

**Advanced Placement English Language and Composition**  
**John A. Ferguson Sr. High**  
**Summer Assignment**

The English course you have registered to take next year is a challenging one, designed for highly motivated and highly capable students who are interested in pursuing potential college credit for doing college-level work in high school. The primary purpose of the AP English courses is to give students a complex reading and writing course which prepares them to encounter sophisticated texts with confidence, independence, and creativity. The course centers on the rhetoric of texts, primarily nonfiction. According to the AP Central website, what makes AP English Language and Composition different from other high school English courses is its focus on rhetoric. While promoting writing in many contexts for a variety of purposes, the English Language course is the place where nonfiction texts and contexts take center stage. Here students think deeply about language as a persuasive tool and about the dynamic relationship of writer, context, audience, and argument.

(AP Central/CollegeBoard.com ).

The following assignments are due on the first day of class.

**Assignments**--All responses should be typed, double-spaced, 12-font.

- Put the assignments in a binder with sections clearly marked. Submit on the first day of class.

Your assignment is composed of 3 parts.

**Part I:** *Definition of terms*

**Part II:** *Reading /annotating book and Dialectic Journal*

**Part III:** *Editorials/Commentaries*

Review the information on the website *Silva Rhetoricae* at this link:

<http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/silva.htm> Use this information to define the vocabulary terms. Be prepared to take a test the first week of class.

1. Read and Pay special attention to the tabs:

- \* What is Rhetoric?
- \* Encompassing Terms
- \* Persuasive Appeals
- \* Rhetorical Figures

2. For all the terms listed below, create a 3-column chart as follows:

**Example**

TERM	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE (must be from a non-fiction source)
Rhetoric	The study of effective speaking and writing; the art of persuasion (pronounced “RHEToric” – not “rhetORic”) *	Dr. King’s famous “I Have a Dream” speech is an example of highly effective <b>rhetoric</b> . His message is persuasive because of both his ideas and his skillful arrangement of language.

\* You may wish to add pronunciation keys for some of the more challenging words, as I have done here. This is not, however, required. \* You will be adding to this list of rhetorical terms throughout the year.

**Terms:**

**Word Use and Meaning**

1. Diction
2. Prose
3. Connotation
4. Denotation
5. Colloquial language
6. Sensory detail
7. Audience
8. Purpose

**Devices**

1. Alliteration
2. Metaphor
3. Simile
4. Hyperbole
5. Understatement
6. Satire
7. Sarcasm
8. Voice

**Sentences and Structure**

1. Syntax
2. Parallelism
3. Antithesis
4. Repetition
5. Juxtaposition
6. Anaphora
7. Rhetorical question
8. Anecdote

**Argument and Persuasion**

1. Rhetoric
2. Ethical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos)
3. Thesis
4. Claim
5. Evidence
6. Concession
7. Inductive /deductive reasoning
8. Paradox
9. Logical fallacies

## Part II

Purchase the following text:

***Amusing Ourselves to Death* by Neil Postman** (Students can **expect** several assignments, which may include essays, discussions, and Socratic Seminars, among others over their summer reading during the first week(s) of class. Therefore, students **must** come to the first day of class having read their selected book, completed their notes, and prepared to discuss their selection.)

Read the text in its entirety and while reading the selected book during the summer, you are **highly encouraged** to annotate (highlight and make notes in the margins) the text. What kinds of things should you annotate?

- **Form and Structure:**

What is happening? How much time is covered? If there is an action framed as a flashback, explain. Mark anything else involved in form, such as narrative, parallel events, significant patterns of writing, frame of work, etc..

- **Purpose/Tone/Style:**

What is the author trying to accomplish? What argument is he/she trying to make? What is the author's attitude towards the subject? How does he/she reveal this through diction and syntax? What is the author's style of writing (Fast paced? Heavily descriptive? Unusual phrasing or word choice? Emotional?)

- **Imagery and/or detail:**

Those words that appeal to one or more of the five senses. What is the effect? Look also for recurring images (light/darkness, colors, clothing, odors, sounds). You may also point out details (numbers, facts, description) the author uses to support the argument. How are these images and/or details used?

- **Diction and Syntax:**

How does the author use diction (specific word choice) and syntax (types of sentences and phrases used) to create mood, tone, and meaning?

- **Rhetorical Devices:**

Look for examples of Logos (an appeal to the audience using logic), Pathos (an appeal to the audience's emotions), and Ethos (an appeal to the audience's ethical or moral beliefs). What other types of rhetorical devices are employed (parallelism? metaphor? satire? ect)

As you read or after reading and annotating the text, you are to create a dialectic journal. A dialectic journal is a conversation between you and what you are reading. You will be evaluated on the quality of your response. Your response must show a range of the reading. **Each section should cover the book's content from beginning to end.**

Following is a detail explanation of how you are to create your dialectic journal.

## Dialectical Journal: One Way of Note-taking

Creating and maintaining a dialectical journal will help you tremendously as you read your selected book over the summer. You will be able to use your dialectical journal to help complete assignments your AP English III teacher will be giving during the first week(s) of class. Therefore, you are more likely to be successful if you take the time to create a thorough, high-quality dialectical journal.

