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 non-fiction 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. Our goal is always to evaluate and analyze how authors create meaning and then to establish your own reactions and beliefs in response to their opinion. It is important to read with an open, but critical mind and to never take a writer’s word without thinking and investigating.

This class requires you to delve deeply into the readings, to question the writer’s intent, purpose and bias, and to grapple with the issues the writer presents. With this in mind, choose TWO of the following books to read this summer. Choose one from list one and one from list two.

**Do not wait until the last minute to read these books.** You will not be able to read on the intense level the assignment requires if you wait until August or, (gasp!) December, to read them. Even if you have this course in the second semester, read the books in the summer. Start early and give yourself enough time to fully analyze the readings. **Read the ENTIRE book, including the preface and afterword.**

Please make careful selections and get your parents’ approval. We selected the following books based on their artistic merit, the variety of topics and styles and the author’s experience and research. Keep in mind that these authors **write about a wide variety of topics that are often controversial. They write passionately about topics of their personal interest and convictions.** These books represent only their authors’ opinions and are not necessarily those of your teachers or the Central Bucks School District. Be sure that you take time exploring these books before making your final choices. Remember that you do not need to agree with an author’s opinion to appreciate their craft of writing. **Choose TWO books total- one from each list:**

**LIST ONE:**

- *Where You Go is Not Who You’ll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania* - Frank Bruni
- *David and Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits and the Art of Battling Giants* - Malcolm Gladwell
- *Cinderella Ate My Daughter: Dispatches from the Front Lines of the New Girlie-Girl Culture* - Peggy Orenstein
- *Stiff: The Curious Life of Human Cadavers* - Mary Roach
- *The Geeks Shall Inherit the Earth: Popularity, Quirk Theory, and Why Outsiders Thrive After High School* - Alexandra Robbins
- *The Happiness Advantage: The Seven Principles of Positive Psychology That Fuel Success and Performance at Work* - Shawn Achor

**LIST TWO:**

- *Columbine* - David Cullen
- *The Soul of an Octopus: A Surprising Exploration into the Wonder of Consciousness* - Sy Montgomery
- *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* - Rebecca Skloot
- *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* - Bryan Stevenson
- *Gang Leader for a Day: A Rogue Socialist Takes to the Streets* - Sudhir Vankatesh
- *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption* - Laura Hillenbrand
- *Between the World and Me* - Ta-Nehisi Coates

**NOTE:** Students who choose this book are also required to print and annotate several related articles. These articles are posted as PDF files on the English department website. If students are unable to print these articles they should choose another title.
Assignment: Annotate the book as you read. You can do this with sticky notes or directly on the book if you have purchased it. You may highlight or underline, but you MUST comment next to it. You will need to be able to turn in your book and use it in class at the start of the course. Please note that you should show evidence of the types of notes below. Your notations should move beyond personal comments and more into analysis of how the piece is crafted. This should extend your reading time, but should not double it. The purpose is to help you engage in the reading in a way to prepare you for rhetorical analysis, argument and synthesis and to show evidence of that engagement on the page.

You should be prepared to turn in your books on the first day of class. You should also expect a test and an assessment on your books as directed by your teacher at the beginning of the course. If you read and engage with the text through marginal notes as you read, you will be prepared even if you have the course second semester.

Enjoy this summer and your preparations for AP Language and Composition!
The C.B. West AP Language Team

Use the following list to help direct your notations as you read (consider using it as a bookmark so that you can refer to it when you don’t know what to write):

1. Reader Response: Be able to trace your reactions, to ask questions in class, to remind yourself when you find answers to earlier questions. This should help note the writer’s effectiveness.

   MAKE NOTE OF:
   • 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...”
   • Wonderful writing: passages that strike you artistically/aesthetically and why

2. Speaker: Think about who the writer is and what he/she knows is communicated. This should help you decide the author’s credibility.

   MAKE NOTE OF:
   • Introductory facts: author backgrounds and relationship to the topic, bias, etc.
   • Ethos- how the author establishes credibility and character on the given topic
   • Note words and language that indicate the author’s attitude or tone and where it shifts or changes and why
   • When the author directly or indirectly states how he/she feels
   • Note key lines that stand out as crucial to the author’s argument

3. Occasion: Think about what caused the author to write about this topic and whether or not it is a valid reason.

   MAKE NOTE OF:
   • The author’s reasons for writing- what is the motivation?
   • Historical, political, social issues surrounding the topic
   • The author’s personal reasons as well as the greater world/national reasons for the piece
   • Evidence of views characteristic of the time period and culture surrounding the work
   • Descriptions of class judgments, racism, gender biases, stereotypes, etc.
4. **Audience**: Think about what kind of person or people the author intended as the audience and whether the author is able to connect with that audience effectively.

**MAKE NOTE OF:**
- Evidence of who (and it can be more than one) the author is trying to reach.
- Where the author directly or indirectly address a specific audience
- Any “Call to Action” that the author is issuing to the reader.
- Pathos - where the author appeals to your sense of emotion through anecdotes and figurative language

5. **Purpose**: Think about the author’s purpose in writing this book and whether or not they are effective in that purpose.

**MAKE NOTE OF:**
- Specific reasons for writing: informing, persuading, arguing, refuting, exemplifying - but make sure you note specifics.
- Logos: the author’s appeal to reason. Examine how he/she makes the reader believe in that purpose.

6. **Subject**: Think about what the book is discussing and whether or not the author shows why this subject is important.

**MAKE NOTE OF:**
- Elements related to the problem and issue
- How the author develops or deepens the aspects of the problem/issue
- How the author shows the complications related to the subject and the implication of it to you, the nation, the world, etc.

7. **Authorial Devices and Structures in the Argument**: Think about the author’s techniques in delivery and how effective author’s methods are for rhetorical purposes - the use of subtleties, patterns, style, structure, etc.

**MAKE NOTE OF:**
- Changes in point of view/emphasis
- Crucial language/vocabulary - not just a word that you don’t understand, but one that seems crucial to understanding the argument - look these up.
- Stylistic techniques: irony, satire, humor, exaggeration, repetition/patterns, possible symbols, significant metaphors and other notable literary and rhetorical devices
- How the author’s structure of the argument/book influence the reader and relate to the subject, audience and purpose