Advanced Placement: English Language and Composition (4 assignments)
Summer Reading Assignments ~ 2018 ~ Ms. Elizabeth Siegfried

Rationale: To help prepare for the rigorous course work expected of you throughout the semester, you are challenged with three compelling reading, writing, and THINKING assignments. The important reminder here is to think about what you are reading and concisely yet specifically articulate those thoughts in writing. The work you submit is your first impression, an application of the skills you have previously acquired. Therefore, summer reading is intended to be a purposeful and true assessment tool to gauge the student’s ability to read, analyze, and interpret literature at a level expected of incoming grade AP students. Written communication skills are simultaneously assessed, also at a level expected of incoming AP students.

Assignment #1: The Martian by Andy Weir

The Martian by Andy Weir is part of the One Book One School initiative. Our class will participate in class, school-wide and community activities center ed on the book’s themes. Read, relax, and enjoy.

Assignment #2: Non-Fiction Text Analysis (75 points)

• OPTION 1: Nickel and Dimed by Barbara Ehrenreich
  OR
  OPTION 2: In Cold Blood by Truman Capote
  OR
  OPTION 3: The Color of Water: A Black Man’s Tribute to his White Mother by James McBride

• While reading this non-fiction work, take notes analyzing:
  Option 1: Complete the SOAPST (see below) and then take notes as you read, analyzing the nature of American life Ehrenreich presents, specifically what she is implying about living on minimum wage
  Option 2: Complete the SOAPST (see below) and then take notes as you read, analyzing the nature of violent crime Capote presents, specifically what he’s implying about what compels cold-blooded behavior
  Option 3: Complete the SOAPST (see below) and then take notes as you read, analyzing the nature of humanity and family McBride presents and the specific manner in which he develops both
    o DO NOT SUMMARIZE THE TEXT – notes must be analysis focused on the assigned topic above
    o The SOAPST and text analysis notes are to be submitted the first day of school.
    o Be prepared for an in-class essay analyzing this text during the first week of the semester.
    o Try to have your own copy of this book so you can annotate significant passages, write questions or comments in the margins, etc.
    o 25 point Analytical Notes & SOAPST + 50 point Essay = 75 points total

SOAPST: An Acronym for Text Analysis
S=Subject: What is the general topic of the text; stated in a few words or phrase.
O=Occasion: In what context was the piece written? Note the larger occasion, that is, the broad issue which is the center of ideas and emotions. Also note the immediate occasion, that is, the issue that catches the writer's attention and triggers a response. (ex: David Denby’s “High School Confidential: the truth about teen movies” is written for the broad issue of the nature of stereotypes in teen movies, but it’s in direct response to the Columbine massacre April 1999). – You may have to do a bit of research on the historical context of the text. If so, be sure to give credit to any sources you use.
A=Audience: Who was the original, intended audience for the text? What assumptions can you make about the intended audience?
P=Purpose: What is the author's/speaker's reason for writing the text? Considering the purpose is important so that the reader can examine the writer’s argument and the logic of it. What is the message? Does the speaker try to spark a reaction in the audience? How is the text supposed to make the audience feel? What is its intended effect?
S=Speaker: For non-fiction, typically, the speaker is the author. But consider: What persona does the speaker adopt in their narration? Is s/he credible? How do you know?
T=Tone: What is the author's attitude toward the subject? Is it consistent throughout or are there tone shifts in the text? Be sure to use ADJECTIVES when describing tone. Be sure to use text support to show examples of tone.
Assignment #3: *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* by Lynne Truss © 2006 (paperback) (75 points)

- While reading this book about the significance of correct punctuation, **take specific notes on your learnings/the significance of each chapter.** 1)Intro – Seventh Sense  2)Tractable Apostrophe  3)That’ll Do Comma  4)Airs & Graces  5)Cutting a Dash  6)Little Used Punctuation Mark  7)Merely Conventional Signs
- **These notes are to be submitted the first day of school.**
- You will take a test on the punctuation and writing guidelines from this text in the first week of class.
- **Be sure to have the correct edition of the text.**
- 25 point Chapter Notes + 50 point Exam = 75 points total

Assignment #4: Rhetorical Précis & Columnist Assignment (75 points)

- Collect **five** columns by any of the authors on the following list. Use **different authors** for each article.
- Write a Rhetorical Précis for each of the five columns you have selected.
- **Please DOUBLE-SPACE TYPE** each Rhetorical Précis (12pt. Times New Roman).
- This assignment is due the first day of school.
- You will be submitting five columns, each with a five sentence Rhetorical Précis.
- Recommendation: Read an article or two from a few different columnists who sound interesting to you prior to selecting your articles. You can access archived articles from the publication’s homepage.

