emotional responses (humor, surprise, sadness, anger, frustration, disappointment, tension/suspense, disgust, criticism, disagreement, confusion)
  - Your questions or lack of understanding or doubts (ask “Why?”)
  - Your revelations: when “things” become clear to you, when you make links
  - Similarities to other works: “Reminds me of...”
  - Writer’s craft—passages that strike you artistically/aesthetically and why
- SPEAKER:** Think about who the writer is and how what he/she knows is communicated. This should help you decide the author’s credibility. Consider the author’s background (ethnicity, education, location, religion, personal experiences, etc.)
- OCCASION:** Consider what has occurred historically, politically, socially, or even personally that may have prompted the writer to address this topic.
- AUDIENCE:** Think about what kind of person or people the author intended as the audience and whether or not the author is able to connect with that audience effectively.
- PURPOSE:** Think about the author’s purpose in writing this book and whether or not he/she is effective in that purpose. Did the writer want to: Inform? Persuade? Argue? Defend? Criticize? Entertain?
- SUBJECT:** Think about what the book is discussing and whether or not the author demonstrates why this subject is important. Consider how the author develops the sides/complications of the issues.
- ARGUMENT:** Think about the author’s address of claims and counterclaims, including support for various perspectives. Consider how the author argues by example, by comparison, or by argument type (like evaluation, cause/effect, definition, policy).

**SAMPLE PASSAGE** from “Pop-A-Shot” by Sarah Vowell:

Along with voting, jury duty, and paying taxes, goofing off is one of the central obligations of American citizenship. So when my friends Joel and Stephen and I play hooky from our jobs in the middle of the afternoon to play Pop-A-Shot in a room full of children, I like to think we are not procrastinators; we are patriots pursuing happiness.

**SAMPLE RESPONSE:**

- Tone=mocking, sarcastic, self-deprecating
  - ✓ Author fakes importance of the game by linking it to real responsibilities, like voting → mocks Americans’ tendency to “goof”
  - ✓ Links playing “hooky” to patriotic duty: mocks herself for choosing fun over responsibility

Enjoy this summer and your preparations for AP Language and Composition! Remember that this assignment will mark the first impression you will make on your teacher. Give the assignment the attention and detail that it warrants, and **be sure to have your work with you/deliver your work to your teacher on the FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.**

*The AP Language Team*

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