

## AP English Language and Composition: Johnson and Tomlin 2017 Summer Reading

Welcome to AP English Language and Composition! This course is primarily centered on analyzing nonfiction works and creating well-developed, convincing arguments. With this in mind, we have selected assignments that will begin to prepare you for the sort of analysis and argumentation that we will do on a daily basis throughout the year.

### Overview of Assignments

We strongly advise that you purchase a copy of each of both books, *Outliers* and *They Say, I Say*. In particular, we will return to *They Say, I Say* periodically.

Assignment 1: read and annotate *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell

Assignment 2: read *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* by Gerald Graff and Kathy Birkenstein and complete the exercises described below

Assignment 3: locate six editorials/commentaries/essays from reputable newspapers or magazines and create an editorial response journal

### Assignment 1: *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell

Annotations: Good readers interact with texts as they read them. Effective interaction with the text improves comprehension and analysis, and gives you notes to draw from in writing and in discussion. Therefore, as you read *Outliers*, annotate the text. This will help to prepare you for the extensive discussions that we will hold in the first weeks of the school year, and for the essay that you will write about the book and for the test over the book.

#### **Annotation Guide:**

1. As you read, mark passages that you find interesting, meaningful, profound, or that stand out for some other reason.
2. Select 5 of these passages for deeper analysis (and discussion when we return in the fall). These should be sections of approximately 1 page that we can analyze in depth through discussion. Endeavor to select passages that you deem especially vital to the work as a whole, and to the author's central argument or meaning.
3. Annotate your selected passages using the following analytical/annotation acronyms and strategies:

**SOAPStone:** Use these annotation elements to better understand the *rhetorical context* of the piece. I advise you to independently research these aspects of the text, as doing so will give you a much more thorough understanding of the rhetoric of the text.

**Note:** You do not need to do a SOAPStone analysis of each passage—it is an overall, big-picture sort of analysis. Therefore, do the research suggested above, and look for clues that would allow us to draw additional subtle inferences about the author and context from the text.

**Speaker:** Think about how who the writer is and what he/she knows is communicated. This should help you decide the author's credibility.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- ✓ Introductory facts: author backgrounds and relationship to the topic, bias, etc.
- ✓ Ethos- how the author establishes credibility and character on the given topic
- ✓ Note words and language that indicate the author's attitude or tone and where it shifts or changes and why
- ✓ When the author directly or indirectly states how he/she feels
- ✓ Note key lines that stand out as crucial to the author's argument

**Occasion:** Think about what caused the author to write about this topic and whether or not it is a valid reason.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- ✓ The author's reasons for writing- what is the motivation?
- ✓ Historical, political, social issues surrounding the topic
- ✓ The author's personal reasons and well as the greater world/national reasons for the piece
- ✓ Evidence of views characteristic of the time period and culture surrounding the work
- ✓ Descriptions of class judgments, racism, gender biases, stereotypes, etc.

**Audience:** Think about what kind of person or people the author intended as the audience and whether or not the author is able to connect with that audience effectively.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- ✓ Evidence of who (and it can be more than one) the author is trying to reach.
- ✓ Where the author directly or indirectly address a specific audience
- ✓ Any “Call to Action” that the author is issuing to the reader.
- ✓ Pathos- where the author appeals to your sense of emotion through anecdotes and figurative language

**Purpose:** Think about the author’s purpose in writing this book and whether or not they are effective in that purpose.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- ✓ Specific reasons for writing: informing, persuading, arguing, refuting, exemplifying- but make sure you note specifics.
- ✓ Logos: the author’s appeal to reason. Examine how he/she makes the reader believe in that purpose.

**Subject:** Think about what the book is discussing and whether or not the author shows why this subject is important.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- ✓ Elements related to the problem and issue
- ✓ How the author develops or deepens the aspects of the problem/issue
- ✓ How the author show the complications related to the subject and the implication of it to you, the nation, the world, etc.

**Authorial Devices and Structures in the Argument:** Think about the author’s techniques in delivery and how effective author’s methods are for rhetorical purposes - the use of subtleties, patterns, style, structure, etc.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- ✓ Changes in point of view/emphasis
- ✓ Crucial language/vocabulary- not just a word that you don’t understand, but one that seems crucial to understanding the argument- look these up.
- ✓ Stylistic techniques: irony, satire, humor, exaggeration, repetition/patterns, possible symbols, significant metaphors and other notable literary and rhetorical devices
- ✓ How the author’s structure of the argument/book influence the reader and relate to the subject, audience and purpose
- ✓ Mark passages that seem especially important or interesting to the work. Choose passages that would be useful to talk about in a discussion over the work.

**Be prepared to discuss to discuss the following as well:**

- Defend, refute, or qualify the ideas that Gladwell presents in *Outliers*—to what extent do you agree or disagree with Gladwell’s ideas? Be able to provide thoughtful, rational reasoning for your position.
- For what audience(s) is the work intended? How do you know? How successful is the book in convincingly conveying its message and ideas to that audience?
- What are the major stylistic aspects of Gladwell’s writing, and how do they contribute to the messages?
- What exigency prompted Gladwell to write the book? That is, what was going on in the world and in his life that prompted Gladwell to write the work?

When we return in August, we will hold extensive discussions over the SOAPS elements of Gladwell’s text, and other aspects of the book as well. Thorough and attentive reading and annotation will prove very helpful in these discussions.

