Summer assignments are meant to help prepare you for the upcoming year and allow us to hit the ground running in August. One of the ways they help prepare you is by letting you see the teacher’s expectations and how he thinks about the class you’re about to take. A second way they are meant to prepare you is by giving you a chance to practice the skills you’ll be using throughout the year. Finally, they may introduce ideas or themes that run throughout the course, and by encountering them in the weeks before class starts, you’re ready to begin discussing them and making connections early in the year. These assignments do all three.

You have four summer assignments:

1. Understanding AP Language
2. Reading and Writing
3. Vocabulary Acquisition
4. Independent Reading

Assignment 1: Understanding AP Language

You need to know what you’ve signed up for. AP Language and Composition is not simply “Honors English III.” The College Board, the agency that oversees all AP courses, describes AP Language and Composition as a course that “aligns to an introductory college-level rhetoric and writing curriculum.” Accordingly, you will be expected to develop the skills necessary to read and write at a college-level. We acquire skills through practice. This means that the reading and writing demands of this course will be intense.

The more you understand about what AP Language and Composition is and how it is supposed to work, the better your chances of success. To that end, please do the following before you begin assignments two and three:

- Read through this two-page AP Language course overview
- Study and prepare to apply this AP Reading Study Skills Guide
- Study and prepare to apply this AP Writing Study Skills Guide

After you’ve read these three guides, create a folder titled “AP Language” in your bookmarks in your preferred browser. Save all three of these guides in that folder for future reference.
Assignment 2: Reading and Writing

Reading

Read the following texts over the summer (preferably in this order):

- *Thank You for Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson Can Teach Us About the Art of Persuasion*, by Jay Heinrichs
  - Nonfiction. A highly-regarded and humorous introduction to rhetoric. It is recognized as a text that meets the curricular requirements of AP Language and Composition. We will be referring to this text throughout the year, so I strongly recommend purchasing your own copy. In each chapter, Heinrichs introduces several related tools of persuasion: techniques and devices a speaker can use to persuade his audience to think, feel, or do, whatever he wants them to think, feel, or do.

- *Julius Caesar*, by William Shakespeare
  - Drama. This play serves as a masterclass in rhetoric - the art of persuasion. We’ll refer to it through the course of the year. You can consider it a kind of textbook, or perhaps a handbook of examples of rhetorical devices. The more familiar you are with its contents, the better.

I strongly recommend you find and purchase your own copies of these texts so that you can annotate them as you read and refer to them throughout the year. Consider them investments. You should be able to find used copies at McKay’s or online.

Writing

After reading both works, choose a scene from *Julius Caesar* where one character tries to persuade another character to think, feel, or do something. Then use what you’ve learned from *Thank You for Arguing* to analyze how the speaker in your chosen scene attempts to persuade his or her audience. Do not simply summarize what s/he says; rather, discuss how the speaker employs specific “tools” to move his or her audience.¹

Your essay must be in MLA format and carefully proofread. You must turn in a copy of your essay to Canvas during the first week of school. This will be your first grade for AP Language.

¹ Heinrichs refers to the specific techniques and devices as “tools.” He discusses them in each chapter and summarizes them at the end of each chapter.
Assignment 3: Vocabulary Acquisition

You will need to build a sophisticated and specific vocabulary to be successful in AP Language and Composition. Accordingly, you must familiarize yourself with the following terms. I recommend either creating flashcards using 3x5 index cards or using a vocabulary program like Memrise or Quizlet.

To aid your understanding of these terms, I suggest looking for examples of them online. Seeing one good example of zeugma² is better than any definition!

You will take an exam over these terms when you return in August. Your score on the exam will be one of your first grades in AP Language.

Alliteration: The repetition of the same sound or letter at the beginning of consecutive words or syllables.

Allusion: An indirect reference, often to another text or an historic event.

Analogy: An extended comparison between two seemingly dissimilar things.

Anaphora: The repetition of words at the beginning of successive clauses.

Anecdote: A short account of an interesting event.

Annotation: Explanatory or critical notes added to a text.

Antecedent: The noun to which a later pronoun refers.

Antimetabole: The repetition of words in an inverted order to sharpen a contrast.

Antithesis: Something that is the opposite of another thing. Ex: Slavery is the antithesis of freedom.

