

## Advanced Placement English Language Summer Reading Assignment<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Joel Neden and Mrs. Lisa St. John  
New Paltz High School 2013-2014  
jneden@newpaltz.k12.ny.us  
lstjohn@newpaltz.k12.ny.us

*Out of our quarrels with others we make rhetoric. Out of our quarrels with ourselves we make poetry. --William Butler Yeats*

Welcome to AP Language! This is an exciting and challenging college-level course. We will explore many different types of reading and writing. Here is a brief description of the content:

The AP English Language and Composition course engages students in becoming skilled readers of prose written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts and in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Most college composition courses emphasize the expository, analytical, and argumentative writing that forms the basis of academic and professional communication, as well as the personal and reflective writing that fosters the development of writing facility in any context. In addition, most composition courses teach students that the expository, analytical, and argumentative writing they must do in college is based on reading, not solely on personal experience and observation. We will read primary and secondary sources carefully, synthesize material from these texts in our own compositions, and cite sources using conventions recommended by professional organizations such as the Modern Language Association (MLA), the University of Chicago Press (*The Chicago Manual of Style*), and the American Psychological Association (APA). One purpose of the AP English Language and Composition course is to enable students to read complex texts with understanding and to write prose of sufficient richness and complexity to communicate effectively with mature readers.<sup>2</sup>

Basically, we will read everything we can: essays, novels, poems, articles, short stories, memoirs, speeches, letters, paintings, graphics, signs, film excerpts, websites, et cetera. We will examine and research the ideas, issues, and values inherent in the texts. We will discover what makes a strong argument, and we will write our own argumentative essays. We will analyze rhetoric (the art of persuasive language) in all of its forms and learn to evaluate research sources and citations.

We will work together to become the best writers and thinkers we can be. We are **always** available to help in any way we can. All assignments are due on the first day of class. A detailed assignment criterion is given on the following pages.

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<sup>1</sup> This document is also available online at: <http://nedensenglish.weebly.com/> and <http://www.newpaltz.k12.ny.us/hs/lstjohn>

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from *The College Board AP Program Course Description English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition* May 2007-2008.  
<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/courses/descriptions/1,,151-162-0-8879,00.html>

### **Assignment #1: Essay Reading**

Read the attached essays (“Politics and the English Language” by George Orwell and “Batman Should Kill the Joker” by White and Arp). Annotate them thoroughly, and write a rhetorical précis for each one. The directions for writing a rhetorical précis are attached. The essays can also be found at the following sites:

<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/orwell46.htm>

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/25/opinion/25iht-edwhite.1.14793506.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/25/opinion/25iht-edwhite.1.14793506.html?_r=0)

### **Assignment #2 ; Freakonomics**

Read *Freakonomics* and answer the study guide questions that follow. We will have a quiz over the content during the first month of classes.

#### *Freakonomics* STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS

##### Introduction

1. Name one rhetorical device the authors use in the introduction (1-13) and explain its function.

- rhetorical device: A method used in writing or speaking in which language is used to influence or persuade an audience.

From: [www.northwestern.k12.oh.us/curriculum/documents/glossary.doc](http://www.northwestern.k12.oh.us/curriculum/documents/glossary.doc)

Extra Credit: To which famous work is the following quote alluding? “An athlete, who cheats to *lose* meanwhile, is consigned to a deep circle of sporting hell” (35).

##### Schoolteachers and Sumo Wrestlers

2. Explain the three “basic flavors” of incentives and give a unique (not from the text) example.

##### How is the KKK Like a Group of Real-Estate Agents?

3. Discuss the implications of the authors’ position that “dealing in information” and information asymmetry ...have in fact been gravely wounded by the internet.”

##### Why do Drug Dealers Still Live with Their Moms?

4. Define the term “conventional wisdom.” Use examples to illustrate your answer.

##### Where Have all the Criminals Gone?

5. Give one example of irony in this chapter and discuss its effect.

Extra credit: Explain the allusion in the sentence that begins with: “If faced with the Solomonic task of sacrificing...” (131).

##### What Makes a Perfect Parent?

6. Explain the difference between correlation and causation.

##### Perfect Parenting, Part II

7. Evaluate the validity of this statement; “The name a parent gives his or her child will have a significant effect on the child’s success. After all, that data show that certain names are associated with increased income.”

### **Assignment #3: The Essay**

You will be given *one* of the following three essay prompts during the first month of school in a 50 minute timed setting (not open note/open book). It is a diagnostic essay. Please prepare.

## #1 2008

For years corporations have sponsored high school sports. Their ads are found on the outfield fence at baseball parks or on the walls of the gymnasium, the football stadium, or even the locker room. Corporate logos are even found on players' uniforms. But some schools have moved beyond corporate sponsorship of sports to allowing "corporate partners" to place their names and ads on all kinds of school facilities—libraries, music rooms, cafeterias. Some schools accept money to require students to watch Channel One, a news program that includes advertising. And schools often negotiate exclusive contracts with soft drink or clothing companies. Some people argue that corporate partnerships are a necessity for cash-strapped schools. Others argue that schools should provide an environment free from ads and corporate influence. Using appropriate evidence, write an essay in which you evaluate the pros and cons of corporate sponsorship for schools and indicate why you find one position more persuasive than the other.

