

Advanced Placement Language and Composition
Summer Reading (2010-2011)
Ms. J. McGrath, Galena High School

The purposes of summer reading are to

- Provide students with an opportunity to read quality books over the summer;
- Enable us to begin the year productively;
- Provide students with a choice of excellent reading texts without using class time;
- Give students something productive to do over the summer!

REQUIRED READING OVERVIEW

Students taking AP English Language and Composition are required to read *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck and *The Overachievers: The Secret Lives of Driven Kids* by Alexandra Robbins.

Both books are available at local bookstores, online (Amazon, thriftbooks.com, etc.), and at local public libraries. Email me at jmcgrath@washoe.k12.nv.us with any questions or concerns with any part of the assignment. Please tell me in the subject line that you are an AP student. Read every section of the assignments to ensure you meet all requirements.

Assignment 1: *The Grapes of Wrath*

Although we won't have a summative assessment over *The Grapes of Wrath* until the end of the September, you are expected to come on the first day ready to participate fully in the discussion having completed the summer reading assignments.

- 1) As you read *The Grapes of Wrath*, you will notice that Steinbeck varies his chapters between narrative chapters (those that tell the story of the Joads) and "interchapters" (those that do not discuss the Joads but are essay-like descriptions of setting, history, the dust bowl, migration, California, etc.). Do some background research about John Steinbeck. This information will help you as you read the novel which won the Pulitzer Prize and the Nobel Prize for Literature. This is a difficult text to read, but worthwhile.
 - Complete a reading log (see attached directions)
 - ✓ Include a minimum of 20 typed entries
 - ✓ Highlight ALL terms required in your reading log.
 - ✓ Be sure to use some of the background information you discovered about the writer in your reading log when appropriate.
 - ✓ Use the checklist attached to make sure you include all items required.
- 2) Literary Criticism:
 - Find one literary criticism of *The Grapes of Wrath*. The source must be credible, i.e., a published scholar. Print the criticism and bring it to class. Be prepared to share it with the class.

Assignment 2: *The Overachievers: The Secret Lives of Driven Kids*

Alexandra Robbins follows several top students at a prestigious Maryland high school as they struggle to graduate and apply to college. As you read this book, I want you to think about how Robbins portrays these teenagers and their experiences. You will create Text Connections in order to further your thinking process and communicate your thoughts and ideas to your classmates and me. We will often refer to this text in class for supporting material and examples, so read closely and actively.

Reading a Work and Responding To It Actively

Sometimes readers confuse a cursory reading with an active reading. A quick reading of a work is little more than that: for example you might read an entire story and not be able to say anything about it at all. A more careful, active reading, however, enables you to understand and respond to questions about meaning and organization. Obviously, we must first follow the work and understand its details. At the same time we must respond to the words, get at the ideas, understand the implications of what is happening, and apply our own experiences to verify the accuracy and truth of the situation and incidents, to appreciate the characters and their solutions to the problems they face, and to articulate our own emotional responses. In short, as active, participating readers, we should assimilate the work into our minds and spirits. (*Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing, Second Edition.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice Hall, 1989.)

For this course, you will be required to complete reader response logs wherein you will read and respond actively to literature. Reading logs should be completed *as you read*. Each log has certain requirements.

The following 12 literary terms are required on all reading logs. Please note: you are required to include 20 entries on your reading log...therefore; you must find 8 additional terms to include. Be sure to utilize information found in your research about John Steinbeck.

Tone/Shifts – identify the writer's tone and any shifts in tone that occur

Personal Connections – identify how the reading relates to your prior experience

Style – identify elements of the writer's style of writing, what makes him or her unique

Theme – state a theme for the work using a complete, general statement

Setting – identify the place and time of the action, note any shifts in setting as well

Writer's Intention – identify the writer's purpose for writing

Conflict – identify All conflicts including internal (man vs. himself) and external (man vs. man, man vs. society, man vs. nature)

Point of View/Shifts – *identify the point of view of the work, first person, third person, and any shifts in point of view*

Personal Response – *identify your reactions to the reading AS YOU READ*

Mood/Shifts – *identify the atmosphere or mood of the work, including any shifts in mood*

Title's Significance – *identify how the title relates to the work...consider foreshadowing if applicable*

Characterization Methods – *identify the methods of characterization the writer uses, including behavior, speech, physical description, thoughts and feelings, thoughts and feelings of other characters toward the main character*

ATTENTION: if you want to turn your summer assignment in early, you can turn it into my home mailbox or you can email it to me. Leave me your email address so I can send you a notice that I have indeed received your work.

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Reading Log Template

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck

Date _____

Page #	Definition of term	Example from text	Implication/Impact
22	<i>Tone is the writer's Attitude toward the topic</i>	Steinbeck's tone is clearly observed in the passage. "provide the actual text from the book here", etc.	Steinbeck's tone impacts the novel in several ways...etc. Explain, explain, explain

Composition books (the square black and white notebooks) work great for your log. We'll be logging throughout the year.

AP English Checklist:

Use the following checklist for your reading log. You should have 20 entries.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| ___ Tone/Shifts | Defined ___ | Example ___ | Implications ___ |
| ___ Style | Defined ___ | Example ___ | Implications ___ |
| ___ Setting | Defined ___ | Example ___ | Implications ___ |
| ___ Conflicts | Defined ___ | Example ___ | Implications ___ |
| ___ Theme | Defined ___ | Example ___ | Implications ___ |
| ___ Intention | Defined ___ | Example ___ | Implications ___ |
| ___ Mood/Shifts | Defined ___ | Example ___ | Implications ___ |
| ___ Point of View | Defined ___ | Example ___ | Implications ___ |
| ___ Characterization | Defined ___ | Example ___ | Implications ___ |
| ___ Title's significance | | | |
| ___ Personal Response | | | |

The Overachievers: The Secret Lives of Driven Kids

Fill out the 'Text Connections' page that follows. Answer the questions on your own paper. Type all of your answers. All of your answers should be AP worthy i.e., complete and thoughtful. Remember to express the **insight that you gain** from the text.

AT A GLANCE:

Look at the form and the content before you start to write. Take notes.

Where do you want to place your focus? If you admire several elements (development of characters, narrative voice, imagery, big statement about life, or overall composition), identify what they are and comment on them.

Please, do not let this reading journey be a hardship. As you get older, this time shrinks by the hours and you can't wish it back. Just think, you might end up enjoying what you picked to read. If you are unsure of the titles, ask me for my recommendations. Bon Voyage!

Answer these questions on your own paper. All answers will AP worthy ("We're not worthy" - Wayne's World), but all of you are worthy of composing paragraphs that have something insightful to say. Remember-cut the crap- do not let your voice sound like a rambling monotone speaker. SAY SOMETHING that is fresh, intuitive, and reflective.

TITLE OF THE BOOK: _____ AUTHOR: _____

1.TEXT-TO-SELF: Describe the ways you related to this book. What value was it to you as an individual? This is the most important connection on a personal level.

Remember – NO blah, blah, blah

2. TEXT-TO-ITSELF: Describe the major features of the book's style. This connection is the one most directly relevant for success on an AP English test.

(ditto)

3.TEXT-TO-TEXT: Explain what connections you see between this book and others you have read in this or any other class in school or as an independent reader outside of school. This connection is a fundamental characteristic of a culturally literate and academically successful person.

(and again...)

4.TEXT-TO-WORLD: Explain what connections you see between the important aspects of this book and the world around you. These observations help you develop a "mature academic perspective."

(Go all out – leave your audience wanting to read the book)