Aphorism: A short, astute statement of a general truth.

Appositive: A word or phrase that renames a nearby noun or pronoun.

Archaic diction: The use of words common to an earlier time period; antiquated language.

Argument: A statement put forth and supported by evidence.

²“You are free to execute your laws - and your citizens - as you see fit.” - Jonathan Frakes as William Riker in Star Trek: The Next Generation
**Aristotelian triangle**: A diagram that represents a rhetorical situation as the relationship among the speaker, the subject, and the audience (see rhetorical triangle).

**Assertion**: An emphatic statement; declaration. An assertion supported by evidence becomes an argument.

**Assumption**: A belief or statement taken for granted without proof.

**Asyndeton**: Leaving out conjunctions between words, phrases, clauses.

**Attitude**: The speaker’s position on a subject as revealed through his or her tone.

**Audience**: One’s listener or readership; those to whom a speech or piece of writing is addressed.

**Authority**: A reliable, respected source—someone with knowledge.

**Bias**: Prejudice or predisposition toward one side of a subject or issue.

**Cite**: Identifying a part of a piece of writing as being derived from a source.

**Claim**: An assertion, usually supported by evidence.

**Close reading**: A careful reading that is attentive to organization, figurative language, sentence structure, vocabulary, and other literary and structural elements of a text.

**Colloquial/ism**: An informal or conversational use of language.

**Common ground**: Shared beliefs, values, or positions.

**Complex sentence**: A sentence that includes one independent clause and at least one dependent clause.

**Concession**: A reluctant acknowledgment or yielding.

**Connotation**: That which is implied by a word, as opposed to the word’s literal meaning (see denotation).

**Context**: Words, events, or circumstances that help determine meaning.

**Coordinating**: Grammatical equivalence between parts of a sentence, often through a coordinating conjunction such as and, or but.

**Counterargument**: A challenge to a position; an opposing argument.

**Cumulative sentence**: An independent clause followed by subordinate clauses or phrases that supply additional detail.
**Declarative sentence**: A sentence that makes a statement.

**Deduction**: Reasoning from general to specific.

**Denotation**: The literal meaning of a word; its dictionary definition.

**Diction**: Word choice.

**Documentation**: Bibliographic information about the sources used in a piece of writing.

**Elegiac**: Mournful over what has passed or been lost; often used to describe tone.

**Epigram**: A brief witty statement.

**Ethos**: A Greek term referring to the character of a person; [one of Aristotle’s three rhetorical appeals](#) (see logos and pathos).

**Figurative language**: The use of tropes or figures of speech; going beyond literal meaning to achieve literary effect.

**Figure of speech**: An expression that strives for literary effect rather than conveying a literal meaning.

**Hyperbole**: Exaggeration for the purpose of emphasis.

**Imagery**: Vivid use of language that evokes a reader’s senses (sight, smell, taste, touch, hearing).

**Imperative sentence**: A sentence that requests or commands.

**Induction**: Reasoning from specific to general.

**Inversion**: A sentence in which the verb precedes the subject.

**Irony**: A contradiction between what is said and what is meant; incongruity between action and result.

**Juxtaposition**: Placement of two things side by side for emphasis.

**Logos**: an appeal to logic; [one of Aristotle’s three rhetorical appeals](#) (see ethos and pathos).

**Metaphor**: A figure of speech or trope through which one thing is spoken of as though it were something else, thus making an implicit comparison.

**Metonymy**: Use of an aspect of something to represent the whole.
**Occasion**: An aspect of context; the cause or reason for writing.

**Oxymoron**: A figure of speech that combines two contradictory terms.

**Paradox**: A statement that seems contradictory but is actually true.

**Parallelism**: The repetition of similar grammatical or syntactical patterns.

**Parody**: A piece that imitates and exaggerates the prominent features of another; used for comic effect or ridicule.

**Pathos**: A Greek term that refers to suffering but has come to be associated with broader appeals to emotion; one of Aristotle’s three rhetorical appeals (see ethos and logos).

