

# English 11 AP

## Summer Assignment



### Rationale for Summer Reading

In the York County School Division, we believe summer reading should empower students to develop an appreciation for reading and enable them to become lifelong readers and learners. The required English summer reading assignment allows students to broaden their scope and knowledge of novels and other literary works, and it provides an opportunity for students to engage in critical thinking and analysis of texts. For students who continue to take advanced courses, summer assignments develop progressively each year. By senior year, students are expected to be fully sophisticated in their knowledge and use of the major elements and characteristics of literature.

### Required Summer Reading

York County students enrolled in English 11 Advanced Placement at **Grafton High School** for the next school year are required to read (prior to the beginning of school in September) **two full-length works** that have been identified by their school.

**Book 1:** *Into the Wild* by John Krakauer

**Book 2:** *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote

### Summary of Summer Assignment

Students will read and complete twelve (12) annotations on **both full-length works** identified above (total of 24 annotations). Specific details about how to complete the annotations are provided. Students are expected to write formally, and in present tense; no contractions. All students will turn in these annotations on the first AP English 11 class in September. **Late work will not be accepted.**

Students will also write an in-class essay on one of the two required summer reading books. The annotations will be used to write the in-class essay. The teacher will announce which book is selected for the essay topic when the essay is assigned. The essay will be assigned to students within the first three weeks of school. The possible essay topic samples are provided below.

### Possible Essay Topics

1. Determine if the narrator of a selected work is believable. Find places in the work that establish the narrator's credibility. Defend your selections.
2. Describe what fresh insights the writer wants his or her readers to understand and to realize by reading this work. In other words, what is the author's purpose?
3. Identify a current topic such as genocide, war, epidemics, politics, natural disaster, social injustices, immigration, colonialism, or scientific advances, and connect it to the development of the conflict in the novel.
4. Compare and contrast two characters from the selected work and discuss their responses to an economic, sociological, or psychological issue.
5. Use the provided teacher-selected quotation to discuss a thematic issue, characterization, or point of view.
6. Review the work and select passages, phrases or words that foreshadow the ending scene. Discuss how foreshadowing is used as a literary device during the novel.
7. Discuss the development of setting and historical background in the novel and explain how they contribute to theme and tone.
8. No scene of violence exists for its own sake in a novel. Discuss the significance of violence in a specific scene from the novel and relate its significance to the overall meaning of the work.
9. Identify isolation and loneliness in the selected work. Discuss whether social circumstances or poor decision-making caused the isolation and loneliness. Are isolation and loneliness always negative elements? How so?
10. Select a character who deliberately chooses a particular course of action and explain the rationale for the choice.
11. Identify the era or real people involved in the era of the work's setting and discuss to what degree the historical background contributes to the meaning of the work or contributes to a character's decisions or behaviors.

### Evaluation

There will be several grades based on the summer reading assignment.

- Quiz grade for the annotations
- Quiz grade for the in-class essay (timed writing)

## Instructions

Summer reading assignments, just like all work throughout the year, should be the student's own work without the assistance of unauthorized aids. Although there are many ways to take notes, annotations are an important way to demonstrate engagement with what is being read. For students who continue to take advanced courses, summer assignments develop progressively each year. By the senior year, students are expected to be fully sophisticated in their knowledge, language, and use of the major elements and characteristics of literature.

Annotations should reflect thoughtful commentary that demonstrates critical thinking through reflection, analysis, questioning, evaluating, and determining relevance and importance.

## Reading and Analysis Strategies

The four reading strategies are designed to assist students in providing a valid interpretation of the author's messages by avoiding weak, inarticulate, insincere, simple, and or/obvious entries without any attempt to convey the meaning of the content. The four reading and analysis strategies mentioned below are the foundation for annotations.

Questioning: A crucial part of critical reading is the pursuit of the causes, consequences, and significance of the choices made by the author, characters, or society represented within a literary text. For this strategy, pose a thoughtful question that pushes past simple plot events, such as wondering what will happen next or how the novel will end. Next, once a question has been raised, it must then be answered. The answers should seek to describe the larger purpose(s) of the text as a whole. Be careful not to merely summarize.

Determining Importance: When reading longer literary texts, a critical reader will work to determine the importance or significance of the text as a whole. For this strategy, choose a quotation that specifically contributes to this larger significance, and then use that passage to explain and justify your own interpretation of the text's overall meaning. This analysis could possibly focus on the treatment of certain groups of people, traits, or values within society. It could also represent the values of a certain historical time period. The options are infinite, but the response should be detailed, argumentative in nature, and push beyond the importance of the passage to the plot.

