



GRAND OAKS HIGH SCHOOL
CONROE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Students at Grand Oaks High School who enroll in AP Language & Composition are expected to complete a summer reading assignment. Summer reading assignments provide several advantages for students, including maintaining skills over the summer, fostering independent learning, understanding course expectations, creating an initial common framework for discussion and study, supporting college-readiness standards, and promoting lifelong learning. Additionally, students who enroll in an AP Language & Composition course are expected to engage in summer reading as it prepares students for the upcoming school year and creates an initial common framework for classroom discussion and instruction.

Your student is scheduled to take AP Language & Composition for the 2021-2022 school year. For the summer of 2021, students will be required to carefully read **one book** of their choice from the AP Language Nonfiction Book GoodReads List.

We highly encourage all parents to carefully review the titles on this list and discuss them with your student. Please research the choices, and guide your student in making this decision. You may even want to read it with them. Please refer to the following website to select a book:

https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/135697.AP_Lang_Nonfiction_Book_Choices

Students will work to understand these texts through various assignments upon returning to school. However, during the summer months, students should annotate their reading by writing comments and questions on sticky notes, within the book, on paper, or in a Word/Google Doc as explained in the attached document. For these reasons, students will need to have a copy of their book brought to class for several weeks in order to complete in-class assignments.

All students enrolled in AP Language & Composition for the upcoming school year are expected to have the book read and annotations for the book of choice complete prior to the first day of school, August 11, 2021. Since there will be several assignments over the summer reading texts during the first weeks of school, students should come to class prepared to discuss the texts using their notes and personal observations on the first day of class. Thank you for your cooperation and continuing interest in your child's education.

Sincerely,

The AP Language & Composition Team

Annotations

- Annotating a text takes time because it forces you to read actively, think critically, and respond accordingly. You must comment as you read, conversing with the text and providing notes for when you review the material later.
- You must handwrite annotations in blue or black ballpoint ink.
- Your annotations will serve as the basis for class discussions, Socratic Seminars, and in-class writing assignments. The more detailed and specific your notes are, the more prepared for class you are.
- Your annotation process depends on who you are and what you determine works best for you. I included information below to assist you in developing an annotation process, if annotating is new to you.

“One technique [to help process is annotation. Annotating a text requires reading with a pencil in hand. Write in your book, [or] write on sticky notes. As you read, circle words you don’t know, or write them on the sticky notes. **Identify main ideas — thesis statements, topic sentences** — and also words, phrases, or sentences that appeal to you, that seem important, or that you don’t understand. Look for **figures of speech** such as **metaphors, similes, and personification** — as well as **imagery** and **striking detail**. If you don’t know the technical term for something, just describe it. For example, if you come across an adjective-and-noun combination that seems contradictory, such as ‘meager abundance,’ and you don’t know that the term for it is **oxymoron**, you might still note the **juxtaposition** of two words that have opposite meanings.” Take notes on the events in the text; “ask questions or comment on what you have read. In short, as you read, listen to the voice in your head, and write down what that voice is saying” (*The Language of Composition* 40).

Focus on the following list when annotating texts to help develop your thinking about and understanding of the material.

- **Individual Response:** Trace your reactions to and questions about the text as you read, and record connections to texts you have read. In years past, your annotations might have focused on personal connections to the text: This passage reminds me of my grandmother...; I suffered this sort of injury as a kid...; etc. While these connections are crucial to your understanding, annotations in AP Lang must progress past this level.
- **Speaker:** Consider who the writer is and what s/he wants to communicate. Use these to determine the writer’s credibility.
- **Occasion:** Determine what prompted or motivated the author to write the text and factors such as time, context, place, and setting. Evaluate whether the writer’s motivations are valid.
- **Audience:** Gauge the person/people the writer addresses and whether the writer effectively communicates to this audience.
- **Purpose:** Think about the reasons the writer composed the text: Persuasion? Comparison? Explanation? Information? Etc.
- **Subject:** Explain the content of the text, what the text is about; evaluate beyond the surface level.

- **Tone:** Assess the writer's attitude with which the author addresses the subject. Use diction, the writer's choice of words, to determine the attitude toward the subject. Connotation of words matters, so define all words you do not understand.
- **Assertion:** Identify the writer's main claim, the overarching thesis of the text. More specific than the subject, the assertion is the point the writer makes about the topic.
- **Claims:** Identify the main points the writer makes to prove the assertion.
- **Appeals:** How does the writer appeal to readers' emotions? How does the writer prove the assertion with logic? How does the writer establish credibility on the subject? Consider the pathos, logos, and ethos of the selection as you read.
- **Rhetorical strategies:** Evaluate the writer's techniques in delivery and how effective these techniques are for rhetorical purposes.
- **Bias:** Evaluate the perspective of the writer that may influence the assertion and claims. Evaluate your bias as a reader.