

AP Language and Composition: Summer 2021 Assignment
Ms. McDonald (jmcdonald@conwell-egan.org)

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

***A Rulebook for Arguments*, 5th ed., Anthony Weston**

Choose ONE of the following nonfiction selections (read a synopsis of each book online and decide which one you'll read based on your personal interests):

Educated, Tara Westover

Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood, Trevor Noah

Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers, Mary Roach

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Rebecca Skloot

The Tipping Point, Malcolm Gladwell

1 lined notebook

1 folder

Assignments

1) *A Rulebook for Arguments*: Annotate and Outline (50 pts)

Part 1: In the AP Language and Composition course, you will do a lot of active reading, and one the best ways to maximize understanding and engagement when doing so is by annotating the text in front of you. You need to **annotate your copy of *A Rulebook for Arguments***; write notes in the margins that help you make connections, circle and define words you don't know, underline and highlight main points (don't overdo it here, too much highlighting and underlining is overwhelming to the eye and defeats the purpose), etc. Thorough annotations will help you complete the second part of this portion of the assignment, creating an outline. I will collect your copy of *A Rulebook for Arguments* and check for consistent, thoughtful annotations. **(20 points)**

Part 2: You will create an outline for *A Rulebook for Arguments*. You need to identify the most important information from each of the ten chapters and condense that information into succinct outline form. Each chapter's outline must include definitions of terms,

explanations of key concepts, and any useful examples of argument rules in action that help you understand the material. Your annotations should help you complete this portion of the assignment. The outline **must be typed**. (30 points)

2) Nonfiction book of your choice: Dialectical Journal (40 pts)

A **dialectical journal**, sometimes called a double-entry journal, is a space for readers to enter into “a conversation” with the material they’re reading. The word ‘dialectic’ is a philosophy term that refers to dialogue as a method of intellectual reasoning and investigation. In your dialectical journal, which will help you investigate and explore the nonfiction book of your choice, you will select lines and/or passages that strike you in some way and comment on them.

In your lined notebook, **on the left side of the page**, you will write a line or passage that you find beautiful, confusing, concerning, overwhelming, flawed, thought-provoking, comforting, unfair, familiar, illuminating, relevant to your life, etc. In occasional cases, it might even be just a specific word or phrase the author uses that moves you, but in most instances it will be at least a whole line. **ALWAYS INCLUDE THE PAGE NUMBER ON WHICH YOU FOUND THAT LINE.** **On the right side of the page**, write your response to the excerpt from the book (this is where the “conversation” idea comes in). Your response can be a/an: insight, idea, question, comment, brief argument, reflection, or a connection to your own life.

You must label your responses using the following codes:

- (Q) Question – ask about something in the passage that is unclear
- (C) Connect – make a connection to your life, the world, or another text
- (P) Predict – anticipate what will occur based on what’s in the passage
- (CL) Clarify – answer earlier questions or confirm/disaffirm a prediction
- (R) Reflect – think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense – not just to the characters in the story/author of the article. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or just the way things work?
- (E) Evaluate - make a judgment about what the author is trying to say
- (D) Disagree- contest something the author writes with which you *sincerely* disagree -- save this for genuine issues with the author’s point of view or approach to a topic, not a minor squabble with something he/she has written

The dialectical journal must have a minimum of 40 entries with a variety of different types of responses (use all of the codes). You will turn in the notebook for grading.

Example of a dialectical journal entry (yours will be handwritten in your notebook) from R. W. Emerson's "Self-Reliance":

"There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide..." (369)	(E) It seems that Emerson is making the point that if someone seeks to imitate another, and in the process abandons their own identity, that person is essentially "killing him/herself," or, more accurately, letting him/herself die while trying to be like the other person. How sad to think that all the passions, talents, and interests "die" because they are looking outside themselves for an identity. : (
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3) Arguments on Social or Political Issues (10 points)

The AP Language and Composition course focuses almost entirely on nonfiction writing and rhetoric (the art of persuasive or effective speaking or writing). The texts we read cover a wide range of topics, and often those topics are controversial social and political issues because they are so conducive to persuasive writing and oratory.

For this final portion of the summer reading assignment, choose a social or political issue that interests you or that you feel passionately about and go searching for articles online that argue two conflicting sides of that issue. Acceptable topics include *but are not limited to*: environmental causes, social media regulation, the minimum wage debate, criminal justice reform, educational funding inequalities, campaign finance law, threats against free speech laws, border security, or public health mandates. The publications you choose must be legitimate, reputable, edited sources; social media and blogs are **not** acceptable. Please select articles whose arguments are sophisticated, written for an informed audience, and concerned with factual accuracy.

Print out three articles that argue one side of an issue and three articles that argue the opposing side. You will turn in the total of six articles in a folder. The more interested in the topic you are, the more enjoyable the experience will be. The goal of this assignment is twofold: a) to determine the areas of public discourse that are of interest to you, and b) to assess your ability to identify quality persuasive writing and the arguments therein.