

Advanced Placement English Language & Composition

Summer Assignment- Plan accordingly

Your school Google accounts will be down September 2nd and 3rd

Welcome to the adventure of language and composition. In other words, welcome to a **college level course** that examines the various ways writers use language to create meaning. This is primarily a writing course; however, it is not a creative writing course (although we may delve into this a bit). Instead, the purpose of this course focuses on rhetoric and argument and manipulation of language by writers.

Before exploring language and its uses, it is imperative to establish a common understanding of analysis and to personally explore topics which rouse your passions. This will be done through summer assignments listed below. **Assignments are due the first day of class, printed. Staple RUBRIC SHEET to the top.**

- Please type your responses. Font: Times New Roman (TNR), Size: 12, Spacing: 1.5 or 2.
- Heading on Left: Your Name, Teacher Name, Class, Day Month Year, Assignment, Word Count.

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READING SELECTIONS LINKED HERE: “[HOW TO MARK A BOOK](#)” AND [NABOKOV’S SPEECH](#).

“How to Mark a Book: by Mortimer J. Adler, Ph. D.

Read the chapter titled above. After reading, write a 271-313 word well-written, reflective response on your own process as a reader and how these ideas influence your own writing. Consider carefully what is meant by the process “marking a book” (or text)—what steps might be part of this method of reading? How might you apply the process as a reader? How might this help you develop as a writer?

READING SELECTION LINKED ABOVE.

Movie Review

With all the new movies that come out over the summer and past school year, it may be hard to pick. Pick one. Write a review of the movie you selected. Before writing, read several movie reviews from newspapers, magazines, or online. Try to pick several different reviews of the same movie to help differentiate each writer’s focus, tone, organization, diction (word choice), selection of details, etc. Create your own style for your review!

Note the conversational style, short sentences and paragraphs, and interesting (or hilarious) comparisons most movie reviewers use. Pay attention to how the writer captures the reader’s attention in the beginning. Observe how the writer interjects specific examples from the movie to support the statements—or opinions—s/he makes about the movie.

Your movie review must include within its writing...

- The title, director, distributor, length in minutes, major actors/actresses of the movie.
- The Rating the movie received (G, PG, PG13, R), and why this rating was given (or appropriate!).
- An interesting opening paragraph which captures the attention of readers.
- Background information about the movie—brief review of general plot.
- Specific statements about the quality of the writing, cinematography, acting, etc.
- Supporting examples (quotes, scenes, etc) for all statements about the quality of the movie.
- A short statements, or accusation, on the type of person who might enjoy the movie.
- Your rating for the movie. Devise your own system (like five stars) and explain the scoring.
- An interesting closing line or thought provoking statement.

“Writing a Précis” by Michael S. Siferth (below)

“Good Readers and Good Writers” by Vladimir Nabokov

Please read the article below on “Writing a Précis” by Michael S. Seiferth. Then, read and annotate the speech by Vladimir Nabokov, “Good Readers and Good Writers,” originally delivered in 1948. When finished, write a 101-151 word précis on the Nabokov’s speech. Bring the **annotated speech** to class! **READING SELECTIONS LINKED ABOVE.**

Writing a Précis by Michael S. Seiferth

As serious academic writers, you will have to read and remember large amounts of prose (and poetry) along with scientific and social-studies articles as well. In many of your college courses, you are probably able to memorize facts and key statements with relative ease, but in English courses and others which also require close, critical reading, you are asked to go a step further, i.e., to present the informing argument of, let’s say, an article and to reproduce the logical development of the argument in as cogent a form as possible in your own words. In order to demonstrate that you have *assimilated* the central argument and proof of another scholar’s critical interpretation, you must be able to summarize *and even compose a précis* of an argument.

A summary or a *précis* is NOT a personal interpretation of a work or an expression of your opinion of the idea; it is, rather, an exact replica in miniature of the work, often reduced to one-quarter to one-fifth of its size, in which you express the complete argument!

What actually happens when you write a *précis*? First, you must understand the complete work so that you can *abstract* the central argument and express it cogently and completely. Next, you must develop the argument ***exactly as the writer has presented it*** AND reduce the work by 75-80% of its size. Of course, this is possible when you consider exactly how you “learn” to read the work.

