

AP English Language and Composition Summer Assignment

Part I: Writing Sample: Who Are You? One Word and 500 more

We will spend much of the year talking about cultivating, crafting, and protecting the unique voice that is you. With this in mind, we would like you to arrive on the first week of school with a writing sample that lets us know something about you as a writer and as a person.

The genesis for this assignment came from a recent essay in The New York Times by Scott Korb, a writing instructor at the New School. In it, he notes:

Somewhere along the way, these young people were told by teachers that who they are in their writing ought to be divorced from who they are on their phones, or as the writer Grace Paley may have said, with their families and on their streets. They know a private “I” who experiences devotion and frustration. I see them text in class and talk and laugh and sometimes cry in the halls. They wear band T-shirts, often from my era, so I assume they have taste. I watch them read.

But no matter who they are in private, when I first encounter their writing, they use only the public passive voice: The text was read. The test was taken.

It’s never: I read the text. I took the test. And it is never ever: I loved the text with queer devotion!

It’s true that a student’s writing style isn’t everything and that much of what we call good writing cannot be taught. (Bad writing apparently has been.) One can be devoted to something — a band from the ’90s, surfing, YHWH— without being able to put that devotion into words.

But my experience with students has me worried that years of “texts being read” and “tests being taken” have created the sense in them that whatever they’re devoted to doesn’t matter much to the rest of us — so long as they know the answers to our questions, so long as they pass the test. Writing so passively and with what they’ve been taught is appropriate and “objective” distance from topics they often seem disinterested in, these young people signal to me that they’re still waiting for something important or real to happen to them.

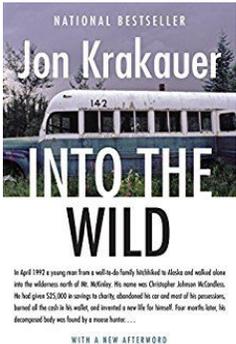
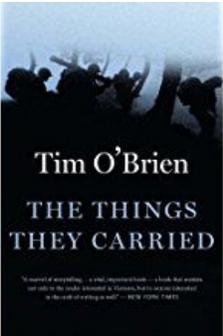
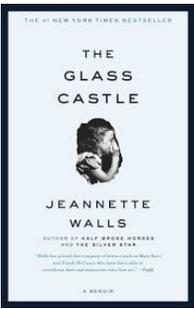
Perhaps they feel that only someone who has lived through something momentous — like the teenagers who survived the Parkland, Fla., shooting — has earned the right to be heard. It’s hard to imagine any of those young activists writing, “The rally was held because Congress was lobbied and guns were purchased.”

But what about those queer devotions and frustrations, experiences and ideas that have stirred an individual heart into peculiarity?

In a 1-2 page essay (no more than 500 words), select ONE adjective that serves as both title and argument for your essay. Using first person, concrete details and examples from your life, and as much creativity and risk you can muster up at the end of summer, tell us how that ONE word defines you. The word can be positive or negative; however, if you chose a negative word think about how it could actually be positive (ex. Selfish— while often seen as a negative attribute, being selfish can create tremendous opportunities for success and, in practical terms, increase survival). You may be serious or silly; sarcastic or literal; irreverent or cautious; you pick the tone that works best for you. This is a writing sample; however, it should reflect your best effort. This essay is due Friday, August 16, 2019, however if you would like to submit early you may contact Mrs. Laufer at terrie.laufer@ocps.net for summer submission instructions.

CYPRESS CREEK HIGH SCHOOL
AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUMMER READING 2019
Part 2: Reading Assignment

For your summer reading assignment, examine the synopsis for each of the following three books. You will choose **TWO** to read. You will complete a **dialectical journal in a composition book** (see directions below) for **ONE** and use the **SECOND** book for an activity that you will complete in class during the first week of school. To be clear: the expectation is that by the first day of school, you will have read two of the three books on this list. The **journal** should be submitted on **Friday, August 16th**. **Please be aware of the following: Any plagiarism, from the Internet, other students, or any other resources will result in a zero, a phone call, and possible referral. Confused? Don't wait until August!** Email questions to terrie.laufer@ocps.net

	<p><i>Into the Wild</i> by Jon Krakauer--In April 1992 a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. His name was Christopher Johnson McCandless. He had given \$25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter. How McCandless came to die is the unforgettable story of <i>Into the Wild</i>.</p>
	<p><i>The Things They Carried</i> by Tim O'Brien--<i>The Things They Carried</i> is a ground-breaking meditation on war, memory, imagination, and the redemptive power of storytelling. Depicting the men of Alpha Company: Jimmy Cross, Henry Dobbins, Rat Kiley, Mitchell Sanders, Norman Bowker, Kiowa, and the character Tim O'Brien, who has survived his tour in Vietnam to become a father and writer at the age of forty-three.</p>
	<p><i>The Glass Castle</i> by Jeannette Walls --<i>The Glass Castle</i> is a A tender, moving tale of unconditional love in a family that, despite its profound flaws, gave the author the fiery determination to carve out a successful life on her own terms. The novel details the story of Jeannette Walls and her family. Constantly short on cash and food, the family moves around the country frequently and tries to re-settle. Though the family is dysfunctional, the memoir communicates itself without condemning either of the Walls parents.</p>

Dialectical Response Journal Directions

Dialectic means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” 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."

For this part of your summer assignment, you will complete a dialectical journal for one novel to aid in your understanding of the story and to demonstrate that understanding to your teacher.

Dialectical journals are not overly-complicated and will help you keep track of important points in the text as you read. Through them, you are essentially having a “conversation” with the text (jotting down insights, questions, ideas, and thoughts) and with yourself. Your goal is to make notes about points in the novel that you find significant, profound, noteworthy, ironic, troublesome, sad, interesting, confusing, etc...

For this summer reading assignment, you should use a composition book to keep your responses together. Create two columns on the page: the left side should contain quotes from the book and the right, your responses.

Directions: Choose one of the three books for your assignment. Next, consider the following questions as you read and answer each question completely and comprehensively in your journal. Your opinion is important! Use quotes to explain your answers.

The Glass Castle:

1. As a successful adult, the author finds her estranged mother digging for food out of dumpsters. When the author speaks to her mother, and voices her concern about her life, the mother tells the author that her values are misplaced. What does this mean?
2. Consider the quote: “Wherever you go, there you are.” Throughout the book, the author works to escape her poverty-stricken and unpredictable family life that her parents have developed. Yet, her memories still hold her strongly. What does this say about how strongly family ties can bind? How does the quote apply to this question?

Into the Wild:

1. Chris McCandless has a burning desire to live as independently as possible. Is he a true rebel, or does he simply want to test his abilities to the absolute limit? Explain with examples.
2. Chris McCandless’s choice to leave societal burdens resulted in heartache for his family and friends, yet he remained anything but anonymous. Were the final years of his life a transitional period of growth, or the acts of a selfish person? Explain.

The Things They Carried:

1. Discuss the double meaning of the title of this book. Choose three characters or events and explore the “things they carried.”