

AP Language and Composition Introductory Assignment

The Argument Free Response Question on the AP Lang exam asks you to respond to an open-ended prompt with a well-constructed essay that develops your position on the topic. Without specific guidelines in the prompt, you may use nearly anything for your evidence and commentary.

We will work on building your knowledge throughout the school year, but we would like to begin with you reflecting on what exactly you know well enough to build into an effective argument. For your first assignment, we would like you to read books, watch shows and movies and documentaries, listen to podcasts, explore the world, dive deeper into the things that interest you, and document what you've learned!

For each category **list 2 examples of topics you know well enough to explore in an essay**. The categories include history, current events, pop culture, biographies, personal experience, books, science, etc

- In the left column, summarize the example, including necessary details and/or background info that would help a reader understand your example. Be appropriately detailed but concise.
 - **Do not use the same example for more than one category**. If your example falls under two categories, make a decision about where you think it fits best.
- For the "keywords" column, think about some broad/abstract concepts that could work with this example. There's a list below, but you're welcome to make your own!
- In the right column, add bullet points of commentary that explain the significance of the evidence. What is the lesson, message, or take-away from the example? What is the lasting impact of this example?

Possible Keywords:

- Integrity, honesty, character, competition, generosity, trust, forgiveness
- Justice, injustice, disobedience, morality, tradition, honor, tolerance, progress, overrated, underrated, antiquated
- Determination, perseverance, adversity, disappointment, uncertainty, patience, focus, positivity, creativity, innovation, hope
- Perfectionism, mistakes, failure, curiosity, passion, motivation, fear, courage, productivity, timeliness, unity, organization
- Wit, wisdom, humor

This assignment will be due on **September 20, 2024. At that time, you will be able to use the assignment to complete an in-class, authentic AP argument essay.**

Check out AP Lang's Google Classroom with code **5256taf** for suggestions on documentaries, podcasts, fiction, and non-fiction text.

Historical events

List 2 events from history you can write about knowledgeably. (Generalized time periods and wars are not specific enough)

<u>Summary of Evidence</u> (with specifics)	<u>Keywords</u>	<u>Commentary</u> (what does the example reveal or demonstrate?)

Biography

List 2 people of impact (living or dead) you can write about knowledgeably.

<u>Summary of Evidence</u> (with specifics)	<u>Keyword</u>	<u>Commentary</u> (what does the example reveal or demonstrate?)

Fiction Texts

List 2 texts of merit (plays, books, short stories etc) you can write about knowledgeably.

<u>Summary of Evidence</u> (with specifics)	<u>Keyword</u>	<u>Commentary</u> (what does the example reveal or demonstrate?)

Pop Culture References

List your top 2 specific pop culture references you can write about knowledgeably. This can include music, art, influencers, TV, movies, etc.

<u>Summary of Evidence</u> (with specifics)	<u>Keyword</u>	<u>Commentary</u> (what does the example reveal or demonstrate?)

Science/ Psychology/Technology

List your top 2 specific scientific examples you can write about knowledgeably. This can include medicine, psychology, environmental concerns, etc.

<u>Summary of Evidence</u> (with specifics)	<u>Keyword</u>	<u>Commentary</u> (what does the example reveal or demonstrate?)

Non-Fiction texts (memoir, books, podcasts, documentaries, essays)

List your top 2 specific examples from reading you can write about knowledgeably.

<u>Summary of Evidence</u> (with specifics)	<u>Keyword</u>	<u>Commentary</u> (what does the example reveal or demonstrate?)

Current events (news events)

List your top 2 specific current events/ news events you can write about knowledgeably. Topics such as "COVID," "Russia/Ukraine," and "Olympics" are too broad to write about in the argument essay, so narrow it down to specific aspects of similar topics that are of interest to you!

<u>Summary of Evidence</u> (with specifics)	<u>Keyword</u>	<u>Commentary</u> (what does the example reveal or demonstrate?)

Personal Experience

List your top specific personal experience you can write about knowledgeably. This can be a personal experience or the experience of someone you know. Make sure you choose a meaningful example that leads to progress, discovery, insight, growth, or change.

<u>Summary of Evidence</u> (with specifics)	<u>Keyword</u>	<u>Commentary</u> (what does the example reveal or demonstrate?)
<p>Look at the keywords above. How does this personal example connect to one of your previous examples from one of the other categories?</p>		

Suggested optional readings and texts

The expectation for this course is to be knowledgeable and curious, making connections between sources and ideas. The resources you find below are not exhaustive but are a place to begin if you are struggling to know where to start.

Consider subscribing for news updates from <https://thedonut.co/> or <https://www.theskimm.com/>

News Sources

<https://www.nytimes.com/section/opinion>

<https://www.foxnews.com/opinion>

<https://www.theguardian.com/us/commentisfree>

<https://www.npr.org/sections/opinion/>

<https://www.cnn.com/opinions>

<https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/columnists>

<https://www.breitbart.com/tag/public-opinion/>

<https://www.wsj.com/news/opinion>

<https://nypost.com/opinion/>

<https://www.huffpost.com/section/opinion>

<https://www.allsides.com/unbiased-balanced-news>

Podcasts

<https://www.iheart.com/content/2021-10-12-2022-iheartradio-podcast-awards-see-the-full-list-of-nominees/>

"Pod Save America"

"The Daily"

"The Rachel Maddow Show"

"Today, Explained"

"Up First"

"Stuff You Should Know"

"Freakonomics Radio"

"Revisionist History"

"Throughline"

Documentaries

- [Frontline PBS Documentary Series](#) - this source provides free access to 100+ documentaries regarding national and international issues. You can sort the documentaries by "topic" listed at the top of the website or you can peruse the list to see if any interest you.
- Feel free to watch any documentary available if you have a subscription service like *Netflix*, *Hulu* or *Amazon*. Some popular/accredited documentaries include:
 - *Forks Over Knives*
 - *Inequality for All*

- *WalMart: The High Cost of Low Prices*
- *King Corn*
- *Food, Inc.*
- *The Cove*
- *Blackfish*
- *The Cove*
- *Chasing Coral*
- *A Crude Awakening: The Oil Crash*
- *The Central Park Five*
- *Sicko*
- *A Place at the Table*
- *Chasing Ice*
- *Hoop Dreams*
- *Miss Representation*
- *13th*
- *The Witness*

Books: Non-fiction (including memoir)

- *Black Like Me* by John Howard Griffin
- *Black Boy* by Richard Wright
- *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou
- *Into Thin Air* by John Krakauer
- *Into the Wild* by John Krakauer
- *Bird by Bird* by Anne Lamott
- *Thank you for Arguing* by Jay Heinrichs
- *Stiff: The Curious Life of Human Cadaver* by Mary Roach
- *Moneyball* by Michael Lewis
- *The Tipping Point* by Malcolm Gladwell
- *The Prince* by Machiavelli
- *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote
- *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: Witchcraft in Colonial New England* by Carol Karlsen
- *Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah
- *Fast Food Nation* by Eric Schlosser
- *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson

- Educated* by Tara Westover
- The Overachievers* by Alexandra Robbins
- Nickel and Dimed* by Barbara Ehrenreich

Books: Fiction

- The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath
- The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan
- The Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison
- Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe
- Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- 1984* by George Orwell
- The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
- Atonement* by Ian McEwan
- The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini
- The Color Purple* by Alice Walker
- Station Eleven* by Emily St John Mandel
- Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley
- Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro