English 11 AP: Language and Composition

2020 Summer Reading Assignment

Summer Reading for students in 11 AP Lang and Comp is a requirement and will be graded for completion credit upon your arrival to school in the fall; essays will be collected during the second week of school.

You are to select one book from [the suggestions list](https://collections.follettsoftware.com/collection/5eab3a58c1fcee0011c909ae?h=65ed37e0439d8dc4af269ca1cf7c30508e2c0e7e939ed1e203f56d61d320320c) ([or pdf version](https://wakefield.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/37/2020/06/2020-Wakefield-AP-Lang-Summer-Reading-Choices.pdf)) and read it. Note: This is a large list of titles to include diverse interests and to account for availability of titles. Not all books are available from Wakefield’s library; please check availability via other resources from list below.

Then select one prompt from the Argumentative Prompts to which you could respond well in a fully composed essay. When developing your essay, incorporate your book as support for your argument.

**Explore these resources for e-book and audio book availability:**

* <https://archive.org/>
* <https://openlibrary.org/>
* from [WHS library’s page](https://wakefield.apsva.us/wakefield-library/): Destiny Discover [this is a great resource to see the list and get a sense of the titles, but not such a good source for reading the books) and MackinVIA
* <https://www.audiobooksync.com/> (available through the end of July; once you download the SORA App, the setup code is: audiobooksync)
* Arlington Public Library uses Overdrive and Libby; download the Apps through the App Store on your laptops. If students do not have an Arlington Public Library Card, they can get one online <https://libsys.arlingtonva.us/selfreg>

Specific expectations for the essay.

* 1.5 pages minimum (typed/printed in hardcopy form)
* Title/author of work under discussion
* Highlighted / identified thesis statement which addresses the prompt
* At least three specific textual references to support your argument

Essays will be collected during the second week of school. This will be a completion grade and will serve as an initial diagnostic for the teacher. Do your best; we recognize that many of you are unused to writing with this degree of complexity at this point. You will be required to revise this essay for a more substantial grade later in the marking period, once we have explored some analytical and literary concepts together.

Each teacher has discretion as to how your work will be further utilized in class, but you may safely assume that activities such as seminar discussions, journals, short writing focuses, application of new lenses or concepts, peer editing, introduction to rubrics, or projects are all possibilities.

AP Language & Composition:

A Collection of Adapted Released

Argumentative Prompts

from College Board

1. In the following passage, E. M. Forster argues that personal relations are more important than causes or patriotism. Read the passage carefully. Then, write an essay agreeing or disagreeing with Forster’s view using evidence from your summer reading.

*I hate the idea of causes, and if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the guts to betray my country. Such a choice may scandalize the modern reader, and he may stretch out his patriotic hand to the telephone at once and ring up the police. It would not have shocked Dante, though. Dante places Brutus and Cassius in the lowest circle of hell because they had chosen to betray their friend Julius Caesar rather than their country Rome.*

2. The first chapter of Ecclesiastes, a book in the Bible, concludes with these words: "For in much wisdom is much grief, and in increase of knowledge is increase of sorrow." Write a carefully reasoned, persuasive essay that defends, challenges, or qualifies this assertion. Use evidence from your summer reading to develop your position.

3. In *The March of Folly*, historian Barbara Tuchman writes:

*Wooden-headedness, the source of self-deception, is a factor that plays a remarkably large role in government. It consists of assessing a situation in terms of preconceived fixed notions while ignoring or rejecting any contrary signs. It is acting according to wish while not allowing oneself to be deflected by the facts.*

Some people would claim that what Tuchman calls wooden-headedness plays a remarkably large role in all organizations and, indeed, in all human affairs. Write a carefully reasoned persuasive essay that defends, challenges, or qualifies this idea about the prevalence of wooden-headedness in human actions and decisions. Use evidence from your summer reading to develop your position.

4. The paragraph below comes from a 1979 essay by expatriate African American writer James Baldwin. Read the paragraph carefully and then write an essay that defends, challenges, or qualifies Baldwin’s ideas about the importance of language as a “key to identity” and to social acceptance. Use specific evidence from your summer reading to develop your position.

