Dear Future AP English Language and Composition Students,

Welcome to AP English Language and Composition! I am thrilled to be able to offer this class to you next year. You are embarking on a wonderful adventure in writing and reading through the canon of American Literature and Letters. This will be a challenging course, but you will come out of it with some excellent skills that you can carry with you through life. In order to prepare for next year, you will need to complete the following assignments. You should give yourself some time to rest and refresh, then begin reading these texts by mid-summer.

All students will read *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne. You will also select additional books from the list below to total a minimum of 1,000 pages of reading. I recommend that you select *at least one non-fiction* book, as AP English Language and Composition focuses on non-fiction texts.

While reading *The Scarlet Letter*, you are required to keep a dialectical journal. While reading the other texts, you should practice engaged reading through annotation. If you have any questions about annotation, contact me and I will provide you with resources.

Some excellent choices are listed below.

**Non-fiction**

*Into the Wild* by John Krakauer

*John Adams* byDavid McCullough

*In the Heart of the Sea* by Nathaniel Philbrick

*Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell

*The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls

*Amusing Ourselves to Death* by Neil Postman

*Fast Food Nation* by Eric Schlosser

*The Color of Water: A Black Man’s Tribute to His White Mother* by James McBride  
*Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Book* by Azar Nafisi

*Eats, Shoots, and Leaves* by Lynne Truss

*The Mother Tongue* by Bill Bryson (skip chapter 14 due to content)

*On Writing Well* by William Zinsser

Additionally, you could choose any of the non-fiction books from this list, but please be aware that this list has not been vetted for content. Please select a book that you and your parents are comfortable with. <https://www.westada.org/domain/6356>

**Fiction**

*The Red Badge of Courage* byStephen Crane

*The Guns of August* by Barbara W. Tuchman

*The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway

*A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway

*The Sound and the* Fury byWilliam Faulkner

*Of Mice and Men* byJohn Steinbeck

*The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck

*Beloved* by Toni Morrison

*The Awakening* byKate Chopin

*Moby Dick* byHerman Melville

*Beloved* by Toni Morrison

*The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison

*Song of Solomon* by Toni Morrison

*Sula* by Toni Morrison

*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou

*Their Eyes Were Watching God* byZora Neale Hurston

*The Road* byCormack McCarthy

*All the Pretty Horses* Cormack McCarthy

*Going After Cacciato* byTim O'Brien

*The Things They Carried* by Tim O’Brien

**JOURNALS**

As you read *The Scarlet Letter,* you should annotate as you read each chapter. Then select the most relevant quotes to put in your dialectical journal.

You may use any type of journal you wish: a composition notebook, a spiral-bound notebook, or even a leather-bound journal. You may decorate it any way you wish and make it your own. Make it an intimate place where you can record your ideas.

These journals will consist of quotations to which you respond critically. Please label the chapter and date at the top of each page. Select one quotation or passage for approximately every 15 pages. Respond to the quotations; **focus on the ways in which the author uses language to create an effect.**

* What is it about the language that stands out and makes the passage distinctive?
* What is your reaction to the characters?
* Are there recurring images or themes that stand out?
* What is your personal reaction to the work?

Responses should be developed thoughtfully and intellectually. An “A” journal will contain responses that are approximately 60 words in length and will contain multiple quotes per chapter. The dialectical journals should be constructed in the following manner:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Chapter** | **Date** |
| **Quote** | **Response** |
| “Write the quote from the on the left side of the paper with quote the correct MLA citation” (176).  **You should take a quote approximately every 15 pages.** You can have more than one quote and response per page, and you can use the back of the page. | Your response and analysis of the book should be written on the opposite side of the (same) page. For the RESPONSE column, you have several ways to respond to a text, but you only need to use one way.  • Raise questions about the beliefs and values implied in the text  • Give your personal reactions to the passage  • Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or a character  • Tell what it reminds you of from your own experiences  • Write about what it makes you think or feel  • Argue with or speak to the character or author  **Responses should be approximately 60 words in length.** |

**Your journals will be collected on the second day of class.**