

**Hardin Valley Academy**  
**AP English Language & Composition**  
**Summer Reading Assignment and Options 2023-24**

Students enrolling in AP English Language and Composition are expected to complete the following summer reading assignment which consists of **reading two required texts** and **completing an argument analysis and opinion/reaction response** for each text (described on pages 2-3).

**Grading:** Summer Reading assignments will be graded for completion and are meant to give students an advantage or boost at the beginning of the course. There is no way to do the assignment poorly or in a wrong manner. The purpose of summer reading is to encourage students to keep their academic minds engaged over the summer break and to give the instructor a sense of their writing skills, proficiencies, and challenges at the beginning of the course.

Summer reading assignments are due beginning **August 9, 2023** (first full day of school) and **no later than 11:59 p.m. September 5, 2023**, for full credit. Any summer reading assignments turned in after September 5 will earn partial credit. No credit will be awarded after October 6, 2023.

**\*Book 1 (required):** Each student is expected to read *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller.

*The Crucible*, published in 1953, is a dramatized and partially fictionalized story of the Salem witch trials that took place in the Massachusetts Bay Colony during 1692–93. Miller wrote the play as an allegory for McCarthyism, when the United States government persecuted people accused of being communists.

**\*Book 2 (required):** Each student is expected to read *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry

*A Raisin in the Sun* debuted on Broadway in 1959. The title comes from the poem "Harlem" (also known as "A Dream Deferred") by Langston Hughes. The story tells of a black family's experiences in south Chicago, as they attempt to improve their financial circumstances with an insurance payout following the death of the father. The New York Drama Critics' Circle named it the best play of 1959, and in recent years publications such as The Independent and Time Out have listed it among the best plays ever written.

Anyone with an objection to either of the required texts should contact one of the instructors for an alternative assignment.

## Argument Analysis and Opinion Response Format

One of the concepts of AP English Language and Composition is that everything is an argument. We will be examining the tools of rhetoric--how writers and speakers use words, sentences, and writing structures to present information, to make arguments and claims, and to support those arguments and claims in order to convince, persuade, and otherwise affect readers.

**Argument Analysis:** The books you read for summer reading have embedded in them many arguments. For the argument analysis portion of your assignment, examine one of the arguments presented in your text(s). Do your best to summarize the overall position the author seems to take, and support your analysis with at least one and no more than three excerpts from the text. You may choose to write about the book's main argument or a lesser argument the author makes. This is may be a shift in the way you have thought about literature in the past. If you are struggling to understand what/where the argument is, examine the events of the text, the things that happen to the characters, as well as any claims or arguments the characters make. You can also think about what you have learned from reading the text. If you have learned something, the author has been able to persuade you of something.

**Opinion Response:** After examining one of the arguments in the work, respond to that argument with a response that indicates your opinion about the argument of the text. Do you agree? To what extent? Do you disagree? Why? What did you take away from reading the author's argument? What questions do you still have?

The Argument Analysis and Opinion/Response template (below) will help you structure your responses. You may use it very closely and "fill in the blanks" with your own words as indicated, or you may use it as a model of the kinds of information and criteria your analysis and responses should include. Your argument analysis and opinion response should be written in complete sentences, should use specific references from the text(s), and should represent the best of your thinking and writing skills.

## Argument Analysis

One of the arguments made by author's name (last name is sufficient--do not use first name only) in her/his work, Title, is that \_\_\_\_\_ (state in brief, general terms at least one of the arguments the author presents in the text). More specifically, X (author's last name) argues that \_\_\_\_\_ (give a more detailed, focused account of the author's claim/position). She/he writes, " \_\_\_\_\_." (Choose a passage from the text that illustrates the author's position.) In this passage, X is suggesting that \_\_\_\_\_. (restate, paraphrase, or explain in your own words what the author is saying or what we are to understand about the author's point.) She/he goes on to say, " \_\_\_\_\_," (another piece of textual support for the author's claim identified at the beginning) which indicates \_\_\_\_\_. (your understanding of the author's point). (You may continue to do this--present textual evidence and explain or comment on it as much as you need until you feel the argument has been thoroughly examined.) In conclusion, X's belief is that \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Opinion/Reaction

X is wrong/right, because \_\_\_\_\_ (explain how you connect or disagree with the author in general terms) . More specifically, I believe that \_\_\_\_\_ (dig a little deeper into the reasons behind your reaction). For example, \_\_\_\_\_ (present an example from your experience or something else you've read/seen/heard that matches up with or challenges the author's ideas). Although X might object that \_\_\_\_\_ (identify the way the author might disagree or differ from your perspective), I maintain that \_\_\_\_\_ (explain the way you see things). Therefore, I conclude that \_\_\_\_\_ (identify the way the author's argument is resolved in your mind, one way or another).