*“It goes without saying, then, that language is also a political instrument, means, and proof of power. It is the most vivid and crucial key to identity: It reveals the private identity, and connects one with, or divorces one from, the larger, public, or communal identity. There have been, and are, times, and places, when to speak a certain language could be dangerous, even fatal. Or, one may speak the same language, but in such a way that one’s antecedents are revealed, or (one hopes) hidden. This is true in France, and is absolutely true in England: The range (and reign) of accents on that damp little island make England coherent for the English and totally incomprehensible for everyone else. To open your mouth in England is (if I may use black English) to “put your business in the street”: You have confessed your parents, your youth, your school, your salary, your self-esteem, and alas, your future.”*

5. Contemporary life is marked by controversy. Choose a controversial local, national, or global issue with which you are familiar. Then, using appropriate evidence from your summer reading, write an essay that carefully considers the opposing positions on this controversy and proposes a solution.

6. In many national elections, only a fraction of eligible voters actually cast ballots. For local elections, the voter turnout is often even smaller. To prevent this state of affairs, some countries, such as Australia, make voting compulsory\* for all adults. In a well-written essay that draws upon your summer reading for support, take a position on the issue of compulsory\* voting.

\* required by law

7.

*“Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents which in prosperous circumstances would have lain dormant.”*

**-Horace**

Consider this quotation about adversity from the Roman poet Horace. Then write an essay that defends, challenges, or qualifies Horace's assertion about the role that adversity or political hardship, danger, and/or misfortune plays in developing a person's character. Support your argument with appropriate evidence from your summer reading.

8. The passage below is from *The Worst Years of Our Lives* by Barbara Ehrenreich. Ehrenreich is writing about life in the 1980s. Read the passage carefully and then write an essay in which you support, refute, or qualify Ehrenreich's assertions about television. Support your argument with appropriate evidence from your summer reading.

*Only after many months of viewing did I begin to understand the force that has transformed the American people into root vegetables. If you watch TV for a very long time, day in, day out, you will begin to notice something eerie and unnatural about the world portrayed therein. I don’t mean that it is two-dimensional or lacks a well-developed critique of the capitalist consumer culture or something superficial like that. I mean something so deeply obvious that it’s almost scary: when you watch television, you will see people doing many things—chasing fast cars, drinking lite beer, shooting each other at close range, etc. But you will never see people watching television. Well, maybe for a second, before the phone rings or a brand-new, multiracial adopted child walks into the house. But never really watching, hour after hour, the way real people do. Way back in the beginning of the television era, this was not so strange, because real people actually did many of the things people do on TV, even if it was only bickering with their mothers-in-law about which toilet paper to buy. But modern people, i.e., couch potatoes, do nothing that is ever shown on television (because it is either dangerous or would involve getting up from the couch). And what they do do—watch television—is far too boring to be televised for more than a fraction of a second, not even by Andy Warhol, bless his boredom-proof little heart. So why do we keep on watching?*

9. The first “Buy Nothing Day”—a day on which people are urged to purchase no goods—was organized in Canada in 1992 as a way to increase awareness of excessive consumerism. A “Buy Nothing Day” has been held yearly since then in many nations. An online article, *“Buy Nothing Day: 2006 Press Release,”* urged worldwide acceptance of taking a *“24-hour consumer detox as part of the 14th annual Buy Nothing Day”* in order to *“expose the environmental and ethical consequences of overconsumption.”* Consider the implications of a day on which no goods are purchased. The, write an essay in which you develop a position on the establishment of an annual “Buy Nothing Day”. Support your argument with appropriate evidence from your summer reading.

10. American essayist and social critic H. L. Mencken (1880-1956) wrote, “The average man does not want to be free. He simply wants to be safe.” In a well-written essay, examine the extent to which Mencken’s observation applies to contemporary society, supporting your position with appropriate evidence from your summer reading.