

A.P. English Language and Composition—Ms. Sarosdy Summer Reading/Writing Assignment, 2009-2010

Welcome to A.P. English Language and Composition! This rigorous course taught at the college level leads to an exam in May that might allow you to receive college credit. (All students are expected to take the AP exam on May 10, 2010.) Just as the pacing and rigor of the course are at the college level, so the sophistication of the topics and materials is as well; all students are expected to engage this material with maturity. The purpose in all cases is to decipher and evaluate both the message and the manner in which it is conveyed so that you may learn precise analytical skills and more effective methods of writing. A.P. English Language and Composition is devoted to a study of nonfiction prose styles (autobiography, essays, letters, speeches, journals, articles, etc.), and this summer assignment will give you a start on relating actively to these types of writing (as well as fiction) to construct meaning. *Begin by thinking of reading as a collaborative process between you, the author, and the text.*

1. Short Readings: These attachments will be posted on the Kellam webpage—scroll down to find the AP Summer Assignments section. Print out each of these guides for annotating text and engaging in critical reading. They should be in the front of your English binder (3-ring, at least 1”) *the first day of class.* **(Daily Grade)**

- **“Marking Your Textbook.”** Read this excerpt from Carol Comfort’s book *Breaking Boundaries*, where she clearly defines and explains the idea of reading as “an active process,” including annotating text.
- **“Guidelines for Critical Reading.”** Read this guide, and refer to it frequently as you complete your summer assignment. This handout gives information about reading with a critical eye, especially when reading nonfiction. It also provides guidelines for annotating what you read. When you annotate, you “have a conversation with the text” as you read; this interaction with the text will prepare you for class discussions. You will be expected to annotate most readings assigned for this course, whether with Post-It notes or on the text itself. This attachment includes links to two other sources of information you will need.
- **“Annotating Nonfiction.”** Read this handout that discusses annotating nonfiction in particular.
- **“How to Mark a Book”** by Mortimer Adler. *Read and annotate* this short essay about annotating a book. Print it out from <http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/adler.html> or <http://www.maebrussell.com/Articles%20and%20Notes/How%20To%20Mark%20A%20Book.html>. I will collect your annotated essay the first day of class. **(Daily Grade)**

2. Long Readings: You will receive the first two texts from your current English teacher the last week of school. You are required to purchase the last two texts.

- ***The Scarlet Letter***, a NOVEL by Nathaniel Hawthorne. Do some research into Hawthorne’s style, themes, concerns, etc. What ideas informed much of his writing? Make sure you understand what an allegory is. Then read and annotate this text with Post-It notes. Read only the novel, not the additional pieces at the back of the book. I will collect your annotated novel on the first day of class and spot-check your annotations for adherence to the principles of annotation introduced in the short readings. **(Quiz grade)**
- ***Billy Budd***, a NOVELLA by Herman Melville. Do some research into Melville’s life and work. How did his experiences influence his work? What are some major themes of his works? Make sure you understand symbolism in literature. Then read and annotate this text with Post-It notes. I will collect your annotated novel on the first day of class and spot-check your annotations for adherence to the principles of annotation introduced in the short readings. **(Quiz Grade)**
- ***Crime and Punishment***, a NOVEL by Fyodor Dostoevsky. You must purchase this book. *****Make sure you buy the Pevear/Volokhonsky translation, ISBN-13 9780679734505.***** I have asked Barnes

and Noble at Lynnhaven Mall to order copies, but you can also purchase it online or from another source. Do some research into Dostoevsky's influences, and in what specifically he attempts to accomplish in this novel. What eternal questions does the novel raise? Make sure you know what Russian nihilism was. Then read and annotate this text in dark blue, black, or red ink pen. I will collect your annotated novel on the first day of class and spot-check your annotations for adherence to the principles of annotation introduced in the short readings. **(Quiz Grade)**

- ***A Moveable Feast***, a MEMOIR by Ernest Hemingway. You must purchase this book. I have asked Barnes and Noble at Lynnhaven Mall to order copies, but you can also purchase it online or from another source. Do some research on Creative Nonfiction, also known as Literary Nonfiction and a host of other names. Then read and annotate the text in dark blue, black, or red ink pen. I will collect your annotated novel on the first day of class and spot-check your annotations for adherence to the principles of annotation introduced in the short readings. **(Quiz Grade)** We will discuss this book as part of our first unit on memoir and autobiography.

3. Notes on the Selections/Suggestions for Success

Even if you have other obligations this summer, you should have plenty of time to get through these books and complete all required work. I suggest you begin with *The Scarlet Letter* and *Billy Budd*. While neither is very long, the language from the early nineteenth century can be challenging. *The Scarlet Letter* is an engaging story; it has sex, drugs, death—what's not to like? You might hate *Billy Budd*, but it will be good for you, so have a positive attitude (or fake one if necessary) and really think about what human and social values Melville deals with in this work. *Crime and Punishment* is an easier read than the first two; keep reading through parts where it gets bogged down—in a page or two it will pick back up. The characters are quite engaging. And finally, *A Moveable Feast* is an entertaining read and will be a good way to wind down your summer.

Whatever you do, DO NOT procrastinate. This is true of not only the summer assignment, but the class as well. Getting behind means certain doom. Do not let it happen to you! Contact me if you are seriously confused or have questions that stand in the way of your completing the assignment. My email address (best way to reach me) is KathyH.Sarosdy@vbschools.com, and my phone number is 427.3232, ext. 79116. Remember, you will be held responsible for completing all work by the first day of class. If you do not have the required work that first day (including the printouts), you will earn a zero for that section of the assignment.

*****You can vastly improve your chances for success in this course if you begin now to habitually read the front page of the newspaper as well as the editorials, editorial cartoons, and Op Ed pieces. (In *The Virginian-Pilot*, these last three are found on the last two pages of the “Hampton Roads” section.) The local paper and other major papers are available at libraries and online. Consider signing up for a free online newspaper—I get *The New York Times* online every day, for example. You will not be able to engage in some class discussions nor to respond effectively to many essay prompts if you do not know what's going on in the world. Being informed about local, national, and global issues is essential knowledge for this course and for life.*****

4. School-wide AP Summer Assignment on Sharepoint

If you are asked to complete a general AP summer assignment this year, you will not receive a grade for that in this class. I will grade only the work I have designed to prepare you for this specific course. However, if you complete the school-wide assignment, you will gain valuable information about AP classes in general as well as about yourself.

NOTE: If any student who attended Kellam during the 2008-2009 school year registers for this course during the first nine weeks of school, that student is responsible for completing this assignment by a date to be determined by the instructor.