

AP English Language and Composition

2011 Summer Assignment

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Course Description: AP English Language & Composition offers students a year of intense training in reading and writing that not only prepares them for the AP Language examination, but also for successful university study and life-long learning. The class focuses on rhetorical analysis of fiction and non-fiction, including sources in non-literary disciplines, a few philosophical documents, and a sampling of British, World and American Literature. Students learn to identify an author's purpose and analyze strategies by examining the ways people think and use language. Students read and analyze models of good writing, write compositions of various lengths and complexity **and** participate in peer response and vigorous revision.

This summer you will be busy as you prepare to enter AP Language & Composition. The nature of the class demands that you begin the school year with the appropriate knowledge and skills necessary to prepare for the AP English Language & Composition Exam in May and the AP English Literature Exam your senior year.

Listed below are assignments to be completed this summer:

Assignment #1: "This I Believe" Essay

According to National Public Radio (NPR), "Fifty years ago, millions of Americans sat by their radios and listened to *This I Believe*." For five minutes each day, they heard from statesmen, department store employees, taxi cab drivers, and secretaries-- all of whom spoke about their most deeply held beliefs.

A few years ago NPR decided to bring back the **This I Believe** series. Each week NPR broadcasts one short essay of approximately 500 words (3 minutes) submitted by a listener. Your assignment is to read the information, requirements, and several examples from the NPR website, and then write your own "This I Believe" essay.

1. Go to <http://thisibelieve.org/> . Click on "**Write**" in the top ribbon and then click on "**Essay Guidelines**" in the drop down menu.
2. Once you know the prompt and the guidelines, carefully consider your topic. 500 words isn't much, so be concise but don't sacrifice style/voice. Outline or jot down ideas before writing. Think about organization.
3. Write the essay: it should be coherent and cohesive and typed (font 12 with 1.5 spacing). Include the word count at end of the essay.

Assignment #2: Movie Review

Assignment:

Write a short 1 ½ to 2-page typed review of a movie (**choose carefully!**) you have recently seen. Before you write the review, read several movie reviews from newspapers or magazines. It will be helpful to read several different reviews of the same movie in order to differentiate each writer's focus, tone, organization, diction, selection of details.

Note the conversational style, the short sentences and paragraphs, and the interesting comparisons that most movie reviewers use. Pay attention to how the writer captures the reader's attention in the beginning and then observe how the writer interjects specific examples from the movie to support statements he/she makes about the movie.

Your Movie Review Must Contain:

- Title, director, distributor, length in minutes, major actors/actresses of the movie
- Rating the Movie received (G, PG, R, etc) and why this rating was given
- An interesting opening paragraph which captures the attention of readers
- Background about the movie – a short review of the general plot of the movie
- Specific statements about the quality of the writing, cinematography, acting, etc.
- Supporting examples (quotes, scenes, etc) for all statements about the quality of the movie
- A short statement of the kind of person who might enjoy the movie
- Your rating for the interest level of the movie. Devise your own system like A-F or 5 stars, etc.
- An interesting closing line or thought-provoking statement

Assignment #3: Read, Read, Read: Reading is Essential

1. In preparation for this class as well as AP Literature, I highly suggest that you spend the summer reading. Read as much as you can; read everything! *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin and *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston are good novels to start with since they **will challenge you** and **prepare you** for the type of critical analysis necessary for success in AP Language and AP Literature.

If you have questions about these assignments or about the course in general, email me:

KHarwood@iusd.org or HarwoodKarenSue@aol.com

Have a great summer! I look forward to being your teacher in the fall,

Mrs. Karen Harwood/ AP English Language & Composition