The key word here is *assimilation*. When you read the material, it is probable *that you will understand only those parts which have associations within your own experience (intellectual, emotional, physical, etc.*

How you actually go about writing a *précis* depends largely on your ability to restate the writer’s central ideas after you have assimilated them in your own mind.

Here are the rules of the game:

1. Read the article **many times** most carefully.
2. Write a *précis* of the article in which you state the entire argument and present the logical progression (the development) of the argument.
3. Reduce the article to one-fifth to one-quarter of its original length *and omit nothing* from the essential argument. **This is, in reality, the key to the whole enterprise!**
4. Type the *précis* and begin with your abstraction of the central, informing idea of the article. Having understood and written the central idea, present the essential argument in as cogent manner as possible.
(Clue: Once you have assimilated the article through the illustrations and examples the writer uses to make his/her abstract ideas concrete, you do **not** have to include these in your *précis*!)
5. Here is a central rule:

Do not copy a single sentence from the article! You may use key words and phrases only when you are expressing ideas which are technically precise or when you feel comfortable using the writer’s own words, i.e., you understand exactly he or she means, and there is really no better way to express the concept.

Finally, in order to complete this assignment, you will have to read the work most carefully, ask questions about the work repeatedly, and reach into your own experiences so that you can shape most cogently the writer’s concepts!

This assignment is **not easy**! When you have completed it well, you will **never, never forget** the argument, the examples, and the development of the article. More than likely you will also be learning that when you write research papers and other critical papers, your ability to write the *précis* is central to the basics of analysis, synthesis, comparison, and other key, higher order thinking skills absolutely required for your success in college and in the profession or career you have chosen when you graduate.

If you do not have the time to do it right, when will you find the time to do it over?

~ John Wooden

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Summer Assignments RUBRICS

Name: _____ Date: _____

Response “[How to Mark a Book](#)”

Effective	Adequate	Basic	Unsatisfactory
Analyzes, connects, and rationalizes the personal processes of reading and writing through “close reading”	Examines reading process, writing, and a connection through “close reading”	Responds to prompt; attempts to consider close reading	Vague, insipid response and consideration

Movie Review

Effective	Adequate	Basic	Unsatisfactory
All required elements are included	Almost all required elements are included	Most required elements are included	Some to none of the required elements included
Review effectively includes specific diction and organization to convey tone and author’s opinion	Review adequately includes specific diction and organization to convey tone and author’s opinion	Review attempts to include specific diction and organization to convey tone and author’s opinion	Review inadequately uses specific diction and organization to convey tone and author’s opinion

Annotation of Nabokov’s “[Good Readers and Good Writers](#)”

Effective	Adequate	Basic	Unsatisfactory
Annotations effectively and clearly demonstrate critical thinking process of text	Annotations mostly demonstrate critical thinking process of text, may have a few lapses	Annotations attempt to demonstrate critical thinking process of text	Annotations demonstrate no critical thinking process of text OR are minimal to nonexistent

Précis of Nabokov’s “Good Readers and Good Writers”

Effective	Adequate	Basic	Unsatisfactory
Main arguments effectively, clearly, and accurately identified	Main arguments clearly and accurately identified; may have minor lapses, but do not detract from précis	Arguments identified, but summarized, generalized; lapses detract from meaning	Summarizes or identifies main ideas; no argument identified OR Attempt made but incorrect
Writing is articulate, succinct, fluid with minimal errors	Writing is clear and focus, minimal errors do not prevent meaning	Writing attempts to be clear and focused, errors cause confusion or prevent meaning	Writing is unclear; errors prevent understanding

ATTACH RUBRIC SHEET TO ASSIGNMENTS.

DUE FIRST DAY PRINTED.

[HTTP://WWW.EN.UTEXAS.EDU/AMLIT/AMLITPRIVATE/SCANS/GOODRE.HTML](http://www.en.utexas.edu/amlit/amlitprivate/scans/goodre.html)

-NABOKOV’S SPEECH

[HTTP://ACADEMICS.KEENE.EDU/TMENDHAM/DOCUMENTS/ADLERMORTIMERHOWTOMARKABOOK_200608](http://academics.keene.edu/tmendham/documents/adlermortimerhowtomarkabook_200608)

[02.PDF](#) -ADLER’S HOW TO MARK A BOOK