

**Summer Preparation for AP Language and Composition**  
**Mr. Clausen, Seoul American High School, SY 2009-10**

Your summer 'assignments' are really minimal, in terms for what is required. You will be pleased to hear that there is no writing 'required.' The only thing required is the acquisition in advance of your I-Search books—these you must have with you on the first day of school. You must be able to find (auto)biographical and literary criticism on all selected authors (these must be with you as well). The other items are recommendations for the wise AP student to pursue.

- 1) **The I-Search Project:** This synthesis project is described in detail on the flip side of this paper. But for now, this is what you should do: select your I-Search author(s) and these should be authors of literary merit; be sure you also find/buy (auto)biographical material and literary criticism. It is best that **you buy all these books** so that you can highlight in them while doing note cards and dialectical journaling. You can choose one author who has four books, or multiple authors whose books must have similar themes (e.g., women's roles, racism, man's inhumanity to man, etc.). By the way, **you will only be able to use one book that you read in Ms. Helm's and Ms. Hicks' classes** (and yes, I have their reading lists). Be sure to choose an author(s) that you can live with the whole year—you don't want to be bored. Read several chapters to 'taste' the interest factor of your author. For literary criticism, a good series is under the name Harold Bloom, and some of these are biocrits (satisfying both of those portions).
- 2) **Reading:** Read newspapers, quality magazines, and quality books, books, books. Some of the students in this year's AP class suffered from an insufficient reading background. The better readers will usually do well on the AP and the SAT tests. The more you read, the more you know.
- 3) **Reading literature of literary merit:** Stephen King, Ann Rice, John Grisham, Stephanie Meyer—these are all great popular fiction writers, but popular fiction writers are, in most cases, not ones of literary merit. Writers of literary merit are ones that have been recognized for the depth of their thinking, the universality of their ideas but not just because they are a 'good read' or a good beach book. This kind of reading will also assist you in preparing for the senior year's AP Lit exam, and, of course, for college. For more guidance, do an Internet search looking for titles of '**classic**' literature, or writers who have won the **Nobel Prize in Literature**—this will give you sufficient lists to select both your summer reading and your I-Search reading. The wise AP reader will save the selected I-Search books for reading during the school year and **read 10-15 other books for summer enrichment**. Also, search contemporary classic writers: Barbara Kingsolver, Annie Dillard, Maya Angelou, etc.
- 4) **Vocabulary:** Want to bolster your vocabulary? Go to Dictionary.com and subscribe to Word of the Day. Record them daily, study them, use them. Also do an Internet search 'words needed for high school grads' or '100 most needed words'—find lists of that nature and start to study them. Make flash cards for easier studying. You can do the same thing for **terminology for rhetorical strategies** (we will be analyzing these heavily in the course).
- 5) **Mechanics, Usage, Punctuation:** Some of this year's unwise AP students came into the class weak in writing skills. It is an expectation that your prose is already fairly clean of textual flaws. So, find one of those self-help books 'out there' to help you review, practice, learn correct comma, semi-colon, colon, apostrophe, etc. usage. You could purchase Strunk and White's Elements of Style as one example. Or you could come to my room and check out an Elements of Writing book for summer study. And you should go to College Board.org and sign up for the Question of the Day—good way to practice verbal and math samples.
- 6) **SAT Practice:** The school has purchased individual licenses (you should already have your own code) for you to practice SAT tests—these are very valuable, and you should be doing the practice tests over the summer. Especially study the explanations for why you missed items.