

Summer Reading Assignment AP Language and Composition

Advanced Placement Language and Composition (AP Lang) focuses on nonfiction: books about real life—history, biography, science, music, art, sports, movies, politics, philosophy, and lifestyle. To prepare for this class, I encourage you to read nonfiction this summer.

Select at least one book that you can read and comprehend comfortably on your own. When selecting a book, use the 5 finger rule: open the book to a random full page. Read the page. While reading, hold up a finger for every unfamiliar or unknown word. The book is right for the reader if the reader is holding up 2 or 3 fingers—1 finger indicates no challenge, and 4 might be too much of a stretch.

The content of the book also has to be right for you. Because AP Lang is in many respects a college-level class, you should read books that are about important issues that adults face, but if some adult content is uncomfortable for you to read about, don't read about those issues. Sometimes the content, or maybe the style or word choice, make a book unreadable. If a book becomes overwhelming, select another book.

Below, you will find a list of potential books. You can choose from this list, or you can choose a different book and get it approved by your English teacher. I encourage you to read a hard copy of the book if you are able. Many of these books should be available at your local library, or through the [Libby](#) app that lets you read ebooks and audiobooks from your local library. You may also purchase a copy of your own.

While you read, keep a quote log. Select 3 important quotes in the book. Pick one from the beginning, one from the middle, and one from the end. Write down the quote, and the page number it came from. Bring the quotes to class on the second day we meet.

Also, you can read more than one of these books if you want to. If you read a second book, (and collect 3 quotes from it) then I'll award you a free pass on an assignment of your choosing. And if you read a third book (and collect 3 quotes from it) then I'll award you two free passes on assignments of your choosing. (Does not apply to major grades or projects, only in-class or homework assignments.)

Email Mr. Houghton if you have any questions-- robert.houghton@houstonisd.org

Happy reading, and see you in the fall!

Non-Fiction Book Options

Start with something you're interested in or something you want to learn more about...

American Studies

- [One Summer: America 1927](#) by Bill Bryson
- [One Day: The Extraordinary Story of an Ordinary 24 Hours in America](#) by Gene Weingarten
- [Monsters: A Fan's Dilemma](#) by Claire Dederer

Science & Investigation

- [Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our Worlds, Change Our Minds & Shape Our Futures](#) by Merlin Sheldrake
- [The Butchering Art: Joseph Lister's Quest to Transform the Grisly World of Victorian Medicine](#) by Lindsey Fitzharris
- [Trinity: A Graphic History of the First Atomic Bomb](#) by Jonathan Fetter-Vorm (graphic novel)

Sports

- [King of the World: Muhammad Ali and the Rise of an American Hero](#) by David Remnick
- [Basketball \(and Other Things\)](#) by Shea Serrano (graphic novel)
- [Soccer in Sun and Shadow](#) by Eduardo Galeano

Autobiography & Biography

- [I am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up For Education](#) by Malala Yousafzai
- [Crying in H-Mart: A Memoir](#) by Michelle Zauner
- [Heavier Than Heaven: A Biography of Kurt Cobain](#) by Charles R. Cross

Psychology & Sociology

- [Humankind: A Hopeful History](#) by Rutger Bregman
- [The Sociopath Next Door](#) by Martha Stout
- [Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood, and The Prison of Belief](#) by Lawrence Wright