

# AP English 11 Language and Composition Summer Assignments: 2017

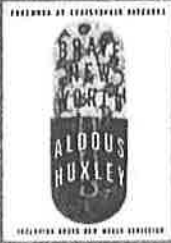

Mr. Gutherman – [bgutherman@ardseyschools.org](mailto:bgutherman@ardseyschools.org)

AP English Language and Composition – language and thought; culture and self. That is the essence of the course. What is it technically speaking? The course is intended to "...engage 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" (*AP Course Description*, 5). The emphasis is placed on non-fiction writing and much of our upcoming year together will be spent reading a wide and rich variety of essays; however, you have the opportunity to experience some very imaginative texts over the summer. These works will begin to raise your awareness of several integral concepts that we will examine: writer's purpose, stylistic decisions, and audience expectations. This also marks the beginning of our focus on cultural studies. Please keep these concepts in the back of your mind as you move through the reading.

## Summer Reading and Writing Requirements

You can gather from the description above that the course provides variety when it comes to what one can read and write. This course also prizes freedom--the student's freedom to pursue areas of personal interest.. As we begin this courses, here are the first three choices that you will make.

**Choice #1: Read one of the following two dystopian novels.**

	
<p><b><i>Brave New World</i> by Aldous Huxley</b> Huxley draws back the curtain on what initially appears to be a utopia, revealing a society soothed into a state of ignorant bliss.</p>	<p><b><i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> by Margaret Atwood</b> A totalitarian theocracy overthrows the U.S. government, and women's rights are obliterated.</p>

### Choice #1 Continued

As you read your novel selection, pause three times to reflect and complete responses to the three prompts below. Pause one-third of the way through and again when you are two-thirds of the way through the novel. Finally, reflect at the novel's conclusion. Refer to the text wherever possible, be clear and detailed.

Entry Template (Approximately 250 words for an entire entry, which includes prompts 1, 2 and 3 below).  
Entry #1 one-third of your way into the novel; Entry #2 = two-thirds; Entry #3: at the novel's end.

1. One scene that got me thinking:
2. One line that I found compelling:
3. One idea I find worthy of discussing in relation to our contemporary culture:

**Note: In addition to seminars, there will be an objective test (multiple choice) on the summer novel in September. You should keep a system of notes that will help you retain key information.**

**Choice #2: Finding the contours of culture. Our primary focus for the fall semester will be this: What kind of culture do I live in, and how do I hope to live in that culture? This assignment is meant to help you become part of the cultural conversation. Read a selection of the voices that have a pulse on our culture and write in response to what you hear.**

You will find these cultural voices in the many sources listed below. You can follow a particular columnist or topic. You can access many of these sites directly or through the [\*\*AHS Library page\*\*](#).

Examples of reputable sources: *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist* Harper's, *The New Republic*, *The New York Times*, *Time Magazine*, *Newsweek*, *The National Review*, *The Nation*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Foreign Affairs and Foreign Policy*, *The Guardian*, *Reason*, *Slate.com*, *Salon.com*, *The Atlantic*, *Psychology Today*, *Nature*.

Now remember, you have the freedom to choose. You can follow an issue of personal interest or follow a writer you love. Between June 26 and September 5, capture seven essays/opinion pieces or feature articles you really care about for their content or admire for their prose. (Please try to space the readings out evenly over the course of the summer.) The focus is up to you: arts, politics, business, environment, technology, education, film/tv, media, etc. (For instance, perhaps you are initially drawn to an essay on the cultural influences of the new film, *Wonder Woman*. You proceed to read a few pieces about that, which leads to essays on feminism and gender equality.)

For each of the seven entries, complete the following:

Record the name of the source, publication date, title and author as well as the URL.
Why did you select this piece?
How does the writer make an impression on you? (Describe the writer's writing style and outlook)
Articulate something with which you agree or disagree.
Describe a new perspective or insight you have as a result of reading this piece.

Remember, your own inquisitiveness is what makes the world so much more interesting!  
Feel free to email me if you have any questions. I hope you enjoy the reading, observing and thinking.

Enjoy summer,

Mr. Gutherman