RHETORICAL PRÉCIS DIRECTIONS:

- The purpose of a Rhetorical Précis is to **insightfully analyze** a text in a clear and concise manner.
- In this analysis, students demonstrate that they can **analyze** an author’s main argument as well as **comprehend** the strategies used in presenting that argument and its effect/purpose.
- It’s a simple format for a complex answer in only 5 sentences. Don’t summarize or stray from the format.
- Closely adhere to the following format for each précis you write. This assignment is to show accuracy in analysis, not creative writing. ;-) 

Sentence 1: Introduce the **writer** (or speaker), the **text** (with publication name and date), and the **central claim**:
- full name of the author, “title of the work,” with (date in parenthesis)
- an active and accurate verb (e.g. "asserts," "argues," "denies," "refutes," "proves," "disproves," "explains"…)
- a **that** clause containing the major claim or thesis statement of the work.
  Example: “Charles S. Peirce's article, "The Fixation of Belief" (Popular Science Monthly, 12 Nov. 1877), asserts that humans have psychological and social mechanisms designed to protect and cement (or "fix") our beliefs.”

Sentence 2: Explain how the author **develops and advances** the thesis statement/argument.
  Example: “Peirce backs this claim up with descriptions of four methods of fixing belief, pointing out the effectiveness and potential weaknesses of each method.”

Sentence 3: State the author’s **purpose**, followed by an **in order to** statement (which qualifies the purpose).
  Example: “Peirce's purpose is to point out the ways that people commonly establish their belief systems in order to jolt the awareness of the reader into considering how their own belief system may be the product of such methods and to consider what Peirce calls "the method of science" as a progressive alternative to the other three.”

Sentence 4: Describe the **intended audience**, justifying your claim with evidence/author’s relationship with the audience.
  Example: “Given the technical language used in the article, Peirce is writing to a well-educated audience with some knowledge of philosophy and history and a willingness to other ways of thinking.”

Sentence 5: Explain the **significance** of this work.
  Example: “This work is significant because it helped to shape the methods of modern scientific inquiry.”
Put it all together, and you have one pretty insightful paragraph:

Charles S. Peirce's article, "The Fixation of Belief" (Popular Science Monthly, 12 Nov. 1877), asserts that humans have psychological and social mechanisms designed to protect and cement (or "fix") our beliefs. Peirce backs this claim up with descriptions of four methods of fixing belief, pointing out the effectiveness and potential weaknesses of each method. Peirce’s purpose is to point out the ways that people commonly establish their belief systems in order to jolt the awareness of the reader into considering how their own belief system may the product of such methods and to consider what Peirce calls "the method of science" as a progressive alternative to the other three. Given the technical language used in the article, Peirce is writing to a well-educated audience with some knowledge of philosophy and history and a willingness to other ways of thinking. This work is significant because it helped to shape the methods of modern scientific inquiry.

COLUMNS TO USE FOR ASSIGNMENT #4

David Brooks: New York Times - has been a senior editor at The Weekly Standard, a contributing editor at Newsweek and the Atlantic Monthly, and he is currently a commentator on "The Newshour with Jim Lehrer." He is also a frequent analyst on NPR’s "All Things Considered" and the "Diane Rehm Show." His articles have appeared in The New Yorker, The New York Times Magazine, Forbes, the Washington Post, the TLS, Commentary, The Public Interest and many other magazines.


Maureen Dowd: New York Times - won the 1999 Pulitzer Prize for distinguished commentary, Dowd … has covered four presidential campaigns and served as White House correspondent.

Thomas Friedman: New York Times - was awarded the 1983 Pulitzer Prize for international reporting (from Lebanon) and the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for international reporting (from Israel).

Ellen Goodman: Boston Globe - is a Pulitzer prize winning columnist, author, speaker [who] has long been a chronicler of social change in America, especially the women's movement and its effects on our public and private lives.

Bob Herbert: New York Times - was a national correspondent for NBC from 1991 to 1993, reporting regularly on "The Today Show" and "NBC Nightly News." He had worked as a reporter and editor at The Daily News from 1976 until 1985, when he became a columnist and member of its editorial board.


Nicholas Kristof: New York Times – is a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner. Kristof has lived on four continents, reported on six, and traveled to more than 140 countries, plus all 50 states, every Chinese province and every main Japanese island. Mr. Kristof has taken a special interest in Web journalism and was the first blogger on The New York Times Web site.

Kathleen Parker: The Washington Post - has worked at a variety of large and small newspapers, covering anything from California cuisine to bass fishing contests in the rural South. Now, she serves on the USA Today's Board of Contributors and her twice-weekly column is published in 350 different newspapers.


Brent Staples: New York Times - holds a PhD in psychology from The University of Chicago. His memoir, Parallel Time: Growing up in Black and White, was the winner of the Anisfield Wolff Book Award (previous winners include Ralph Ellison and Zora Neale Hurston).

Have questions? I can help. 😊 Please email at esiegfried@tvsd.org

Academic honesty and originality of work is paramount. Evidence of plagiarism of any kind will result in a zero grade for the assignment.