### What is a dialectical journal?

“A dialectical journal is a conversation between you and what you are reading. You simply write down **passages** that make you think or interest you and write about **your thoughts**. This process is an important way to understand a piece of literature. By writing about literature, you make your own meaning of the work in order to truly understand it. When you do this yourself, then the text belongs to you--you have made it yours. The passages are there for everyone to read; however, the connections and interpretations are uniquely yours. You are neither right or [*sic*] wrong in your response. So be willing to take risks and be honest.” – definition from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory

1. In your journal, create a table like the one below. Label it **Form and Structure**.

### Form and Structure

<b>Important Excerpts from the Book</b> <i>Use quotes from the text in quotation marks followed by page numbers in parenthesis.</i>	<b>Your Commentary/Reaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Personal Connections</li><li>• Evaluate/Question/Explain</li><li>• Predict</li></ul>

2. Flip a couple of pages in your journal and create another table like the one above. Label this one **Purpose/Tone/Style**.
3. Create additional tables for *each* of the following: **Imagery and/or Detail, Diction and Syntax, and Rhetorical Devices**. Remember to label each table and to leave a couple of blank pages between each table. You should have a total of five tables.
4. As you read, look for *several* quotations from the beginning, middle, and end of your book for each of the categories you made table for. Your quotations should be good illustrations of the author's use of **Purpose/Tone/Structure, Style, Imagery and/or Detail**, etc. Remember, commentary should be in response to meaning not simply a repetition/summary of what you read. **Students will likely be much more successful if they have prepared a vast array of notes in their dialectical journals.** Please see the sample dialectical journal below.
5. Remember to bring your annotated copy of your book and your completed dialectical journal to the first day of class.

Here is a sample dialectical journal entry. Your journal, however, will be much more extensive. Remember that you will have five different tables, one for each of the categories above.

**Form and Structure**

<b>Important Excerpts from the Book</b> <i>Use quotes from the text in quotation marks followed by page numbers in parenthesis.</i>	<b>Your Commentary/Reaction</b>
<i>"Now, on this final day of her life, Mrs. Clutter hung in the closet the calico housedress she had been wearing, and put on one of her trailing nightgowns and a fresh set of white socks" (30).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Connections</li> <li>• Evaluate/Question/Explain</li> <li>• Predict</li> </ul> <p><i>In Part I, Capote switches back and forth from the daily routine of the Clutter family to the actions of Dick and Perry. This structure can be confusing but will hopefully make sense later.</i></p> <p><i>This seems like foreshadowing also. It sounds like Mrs. Clutter will not be around for much more of the book. I wonder where the plot will go next.</i></p>

## PART III

### Editorials/commentaries

Find at least **five** editorials or commentaries / essays (not news articles or informational features) from reputable newspapers or issues-based magazines (you should mix-and-match, using at least two-three different sources). Find articles that you have a strong opinion about that you can agree, disagree or qualify with the author's opinion). You may find articles on line or from actual magazines.

Include a copy of the editorial/commentary. Then, comment on the aspects of each of the editorials that made you think and your thoughts about the editorial or the issues – one response per editorial. Your responses should be thoughtful and detailed and at least **200** words in length. (See additional info below for more specific information for this assignment)

Examples of suggested newspapers/magazines:

*The New York Times* (US newspaper)  
*The Washington Post* (US newspaper)  
*The Times of London* (UK newspaper)  
*The Daily Telegraph* (UK newspaper)  
*Maclean's* (Canadian news magazine)  
*The Economist* (UK news magazine)  
*Time* (US news magazine)  
*Newsweek* (US news magazine)  
*The New Republic* (US political magazine)  
*National Review* (US political magazine)

*The New Yorker* (US ideas magazine)  
*Atlantic Monthly* (US ideas magazine)  
*Harper's* (US ideas magazine)  
*Mother Jones* (US ideas magazine)  
*The Walrus* (Canadian ideas magazine)  
*This* (Canadian ideas magazine)  
*Salon.com* (online ideas magazine)  
*Slate.com* (online ideas magazine)  
*Arts and Letters Daily* an online compilation of items from around the English speaking world)

Examples of newspapers/magazines that are **NOT** RECOMMENDED:

*The Toronto Sun* (newspaper)  
*The Toronto Star* (newspaper)  
*USA Today* (newspaper)  
Any fashion, lifestyle, or popular culture/entertainment magazines

Some questions to think about/comment on: (You **don't** have to answer them all).

- What exactly is the editorialist's viewpoint?
- Do you agree or disagree or qualify (you agree with some but not all) with the writer's viewpoints? Why?
- Did the editorial make you want to know more about the issue?
- What are some of the author's best arguments? Techniques are used? What makes them good?
- Which arguments or points made by the author do not make sense to you and why?
- How does this editorial connect with other knowledge that you have from other sources?
- Anything else this editorial makes you think about...?
- How would you describe the author's tone? (his attitude toward what he is writing)
- How would you describe his style? (his sentence constructions, word choice, rhetorical devices used, organization, etc.)