

English III AP Language and Composition
Recommended Summer Assignments 2023
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Please read all instructions carefully!
QR CODE IS ON LAST PAGE FOR ACCESS TO LINKS.

Again, read the instructions carefully! These assignments will be due at the end of the first week of school in August.

Part 1. Podcast Study: Building Background Knowledge with Podcasts

One of the most difficult tasks in AP Lang is to formulate written arguments on a wide variety of topics, and to support those arguments with your own knowledge of history, politics, literature, art, and more. Summer is a great time to give yourself a boost here by taking a deep dive into subjects that are new and interesting to you.

Instructions:

- Choose one of the informational podcasts from this list of [Interesting Podcasts to Expand Your Knowledge](#).
- Listen to at least 5-10 episodes over the course of the summer. (You MAY listen to more than one podcast this summer, but your written responses should all be for the same one.)
- Notes are not required, but you will have to recall details from some episodes in your responses. Notes also help students who struggle to retain information from listening.
- Choose three episodes of a single podcast on which to write a response. (You will write a total of three responses.)
- Each response must be at least 250 words (about half of a page of writing) and should include personal response, analysis, and questions that emerged from the episode. Do not merely summarize. Use the following questions as a guide:
 - What do I know/understand now that I didn't before?
 - How did this episode change the way I think about something?
 - What is a thought, idea, or perspective that I might not have considered if I hadn't encountered this episode?
- Please include an MLA-style citation of the podcast episode discussed on each response. [Click here for guidelines](#).
- <https://style.mla.org/how-do-i-cite-a-podcast-episode/>
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Part 2: Read *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote.

This is a nonfiction, true crime book that reads like fiction but is based on real events. From Goodreads: “*In Cold Blood* tells the true story of the murder of the Clutter family in Holcomb, Kansas, in 1959. ... *In Cold Blood* took six years for Capote to research and write, and it took an incredible toll on Capote, personally — so much so that he never published another book again. *In Cold Blood* is said to have been his undoing.”

Part 3: Read selected excerpts from *How to Read Nonfiction Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster.

Foster covers important skills and ideas that you will need for AP English and college English as well as being a well-informed citizen of the world. I suggest that you take notes as you go for each chapter. (Make sure you get the **Nonfiction book**, NOT the *How to Read Literature or Poetry* version.)

This book is designed to introduce you to the analytical ways of thinking about texts in this course. It also includes a LOT of information that is relevant to the information you encounter on a daily basis through the news, advertising, and social and internet media. Do not panic if you find yourself confused by some concepts but do your best to understand Foster’s main points by looking up words and using other resources. As stated earlier, all written work must be your own.

Instructions: Please read and annotate the following sections, answering the questions as you read. The sections that are NOT assigned are OPTIONAL--please read them if you are interested, but we will go over the material in these sections during class throughout the year.

Preface: What’s Going On Around Here? (pages ix-xiv)

1. What is Foster’s main point, or thesis, in this section? Write 1-4 sentences.

Introduction: Why Critical Reading Matters (pages 1-8)

2. What is Foster’s thesis in this section? Write 1-4 sentences.

Chapter 1: The Structure of Nonfiction Information (pages 9-18)

3. On page 15, Foster writes, “It’s worth noting that such a structure is not inevitable, not dictated by the material.” What does he mean by this?
4. Consider a book or article you have read, or a podcast episode you have listened to. Describe the structure, using this chapter as a guide. How does it start? Where does it go? How does it end?

{Building Blocks of Argument} (pages 31-34)

5. Define “claim,” “ground,” and “warrant” in your own words.
6. Write an example of a claim, ground, and warrant.

Chapter 3: The Power of Prologue (pages 35-40)

7. In this chapter, Foster gives many examples and descriptions of prologues, ultimately settling on the observation that “they are brief, somewhere between a squib and a chapter, and... they try to provide a glimpse into some aspect of what’s to come” (40). If the school year is a chapter of your life, what is the prologue? Write a prologue (at least a paragraph) for the upcoming chapter of your life.

Chapter 4: The Parts You Don’t Read (pages 41-50)

8. What was the most interesting thing(s) you read in this chapter? What did you learn?

Chapter 7: All in How You Look at Things (pages 79-99) **Important section!*

9. What does Foster say about the *five-paragraph theme (essay)*?
10. What does Foster mean when he writes, “**Chronology does not equal structure?**” (82). What’s the difference between the two?
11. What is an “anecdote” (look it up if needed), and how might it be used to begin a nonfiction text?
12. According to Foster, what did the term “Fake News” used to mean, and how has the term been used more recently by politicians and public figures?

{Interrogating the Text} (pages 233-239)

13. What are the five elements Foster encourages readers to interrogate? Why?

Emerging Media: Chapters 15-16 (pages 241-274)

14. Choose 3 of the “Web-Specific Forms” listed which you encounter regularly and give an example of each (links are fine).
15. What cautions does Foster offer on Wikipedia? Why should information found there not be fully trusted (or cited as research in school essays)?
16. What is “clickbait” on social media, and how can it distort truth?

Special Circumstances: Chapter 17 (pages 275-300)

17. Using your own words and/or quotes from the text, what is a *Hoax*, *Faked News Stories*, and *False Data*?

18. How can we, as readers, protect ourselves from believing intentionally falsified information we read? Why is this important to do?

Conclusion (pages 301-305)

19. What is Foster's thesis in this section? Write 1-4 sentences.

20. Overall reaction: how much of the information in this text was new for you? What did you think?

AS FOR ALL AP TEXTS FOR THIS CLASS, I ENCOURAGE YOU TO ANNOTATE THESE AS YOU READ. YOU MAY DO THIS BY MARKING THE TEXT, OR BY USING SMALL POST-IT NOTES. MARK SIGNIFICANT PASSAGES, QUOTES, ETC. THIS WILL HELP YOU WHEN WE REVIEW THESE BOOKS AT THE BEGINNING OF SCHOOL. Annotating is NOT required though and will not be graded.

Note: These readings are college level and are endorsed by the College Board for Advanced Placement. Some of them have mature themes and content.

HERE IS THE QR CODE SO THAT YOU CAN HAVE ACCESS TO THE LINKS IN THE DOCUMENT.

