

Congratulations to you for choosing an Advanced Placement English Language and Composition course. Below you will find your summer reading and summer writing assignments. Presumably, by registering for an Advanced Placement English Language and Composition, you have some passion for or a strong interest in reading and writing. Or, perhaps, you—in anticipation of entering college—have a desire to improve your reading and writing skills, and, in recognizing the disciplined labor needed to improve in any facet of life, are excited by the challenge of a college level course. Therefore, I am sure you welcome an opportunity to read *and write* over the summer. I have prepared some tasks which I find both useful in preparing you for the rigors of what we will do on a daily basis in our course and useful in providing me a sample of your best work. I believe you need to be given a fair representation of the course and the sorts of conversations we have about language and meaning. Also, I need to be given a fair representation of your work, so we can begin immediately the labor of moving your writing and reading skill toward a college sophomore's writing level. This AP course, you should know, recreates (and, with a successful score on the AP test, usually replaces) college freshman writing courses. This is quite the responsibility for high school juniors and, I might add, their teacher. So, let me again congratulate you for wanting this challenge. I look forward to meeting you and reading your work.

**Task One: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass.***

You will need to purchase and read *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. Please buy the Signet Classics edition. Your task will be to annotate your copy as you read the book. I have attached an essay that gives direction on how to “mark up” a book. When you return to school, I will take a look at your book. We'll see how your annotated copy matches up to mine. You will then be asked to explain some of your choices.

**Task Two: *Slaughterhouse Five***

You will read Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*. An in-class writing assignment will ask you to explain and elaborate on the significance of a particular line from that novel.

**Task Three: Magazine Close Reading**

The magazine close reading will allow you to create a reading and writing portfolio. It will collect all tasks described below. The portfolio will collect all the items you choose to read closely and your responses to those items. Collate this material in a three-prong folder. Decorate the cover as an introduction to you, your interests, your goals, your personality, but do not put your name on the front cover.

Purchase an issue of *Time* or *Newsweek*, dated between June 1<sup>st</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008. Choose an issue that has a cover story that looks to be of interest to you. You will take apart this magazine. Make the cover of the magazine the first page of your portfolio. Add below the title of the magazine “As read by [your name].” Add to the cover of the

magazine a photo of yourself and any other additions you want so as to make the cover of the magazine “your own.” In the portfolio you should place the pages you are speaking about in the folder followed by your response to them. For all articles you read, circle words you don’t know. Write a brief definition in the margin. As you read, underline those sentences you find particularly well-written, compelling, impressive, or thought-provoking.

Type all responses. Use 12 point Times New Roman font. Use standard 1” margins and double space. Be specific in all responses, and be clear. Each task probably requires at least a page for a complete response, with the cover story requiring more. This exercise is designed to evaluate the care of your reading and the detail of your writing.

Item #1: Read the cover story. Provide a summary of the article. Provide your own response to the issues addressed in the article as a whole. What did you learn? How could knowing the information provided help anyone? What are the benefits of having read this? How important is the information? Also, what is the article’s most compelling point? Cite the sentence or passage you believe is the most thought-provoking and respond to it specifically.

Item #2: Browse the entire magazine. What is the best advertisement? Tell me why it is effective. Direct my attention to—and describe—each detail that contributes to its effectiveness.

Item #3: Locate the political cartoon in the issue (or one of the political cartoons in the issue). Explain it (You may have to do some research). Is it funny? How so, or why not? Is it true? How so, or why not?

Item #4: Find the article (other than the cover story) you believe to be the most *relevant* to you (and/or your generation). Summarize it. Explain why it is useful to you and how you can use the information.

Item #5: Find the accompanying photograph or illustration (a photograph or illustration used specifically to support an article) that you believe is the most effective. You should include it (and the article it accompanies) in your portfolio, but still describe it the best you can. (If it’s a part of one of the previous articles you’ve included, you can direct my attention to it.) What story is it accompanying? What story is the photograph/illustration telling if it were standing alone as an isolated photograph/illustration? How does it—in the context of supporting an article—add to an understanding of the accompanying article? How does it aid the article’s tone or mood? What point in the article does it underscore (or emphasize)?

Item #6: Find the photograph or illustration you believe is the most moving (that is, touching, heartfelt, disturbing, frustrating). Describe it. Why are you moved by it? Is it because of the content of the photo alone? Or is it the way the photograph is taken, as well? Explain.

Item #7: These magazines include full page editorials (usually located near the front) and full page essays (typically as the last text in a magazine). There are usually three. Read one of these. Complete a SOAPS analysis: What is the Subject? What is the Occasion? Who is the Audience? What is the Purpose? Who is the Speaker? (That is, what is the subject matter—main ideas and supporting points—of the text? What has occasioned the piece, or why is it being written now? Who is the intended audience, or who does the writer hope is listening? What does the writer hope to accomplish, or for what changes is he or she calling? What sort of person does the writer strike you as, or what seems to be some of their beliefs about how people generally act or how the world usually works?)

Item #8: Locate one of the reviews in the magazine (usually as the magazine concludes, typically about movies or books, sometimes new technology, sometimes music, television, or other arts) and perform a SOAPS analysis.

Item #9: From the photographs in the magazine create a photo collage (5" X 7"). Give the photo collage a one-word title.

Item #10: From the photographs in the magazine create another photo collage. Give this photo collage a four-word title: Adjective- Noun- Verb- "me" (The "me" here refers to you, i.e. "New technology scares me.")

Item #11: Find what you believe to be the single most worthless page (or *the least worthwhile* page) in the magazine (perhaps, the back cover) and fold it into an origami bird. <http://www.wikihow.com/Make-an-Origami-Flying-Bird>. Feel free to fold it into any other origami creation if you prefer. Invent some way to secure your origami to the portfolio.

Creatively solve any problems you come across when reading these directions. This, I should say, is an experiment for which there are bound to be some difficulties and confusions. Please be prepared to share your experience with these directions.

Be prepared to present your materials the first day of class.

Happy reading,

Mr. Giddens