

SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT 2018-2019
AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

Welcome to AP English Language and Composition! This is a college-level course focused on the writing process and on analyzing nonfiction texts. This class requires you to delve deeply into true-life readings, to question the writer's intention and bias, and to grapple with complex, contemporary issues. Please note that some of the titles in this course depict mature and/or controversial topics appropriate to college-level discourse.

This summer reading assignment (adapted from some online sources) is designed to give you an introduction to the type of reading and thinking you will experience throughout the course. You can acquire your books from the Mahwah Public Library, Barnes and Noble, Amazon, or another bookstore. If there are concerns about obtaining the books, please see your current English teacher before the end of the school year.

Over the summer, students entering AP Language will complete the following:

1. **Read *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell.** In this book, Gladwell challenges our belief of the “self-made man.” He argues that superstars “are invariably the beneficiaries of hidden advantages and extraordinary opportunities and cultural legacies that allow them to learn and work hard and make sense of the world in ways others cannot.”
2. **Read *Into Thin Air* by John Krakauer.** This book is the personal account of the deadliest season in the history of Mount Everest told by an acclaimed journalist and accomplished climber. Krakauer examines what it is about Everest that has compelled so many people – including himself – to throw caution to the wind and willingly subject themselves to so much danger, hardship, and expense.
3. **Annotate the texts while you are reading.** Your annotations may be directly on the pages (if you own the book), on Post-its, or in the notebook you plan to use in class in September (include corresponding page numbers). Make note of anything you find interesting, confusing, or significant. Also make notes on the following topics as they will be the basis of discussions and assignments once the year begins:
 - How does each author define success and failure? How do characters cope with adversity?
 - How and why do characters seek the unknown?
 - What is the author's overall argument and what evidence does he use to support himself?
 - How does the author organize his ideas? More specifically, how and why does the author use any of the following organizational structures at different points: examples, cause/effect, description, narration, and/or comparison/contrast?
 - Who is the author's intended audience? How do you know?
 - What rhetorical devices (diction, syntax, tone, figurative language, etc.) is the author using? Why? What is the effect of these devices at different moments in the text?
 - When and why does the author use appeals to logos (logic), ethos (credibility), and/or pathos (emotion) to enhance his argument?
 - Why and how does the author use footnotes? (Make sure you look at the footnotes in both books as this is useful not only for these texts but for our class as a whole.)

Once the school year begins, students will complete the following:

- **A graded Socratic Seminar** focused on the given analysis questions using evidence from the texts as support.
- **An in-class argument essay** focused on the given analysis questions using evidence from the texts as support. (This type of writing will be introduced and practiced during the first few weeks of school.)
- Informal classroom discussions and lessons throughout the month of September.

Your reading and annotations are due on Friday, September 14. It is highly recommended that you finish reading the texts prior to the start of the school year as we will be beginning right away with additional assignments/texts. If you have any questions or concerns about the assignments, please email Ms. Cording directly at ecording@mahwah.k12.nj.us. Happy reading!