Preparation Work for AP Language and Composition 2026-2027

AP English Language and Composition is an introductory college-level composition course. Students cultivate their understanding of writing and rhetorical arguments through reading, analyzing, and writing texts as they explore topics like rhetorical situation, claims and evidence, reasoning and organization, and style. - College Board

Overview

In preparation for AP Language and Composition, incoming students are required to read over the summer in preparation for the course and subsequent AP Exam. The goal of this assignment is to not only begin your preparation for the exam, but also, to initiate you into the conversation about ideas and teach you to analyze a text from a language, not a literary, perspective. AP Language and Composition is a college level course; it is not a preparation for college. While this assignment won't be due until August 31, 2026, it is highly recommended that you complete it during the summer. If you are looking for ways around this assignment, you should not enroll in this class. Previous students have found it difficult to be prepared for the course when the summer reading is not completed. If you have any questions regarding this assignment please come see Mrs. Ingram in R-7 or email r.ingram@bonita.k12.ca.us.

Assignment: Read and Annotate a **Nonfiction** Text *AP Lang is a nonfiction based course*
Please read and annotate one of the nonfiction texts from the list below and be prepared for a corresponding writing assignment. It is preferable that you get your own copy, but you can visit a library for a borrowed copy if need be. Digital versions of books will not be accepted. Make sure you read an original, unabridged version of the text - **DO NOT read an adaptation for young adults.**

Annotate the book as you read. You should know how to annotate from your previous English classes, but just in case, annotating means that you are actively reading the text and critically thinking about its content. You are to engage in a conversation with the text and write your critical, analytical comments directly on the text. You can do this with sticky notes (3x3 or larger), if you have borrowed it, or directly on the book, if you have purchased it. If you have your own book, you may also highlight or underline, but you **MUST** annotate next to it. Your annotations should move beyond personal commentary and questions and into analysis of how the piece is crafted. It is expected that your annotations be consistent and continuous throughout the text. **A minimum of 2 thoughtful and thorough annotations are required per page.** Make sure you annotate any prologues and/or epilogues your book might have. Annotating instructions are on the back of this sheet. The purpose is to help you engage in the reading in a way to prepare you for rhetorical analysis, argument, and synthesis, and to show evidence of that engagement on each page.

Nonfiction Text Options:

1) Campbell, Olivia, *Sisters in Science: How Four Women Physicists Escaped Nazi Germany and Made Scientific History – An Extraordinary WWII Biography of Friendship and Discovery*
2) Capote, Truman, *In Cold Blood*
3) Haidt, Jonathan, *The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness*
4) Krakauer, Jon, *Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mt. Everest Disaster*
5) Laskas, Jeanne Marie, *Concussion*
6) Westover, Tara, *Educated*

Due Date: August 31, 2026

Annotating Instructions

So what is annotating…?
Annotate: verb [-tating, -tated] to add critical or explanatory notes to a written work

Types of Annotations

- Questions **AND** Answers
- Summary of Main Ideas
- Personal Connections to the Text
- Explanation of the Text
- Analysis of Important Passages
- Focus on the Author's Purpose of the Text and **HOW** They Support Their Purpose

DIDLS Annotating *AP Language and Composition Focus*

- **D: Diction - the connotation of the word choice** What words does the author choose? Consider his/her word choice compared to another. Why did the author choose that particular word? What are the connotations of that word choice?
- **I: Imagery - vivid appeals to understanding through the senses - concrete language** What images does the author use? What does he/she focus on in a sensory (sight, touch, taste, smell, etc.) way? The kinds of images the author puts in or leaves out reflect his/her style? Are they vibrant? Prominent? Plain? NOTE: Images differ from detail in the degree to which they appeal to the senses.
- **D: Details - facts that are included or those that are omitted** What details does the author choose to include? What do they imply? What does the author choose to exclude? What are the connotations of their choice of details? PLEASE NOTE: Details are facts or fact-lets. They differ from images in that they don't have a strong sensory appeal.
- **L: Language - the overall use of language, such as formal, clinical, jargon Consider language to be the entire body of words used in a text, not simply isolated bits of diction. For example, an invitation to a wedding might use formal language, while a biology text would use scientific and clinical language.** What is the overall impression of the language the author uses? Does it reflect education? A particular profession? Intelligence? Is it plain? Ornate? Simple? Clear? Figurative? Poetic
- **S: Sentence Structure - how structure affects the reader's attitude** What are the sentences like? Are they simple with one or two clauses? Do they have multiple phrases? Are they choppy? Flowing? Sinuous like a snake? Is there antithesis, chiasmus, parallel construction? What emotional impression do they leave?

Passive vs. Active Annotations
• Passive Annotations do not involve much thought or comprehension. Avoid excessive underlining and highlighting.
• Active Annotations are written connections, questions, and observations. They require readers to think and express their ideas