

Summer Reading Assignment

AP English Language and Composition

Welcome to AP Language and Composition! In preparation for our study of American literature next year, I am including the following directions for your summer reading assignment. This summer you will read a memoir by an American author and annotate as you read in order to complete a short writing reflection. This assignment will be **due on the first day that you return to school**. (Please be prepared to submit your paper via Turnitin.)

A memoir gives us the chance to climb into other people's skin. We experience what they experienced as they remember experiencing it. No two people experience the same event the same way, but that doesn't mean that one person's interpretation of the same event is any less valid. Each individual brings their own experiences and preconceived notions to the table and that often defines how they are going to respond to a particular situation. Consequently, the more you understand people the better you will get along with them. That doesn't mean that you will agree with them on everything. You may not even agree with them on most things. But if you recognize them as human beings with valid life experiences then you may be able to figure out how to talk to them and how to respectfully persuade them to your point of view. And if you can agree to disagree and still have a good relationship with a person, you will have found a way to get along with just about everyone while maintaining a strong hold on your beliefs.

Your summer reading assignment is to read a memoir from the list provided and complete a writing assignment.

Step one: Select one of the following books, read it, and annotate it (at least 75 annotations **throughout** the book). **Note: Highlighting/underlining alone is not annotating!**

When annotating your book, consider the following:

- Highlight **and label**:
 - Examples of literary elements: foreshadowing, irony, metaphor, personification, etc.
 - Important events in the author's life
 - Character descriptions/changes
 - Vocabulary that needs defining (define in the margins)
- Write in the margins:
 - Summary of paragraphs/chapters
 - Predictions of what you think might be coming
 - Formulate opinions (agree or disagree with the author)
 - Make connections to anything: other texts, dates, opinions, people, etc.
 - Identify and analyze the author's
 - a. point of view (narrator's perspective)
 - b. tone (attitude toward subject)
 - c. diction (style of speaking and word choice)
 - d. syntax (sentences and their patterns)

Step two: After you finish reading, write at least a 600-word summary and personal response to the memoir. Your paper must be typed and follow MLA format. Please be prepared to submit it via Turnitin on our first day of class.

A. In your own words, summarize the book. (This part should be only a couple of paragraphs.)

B. Personal Response (This part should account for most of your paper)

In your personal response you may want to consider the following questions:

- Did you learn anything new?
- Did you make any discoveries about yourself as you read someone else's story?
- If you were in the author's position, what would you do differently?
- Were there any instances in which you felt the author was not being truthful? How did you react to these sections?
- Was there anything that you found especially surprising about the author's story?
- Were there any parts of the book where you would have liked more information?
- What did you particularly like or dislike about the book?

You may use first person for this response.

Book options

Beautiful Boy by David Sheff

Hillbilly Elegy by J.D. Vance

The Other Wes Moore by Wes Moore

Educated by Tara Westover

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou

Note: All of the above books contain varying degrees of challenging content, including profanity, racial slurs, violence, and sexual content. The point of this project is to learn from another's experience. We are sinful human beings and that makes life messy. We learn from each other when we share in each other's messes and God calls us to care for each other despite the mess, directing people to the One who wipes their slate clean.