AP English Language and Composition Summer Reading 2018

According to the College Board’s description of the course, “the purpose of the AP English Language and Composition course is to enable students to read complex texts with understanding and to write prose of sufficient richness and complexity to communicate effectively with mature readers.” Reading at a higher level is an essential skill for any scholar (and it improves writing skill), but we want you to also enjoy what you read. Because of this, we are giving you a lot of choice in your summer reading. Please peruse the provided list and choose at least TWO books to read this summer. While there are some works of fiction on the list, AP Language is primarily a course focused on non-fiction. Because of the heavy emphasis on non-fiction, we strongly suggest at least one of your choices be a non-fiction book. If you really want to read books not on the list, that’s okay too, but you should be striving to ensure that your chosen books are equivalent in literary merit, difficulty, and complexity. Please also read about the book before you choose it to ensure that you and your guardians would be comfortable with you reading it; some books on the list explore mature and controversial topics.

And remember, at its core, AP Language is a course in argument; think about the overarching argument(s) each book you read is making. You do not need to agree with the author’s ultimate claim(s), but you need to be able to identify and dissect it.

1. A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius - Dave Eggers
2. Between the World and Me - Ta-Nehisi Coates
3. Bitter is the New Black - Jen Lancaster
4. Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking - Malcolm Gladwell
5. Born a Crime - Trevor Noah
6. Brain on Fire: My Month of Madness - Susannah Cahalan
7. Brave New World - Aldous Huxley (fiction)
8. Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance - Barack Obama
10. Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything - Steven D. Levitt & Stephen J. Dubner
12. I Am Charlotte Simmons - Tom Wolfe (fiction)
15. Lexicon - Max Barry (fiction)
16. Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong - James W. Loewen
17. Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America - Barbara Ehrenreich
19. SuperFreakonomics: Global Cooling, Patriotic Prostitutes, and Why Suicide Bombers Should Buy Life Insurance - Steven D. Levitt & Stephen J. Dubner
21. The Big Short: Inside the Doomsday Machine - Michael Lewis
22. The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair That Changed America - Erik Larson
23. The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks - Rebecca Skloot
24. The Perfect Storm - Sebastian Junger
26. The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace - Jeff Hobbs
29. Walden - Henry David Thoreau
30. Youth in Revolt - C. D. Payne (fiction)