

2021 AP English Language and Composition

Summer Reading Assignment

Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man.

Sir Francis Bacon

Teacher: John Baker

john.baker@myplace.wcs.edu

Required Reading

1. **Craft Book:** *How to Write a Sentence (and How to Read One)* by Stanley Fish (176 pages)
This very short book packs a punch. The goal is for it to recalibrate your approach to reading like a writer, providing you rich resources to appreciate and to imitate some of the best sentences in the English language.
 2. **Nonfiction Narrative:** *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer (203 pages)
The true story of a man who walked away from his comfortable, conventional family and lifestyle to live and ultimately to die in the Alaskan wilderness. The book is written in a spare, journalistic style, but it explores deep themes, such as materialism, individuality, nature, and purpose.
 3. **Choice Book:** One other text of your choice. Really. Your choice. No list to pick from. No minimum length. Read something you'll enjoy, but challenge yourself to make it something that stretches you as a reader and as a thinker. If you want recommendations, email me.
-

Reading Assignments

Each assignment should be in its own Google Doc. No formatting requirements. All assignments due 2 weeks after the first day of school. (But don't wait... You'll have other things to do in those 2 weeks as well.)

1. **Sentence Collection (20 points)** based on *How to Write a Sentence (and How to Read One)*. As you read through *Into the Wild* and your choice book, write down 10 sentences from each (20 total) that stand out as particularly beautiful. Explain how these sentences caught your attention, referring to specific details from Stanley Fish's book to categorize or analyze them. This document will be graded on breadth (sentences should come from throughout your readings), depth (say insightful things about the sentences), and detail (make it clear that you've read Fish's book on sentences).
2. **Dialectical Journal (50 points)** on *Into the Wild*. 20 entries minimum (an average of one per chapter.) See next page for full instructions on dialectical journals.
3. **Choice Book Reflection. (30 points)** Write a response (300+ words) to your chosen book in which you either *unpack a major theme of the book and how it is developed* **or** *summarize and respond to an argument that is presented in the book* **or** *explain how this book changed your perspective on a particular idea or issue*. This response is a chance to show off what you've learned in prior English classes. Be sure to include plenty of details from the text without merely summarizing. Your voice and commentary is most important.

Dialectical Journal

The word "dialectic" means (roughly) "a discourse between two or more people holding different points of view about a subject but wishing to establish the truth through reasoned methods of argumentation."

A dialectical journal is a conversation between you and what you are reading, much like adding extensive annotations in the margins, except that with a journal you let these thoughts have more room to breathe off the page. The journal highlights the questions, connections, and ideas that you have as you read..

There are no right or wrong answers in such a journal. Be willing to take risks, try your ideas, and be honest. The only mistake is a failure to attempt engaging with the text.

Since the journal is a conversation between you and the text, you'll need to record parts of the text and your thoughts about each passage. **On the left side of your journal**, record phrases, sentences, or short passages that spark your thinking. **On the right side of your journal**, write your thoughts about the quoted text. Use literary terms in your reflections and elaborate on your thoughts. You may ask questions, but make sure to provide partial answers.

Everyone thinks *something* when they read; don't discount the value of those thoughts. However, if you need more guidance, the questions below can get you started.

- Read for meaning, such as:
 - How does this passage develop the theme of _____?
 - What does this passage reveal about the character of _____,
 - What is the author's main argument here, and how is it supported?
- Read for craft, such as:
 - How does Krakauer structure the text, and what effect does it have?
 - What tone does Krakauer employ? Does it shift? Why?
 - How does Krakauer use **rhetorical strategies** to enhance the narrative? (This is the primary content we learn in AP Lang, but feel free to look up some rhetorical strategies to support your annotations.)
- Use specific and carefully chosen nouns and verbs that connect the passage to the message/meaning.
- Choose significant passages that you can analyze deeply in discussions or in an essay.

Passage + Page #	Response/Analysis/Reflection
<p>“I’ve given jobs to lots of hitchhikers over the years,” says Westerberg. “Most of them weren’t much good, didn’t really want to work. It was a different story with Alex. He was the hardest worker I’ve ever seen. ... If he started a job, he’d finish it. It was almost like a moral thing for him. ... He set pretty high standards for himself.” (Page 18)</p>	<p><i>Westerberg’s characterization of McCandless reveals a detail about him that will show up again repeatedly: he isn’t like everyone else. His code of conduct chafes against the way the world wants him to behave. I wonder, though, why he avoided a life of work if he were such a hard worker -- it seems like he could have found a spot in the world rather than the wilderness.</i></p>