## #2 2008 (Form B)

Read the following excerpt from *The Decline of Radicalism* (1969) by Daniel J. Boorstin and consider the implications of the distinction Boorstin makes between dissent and disagreement. Then, using appropriate evidence, write a carefully reasoned essay in which you defend, challenge, or qualify Boorstin's distinction.

*Dissent is the great problem of America today. It overshadows all others. It is a symptom, an expression, a consequence, and a cause of all others. I say dissent and not disagreement. And it is the distinction between dissent and disagreement which I really want to make. Disagreement produces debate but dissent produces dissension. Dissent (which comes from the Latin, dis and sentire) means originally to feel apart from others.*

*People who disagree have an argument, but people who dissent have a quarrel. People may disagree and both may count themselves in the majority. But a person who dissents is by definition in a minority. A liberal society thrives on disagreement but is killed by dissension. Disagreement is the life blood of democracy, dissension is its cancer.*

### #3 2007

A weekly feature of *The New York Times Magazine* is a column by Randy Cohen called “The Ethicist,” in which people raise ethical questions to which Cohen provides answers. The question below is from the column that appeared on April 4, 2003.

*At my high school, various clubs and organizations sponsor charity drives, asking students to bring in money, food and clothing. Some teachers offer bonus points on tests and final averages as incentives to participate. Some parents believe that this sends a morally wrong message, undermining the value of charity as a selfless act. Is the exchange of donations for grades O.K.?*

The practice of offering incentives for charitable acts is widespread, from school projects to fund drives by organizations such as public television stations, to federal income tax deductions for contributions to charities. In a well-written essay, develop a position on the ethics of offering incentives for charitable acts. Support your position with evidence from your reading, observation and/or experience.

#### ESSAY SCORING NOTE

**The best essays reflect critical thinking rather than a black and white answer. Essays earning high scores are *especially sophisticated* in their explanation and argument or demonstrate particularly impressive control of language. The evidence used is appropriate and convincing.**

#### General Scoring Guide for Free-Response Essays

Essays are graded holistically as on-demand writing; however, an essay that is full of grammatical or mechanical errors should not be scored higher than a 2.

9	These essays are exceptionally well written, show unusual insight into the topic, are well organized, and support assertions with appropriate examples. They remain focused on all aspects of the topic and present a unique writer’s voice.
8	These essays are very well written, show clear understanding of and focus on the topic, are well organized, and usually support assertions with appropriate examples. They focus on all aspects of the topic and show a writer’s voice. They may have a few mechanical errors but only very minor ones.
7-6	These essays are well written, show an understanding of the topic and remain focused on almost all aspects of it. A few assertions may lack specific examples, but the argument is clearly made. The writer’s voice is somewhat less mature than that of an 8-9 essay, but it is still evident. There may be a few errors in mechanics but only minor ones.

### AP Language: Rhetorical Précis<sup>3</sup>

**Sentence #1:** Name of author, (optional: a phrase describing the author), the genre and title of the work, a rhetorically accurate verb (such as "assert," "argue," "suggest," "imply," "claim,"), and a THAT clause containing the major assertion (thesis statement) of the work

**Sentence #2:** An explanation of how the author develops and/or supports the thesis usually in chronological order.

**Sentence #3:** A statement of the author's apparent purpose, followed by an "in order" phrase

**Sentence #4:** A description of the intended audience and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience

Example:

Toni Morrison, in her essay "Disturbing Nurses and the Kindness of Sharks," **implies** that racism in the United States has affected the craft and process of American novelists. Morrison supports her implication by **describing** how Ernest Hemingway writes about black characters in his novels and short stories. Her **purpose** is to make her readers aware of the cruel reality of racism underlying some of the greatest works of American literature **in order** to help them examine the far-reaching effects racism has not only on those discriminated against but also on those who discriminate. She establishes a formal and **highly analytical tone** with her audience of racially mixed (but probably mainly white), **theoretically sophisticated readers and critical interpreters** of American literature.

### ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

- #1 Essay Reading (annotation and précis)
- #2 *Freakonomics* (questions and test preparation)
- #3 Essay Writing (prepare for an in-class essay)

Please remember that we are here to help you ANYTIME. We are going to have a great year together! [jneden@newpaltz.k12.ny.us](mailto:jneden@newpaltz.k12.ny.us) [lstjohn@newpaltz.k12.ny.us](mailto:lstjohn@newpaltz.k12.ny.us)

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Dr. William Banks <http://english.ecu.edu/~wpbanks/eng8601/8601precis.html>

