

# Summer Reading, 2021

## AP Language and Composition

### Introduction

Congratulations on choosing to take AP Language and Composition - one of Northside High School's most rigorous courses. This class promises to challenge you intellectually, spiritually, and emotionally. Through this course you will sharpen your confidence and facility with language as you approach work that is meaningful.

Malcolm Gladwell defines meaningful work as having autonomy, complexity, and a direct relationship between effort and reward. This summer reading assignment attempts to fulfil this definition, offering a choice of text (autonomy), a complex product, and a reward directly related to the quality of your effort.

### Choosing Your Book

Please see the list below for your options. This list is a combination of titles chosen by students from my previous AP Language and Composition class as well as books published in 2020. You only need to choose one book.

### Titles

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ <i>A Woman of No Importance</i> - Sonia Purnell</li><li>❑ <i>Catch and Kill</i> - Ronan Farrow</li><li>❑ <i>Say Nothing: A True Story of Love and Murder in Northern Ireland</i> - Patrick Redden Keefe</li><li>❑ <i>Stamped: Racism, Anti-Racism, and You</i> - Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi</li><li>❑ <i>The Salt Path</i> - Raynor Winn</li><li>❑ <i>Fascism: A Warning</i> - Madelyn Albright</li><li>❑ <i>The Privileged Poor</i> - Anthony Abraham Jack</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ <i>Eat the Buddha: Life and Death in a Tibetan Town</i> - Barbara Demick</li><li>❑ <i>A Silenced Voice: The Life of Journalist Kim Wall</i> - Ingrid Wall and Joachim Wall</li><li>❑ <i>I Want You to Know We're Still Here: A Post-Holocaust Memoir</i> - Esther Safran Foer</li><li>❑ <i>Children of the Land: A Memoir</i> - Marcello Hernandez Castillo</li><li>❑ <i>No Rules Rules: Netflix and the Culture of Reinvention</i> - Reed Hastings and Erin Meyer</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ <i>Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning</i> - Kathy Park Hong</li><li>❑ <i>Once I Was You: A Memoir of Love and Hate in a Torn America</i> - Maria Hojonosa</li><li>❑ <i>The Riches of This Land</i> - Jim Tankersly</li><li>❑ <i>Alien Oceans: The Search for Life in the Depths of Space</i> - Kevin Hand</li><li>❑ <i>The Jakarta Method</i> - Vincent Bevins</li></ul> |
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If you would like descriptions of the titles, please visit the [NPR Book Concierge website](#) or Goodreads. You will find these titles listed by year in the nonfiction section of the NPR website. Click the tabs on the left side of the page to filter the list. Each title is also given hashtags to give you an idea of what the book focuses on. If you or your parents are unsure regarding the content of any of the titles, please visit [commonsensemedia.org](#) to get a better idea about sensitive topics or issues covered in the text.

# Reading and Annotating

After obtaining your summer reading book from the library, book store, etc., you should read the text, annotating and / taking notes to prepare for both a discussion as well as an essay. If you are unsure of how to annotate, [please see this resource](#).

As you read, you should be able to divide the book into sections based on meaning, chapter, or some other form of organization (roughly every 20 - 30 pages; however, this is not an exact number). A longer work may require that you increase the pages in your sections. You should end up with somewhere between five and eight total sections.

## The Dialectical Journal

For each section or division that you created while reading, you will complete [a dialectical journal](#) entry. Make a copy of the template, then, for each section, provide a statement of the author's primary claim or claims and an explanation of any patterns or strategies that you notice the writer implementing to convince their audience. These claims and explanations do not have to be exhaustive (listing every claim, device, and / or strategy); however, they should fairly and thoroughly present the complexity of the argument or idea put forward in the section.

Here is an [example of the dialectical journal](#) to clarify what I am looking for. I've also added comments that you should be able to view. Please read and follow the directions carefully.

I will be checking these for a grade upon your return to school in August. You will also write an essay based on the following prompt:

**What is the author's primary claim or message? How does the author tailor the development of their message or claim to their primary audience?**

## Parting Thoughts

One final reminder—AP Language is for contenders not pretenders. By choosing to take this class, you are choosing to adopt a rigorous schedule that will develop a sound mind capable of meeting the challenges of mastering rhetoric and composition.

The reward you receive for taking this class will be the satisfaction of a challenge well-met, the college credit received from the AP Exam, and the life-long skills to navigate a rhetorically complex society. The quality of each of these rewards will be directly related to the effort you apply and the consistency with which you apply it.

If, as John Wooden claims, "we are what we repeatedly do" then it stands to reason that "excellence is not an act, but a habit." Practice excellence this summer. I look forward to working with you in the fall.

## Acknowledgement of Summer Reading

Take [this quick survey](#) to acknowledge that you have received this document.