In the first weeks of the school year, you will write an argumentative essay over *Outliers*. This essay will ask you to defend, challenge, or qualify some of the central arguments and ideas in Gladwell’s book. As you read, you should begin to formulate your position on Gladwell’s arguments—do you agree with his arguments? To what extent? What

points do you disagree with? The essay will also require you to provide thoughtful, rational reasoning for your position, and to support your reasons with evidence, so begin thinking through these aspects as well.

**Finally, be prepared for a rigorous exam over *Outliers*.** The exam will include both reading comprehension questions as well as analysis-level questions similar to the kinds of questions that will appear on the AP exam. Read carefully and be sure to closely and carefully read the book in its entirety.

### **Assignment 2: *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* by Gerald Graff and Kathy Birkenstein**

The AP English Language and Composition course focuses on the ability of students to not only analyze texts, but to also create an argument utilizing their prior knowledge as well as outside sources. In order to prepare students to write solid arguments, you are to read *They Say/I Say* and complete the activities that follow each chapter.

These activities are to be completed using MLA format and submitted electronically via Turnitin.com. The assignments are listed below:

- Introduction: Entering the Conversation—Exercise #2
- Chapter 1: Starting with What others Are Saying—Exercise #1
- Chapter 2: The Art of Summarizing—Exercise #2
- Chapter 3: The Art of Quoting—Exercise #1
- Chapter 4: Three Ways to Respond—Exercise #1
- Chapter 5: Distinguishing What You Say from What They Say—Exercise #1
- Chapter 6: Planting a Naysayer in Your Text—Exercise #1
- Chapter 7: Saying Why It Matters—Exercise #2
- Chapter 8: Connecting the Parts—Exercise #1
- Chapter 9: Academic Writing Doesn't Always Mean Setting Aside Your Own Voice—None
- Chapter 10: The Art of Metacommentary—Exercise #2
- Chapter 11: Entering Class Discussions—None
- Chapter 12: Reading for the Conversation—None

### **Assignment 3: Analyze newspaper/magazine editorials**

This assignment will give you practice in reading and responding to essays and arguments as well as in becoming an “informed citizen.”

- A) First, brainstorm a list of issues that matter to you—national, international, local, political, environmental, religious, cultural, etc.
- B) Next, consider the list you wrote and locate editorials or commentaries/essays that address issues that are meaningful to you. Over the summer, read, clip/print out, and paste/staple into a journal at least SIX editorials or commentaries/essays (NOT news articles or letters to the editor) from reputable newspapers or issues-based magazines. Be sure to identify the source and date of the article, along with the name of the columnist. Also, a minimum of three different sources must be used in the compilation of your editorial journal.

Examples of suggested newspaper/magazine sources:

- The Boston Globe (newspaper)
- The New York Times (newspaper)
- The Wall Street Journal (newspaper)
- USA Today (newspaper)
- The New Yorker (magazine)
- Atlantic Monthly (magazine)
- Newsweek, Time, or Harper's (magazines)

Enter your responses to the editorials, commenting on the aspects of each editorial that made you think, and explaining your own opinions about the editorial or the issue. Use the various templates in *They Say, I Say* as needed

in your responses. There is no specific guideline for each as to length, but your responses should be thoughtful and detailed. Some questions you might want to think about/comment on:

- Do you agree or disagree with the editorial’s viewpoints? Why?
- What about the editorial made you want to know more about the issue?
- What are some of the author’s best arguments? What makes them so good?
- Which arguments or points made by the author do not make sense to you? Why?
- How does this editorial connect with information you already knew?
- Does the editorial make you think about anything else or remind you of something else?

### Format

- ✓ Use standard MLA format for all aspects of each response
- ✓ Include a proper MLA heading and header
- ✓ Double-space your document. Use 12-point, Times New Roman font
- ✓ 1-2 pages per response
- ✓ In the title line, include the phrase “Editorial Response” with a number for the response, then the title of the Article. For instance “Editorial Response 1: ‘Why it is Important to Do Your Summer Reading’.”

### Submission

- ✓ Carefully edit your *They Say, I Say* exercises and your editorial responses before submitting them. This assignment is the first impression you will make on us—you should aim to make it a good one.
- ✓ You will turn in typed, printed copies of all of assignments 2 and 3 in a folder with brads.
- ✓ Make sure your name is clearly visible on the front of the folder.
- ✓ Turn in assignment 2 (*They Say, I Say* exercises in the left-hand pocket of your folder.
- ✓ For assignment 3, print out each of your articles. Number them according to the numbers you used for your responses—make sure the numbers match.
- ✓ Put your articles in a folder with brads. The articles go in numerical order in the brads, with response #1 first and #6 last. Place the numbered responses in the right-hand pocket in the same order.
- ✓ When we return to school in August, you will need to upload assignments 2 and 3 to Turnitin.com. Keep all of your exercises and responses in a single file on your computer, rather than using a separate file for each response.

**Important Note:** This should go without saying—all written work must be entirely your own. Do not work on these assignments with other students or “share” your work with one-another. Also do not use any sources such as Sparknotes, Enotes, Shmoop, and the like. Any phrases, sentences, and/or ideas copied from analytical sources (either paper or online) or the work of other students will result in a 0 for the assignment.

I look forward to meeting you in August, when we will kick off what will no doubt be a challenging, fun, and exciting year. Enjoy the reading!

You may email me with questions at [Daniel.johnson@fortbend.k12.tx.us](mailto:Daniel.johnson@fortbend.k12.tx.us). Please include “Summer Reading” in the subject line. I will respond at my earliest convenience.