**Persona**: The speaker, voice, or character assumed by the author of a piece of writing.

**Personification**: Assigning lifelike characteristics to inanimate objects.

**Polemic**: An argument against an idea, usually regarding philosophy, politics, or religion.

**Polysyndeton**: The deliberate use of a series of conjunctions.

**Premise, major, minor**: Two parts of a syllogism. The concluding sentence of a syllogism takes its predicate from the major premise and its subject from the minor premise.

- Major premise: All mammals are warm-blooded.
- Minor premise: All horses are mammals.
- Conclusion: All horses are warm-blooded (see syllogism).

**Propaganda**: A negative term for writing designed to sway opinion rather than present information.

**Purpose**: One’s intention or objective in a speech or piece of writing.

**Refute**: To discredit an argument, particularly a counterargument.

**Rhetoric**: The study of effective, persuasive language use; according to Aristotle, use of the “available means of persuasion.”

**Rhetor**: A speaker who uses rhetoric; one who is attempting to persuade others

**Rhetorical modes**: Patterns of organization developed to achieve a specific purpose; modes include but are not limited to narration, description, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, definition, exemplification, classification and division, process analysis, and argumentation.
**Rhetorical question**: A question asked more to produce an effect than to summon an answer.

**Rhetorical triangle**: A diagram that represents a rhetorical situation as the relationship among the speaker, the subject, and the audience (see Aristotelian triangle).

**Satire**: An ironic, sarcastic, or witty composition that claims to argue for something, but actually argues against it.

**Scheme**: A pattern of words or sentence construction used for rhetorical effect.

**Sentence patterns**: The arrangement of independent and dependent clauses into known sentence constructions—such as simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex.

**Sentence variety**: Using a variety of sentence patterns to create a desired effect.

**Simile**: A figure of speech that uses “like” or “as” to compare two things.

**Simple sentence**: A statement containing a subject and predicate; an independent clause.

**Source**: A book, article, person, or other resource consulted for information.

**Speaker**: A term used for the author, speaker, or the person whose perspective (real or imagined) is being advanced in a speech or piece of writing.

**Straw man**: A logical fallacy that involves the creation of an easily refutable position; misrepresenting, then attacking an opponent’s position.

**Style**: The distinctive quality of speech or writing created by the selection and arrangement of words and figures of speech.

**Subject**: In rhetoric, the topic addressed in a piece of writing.

**Subordinate clause**: Created by a subordinating conjunction, a clause that modifies an independent clause.

**Subordination**: The dependence of one syntactical element on another in a sentence.

**Syntax**: Sentence structure.

**Synthesize**: Combining or bringing together two or more elements to produce something more complex.

**Thesis**: The central idea in a work to which all parts of the work refer.

**Thesis statement**: A statement of the central idea in a work, may be explicit or implicit.
**Tone:** The speaker’s attitude toward the subject or audience.

**Topic sentence:** A sentence, most often appearing at the beginning of a paragraph, that announces the paragraph’s idea and often unites it with the work’s thesis.

**Trope:** Artful diction; the use of language in a nonliteral way; also called a figure of speech.

**Understatement:** Lack of emphasis in a statement or point; restraint in language often used for ironic effect.

**Voice:** In grammar, a term for the relationship between a verb and a noun (active or passive voice). In rhetoric, a distinctive quality in the style and tone of writing.

**Zeugma:** A construction in which one word (usually a verb) modifies or governs—often in different, sometimes incongruent ways—two or more words in a sentence.
Assignment 4: Independent Reading

For the next twelve months, you’ll be expected to read an average of three hours a week outside of class. While this may sound like a lot, it’s quite manageable if you think of it - and treat it - as simply 30 minutes a day, six days a week. What you read is up to you; my only requirement is that it has pages. Twitter doesn’t count; *Harry Potter* does. Use this time to read things you like. Please don’t make yourself miserable.

In addition to reading for three hours a week, You’ll be expected to keep up with the time you’ve spent reading and the number of pages you’ve read in that time. To help you do this, I’ve created [this chart, which I expect you to fill out over the summer and turn in during our first week back in August.](#)

You should include the time spent reading *Thank You for Arguing* and *Julius Caesar* in your summer reading chart.

While I’m certainly curious about how many you can and will read, there is no prescribed number of books I expect you to read over the summer; **the goal is 30 hours of reading.** Simply read, record your time and the pages you read in that time, and have fun!