Making Connections: Literature is best understood and most meaningful when related to personal knowledge. For this strategy, choose a passage and establish a thoughtful connection to another literary work (i.e. mythology, novel, poem, short story, play, artwork, movie and/or television show) historical events, or social issues that are relevant within modern society. Be mindful that making a basic connection is not enough. It is necessary to develop and explain the significance of this connection. For instance, do both texts originate from similar causes or sources? Do they result in similar consequences for characters? It is important to explain why the texts share a connection and why it is significant enough to appear in multiple literary texts and often across the span of many years.

Interpreting Language: In order to fully appreciate the language used in literature, a reader must interpret it on both the surface (literal) and deeper (figurative) levels. For this strategy locate a passage that contains a powerful literary device. There is no need to define the literary term or to explain why this is an example of the term. Instead, explain why the use of that specific device, comparison, or image is significant within the text as a whole. Explanations related to the purposes, causes, and consequences of the device are good places to begin. Again, push past superficial or cursory observations. Some possible devices include (but are not limited to):

- Allusion
- Connotation
- Diction (meaningful word choice)
- Hyperbole
- Metaphor
- Motifs (repetition of ideas, symbols)
- Personification
- Simile
- Symbolism

Note: An excellent resource to assist with annotations can be found at the College Board site:  
[http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/teachers\\_corner/197454.html](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/teachers_corner/197454.html)

## Step-by-Step Instructions for Each Annotation Type

The purpose of annotations is to discover the **THEME**: the theme is the author's message. No matter what type of annotation you do, you are doing commentary or explanation to get to the theme. You must show **HOW** the passage makes meaning, and **WHAT** it reveals about the author's purpose. Here are the steps to follow for each type of annotation.

### Questioning:

Situate the context; what is going on?

Then, pose the question.

Then, explain the passage using quotation snippets and clearly explain the answer to the question.

Finally, link it to the theme of the work as a whole.

### Determining Importance:

Situate the context; what is going on?

Then, explain what the passage is showing or demonstrating on a deeper level.

Then, explain the passage using quotation snippets and clearly explain the meaning.

Finally, link it to the theme of the work as a whole.

### Making Connections:

Situate the context; what is going on?

Then, explain what the passage is showing or demonstrating on a deeper level.

Explain the passage using quotation snippets and clearly explain the meaning you derive.

Then, connect the piece to **another work of literature**: literature includes television shows, movies, artwork, poems, and reading you have done in class. **DO NOT USE PERSONAL EXAMPLES.**

Finally, link it to the theme of the work as a whole: compare or contrast the author's themes.

### Interpreting Language:

Situate the context; what is going on?

Then, explain what the passage is showing or demonstrating on a deeper level.

Explain the passage using quotation snippets and clearly explain the meaning you derive.

You must mention at least three literary techniques.

Finally, link it to the author's point.

## Expectations

Before students submit their work, they should check to ensure they have met the following requirements:

- Students should apply one of the four strategies to each annotation prepared.
- Each reading strategy should be addressed at least once, and there should be a relatively even distribution of these reading strategies. In other words, do not use any strategy too heavily.
- Students must ensure the annotations **span the entire book**. Do not concentrate all annotations at the beginning, or in one chapter. They should be used throughout the book to demonstrate engagement with the text.
- Passages must be quoted as they appear in the book. Page numbers should be included. In the citation, provide the author's last name and page number after the quotation. EX: John says, "This is the final chance I'm giving you" (Rhodes 23).
- For English 11AP, twelve (12) annotations are required per book for a total of twenty (24) annotations. **Do not use the commentary/quotations from Sparknotes, Shmoop, or other online sources; this should be original work. Plagiarism is using, paraphrasing, quoting, or borrowing from the ideas of others without giving proper credit, and will result in a zero.**

## Frequently Asked Questions

- **How long is a passage or quotation for annotation?** It may be 2-4 sentences. Do not spend time writing whole pages of text. Select important quotations that will help to point to the theme or message.
- **What should an annotation look like?** Annotations must be written in complete sentences, using proper grammar and diction. Literature is discussed in present tense. Avoid 1<sup>st</sup> person personal pronouns (I, me, we, you, us, your). Sample annotations and step by step directions are provided for each annotation type.
- **What is the format?** Students may access a fillable template for the summer assignment by visiting the YCSD website: [http://www.yorkcountyschools.org/parents/studentInfo/summer\\_readingLists.aspx](http://www.yorkcountyschools.org/parents/studentInfo/summer_readingLists.aspx) .

For general questions on the summer assignment, please contact: Ms. Heather Brown at [hbrown@ycsd.york.va.us](mailto:hbrown@ycsd.york.va.us) .

A hard copy of the summer reading assignment is located in the Guidance Department, and it is posted on the school's website under Summer Reading.