



# AP Literature and Composition

## Summer Work – 2023

### Mrs. Monday

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When utilized well, summer reading should be meaningful, enjoyable, and reasonable. Overloading you with tedious, meaningless tasks in order for you to prove that you deserve a spot in the course just isn't my style. Summer reading should serve to benefit you by helping you retain the skills you will need to succeed next year. Because reading and writing are the most important skills necessary for AP Lit, your summer work will involve both, and my hope is that it will be an enjoyable experience for you as well. This summer, you should complete the following:

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#### **Part 1 - Summer Reading:**

In order to help you bridge the gap between the nonfiction of AP Language and the fiction of AP Literature, you will read Truman Capote's true crime classic *In Cold Blood*. *In Cold Blood* is one of the first works of "literary non-fiction" – a true story told in a more artistic way than straight journalistic writing. We will discuss the book during the first week of class and use it as a springboard to begin our work with literary analysis. You are responsible for obtaining your own copy of the book from a store or library, but I will also put a link to the full text (available online) at the padlet linked below.

Description: (from Random House): Truman Capote's masterpiece, *In Cold Blood*, created a sensation when it was first published, serially, in *The New Yorker* in 1965. The intensively researched, atmospheric narrative of the lives of the Clutter family of Holcomb, Kansas, and of the two men, Richard Eugene Hickock and Perry Edward Smith, who brutally killed them on the night of November 15, 1959, is the seminal work of the "new journalism." Perry Smith is one of the great dark characters of American literature, full of contradictory emotions. "I thought he was a very nice gentleman," he says of Herb Clutter. "Soft-spoken. I thought so right up to the moment I cut his throat." Told in chapters that alternate between the Clutter household and the approach of Smith and Hickock in their black Chevrolet, then between the investigation of the case and the killers' flight, Capote's account is so detailed that the reader comes to feel almost like a participant in the events.

*In Cold Blood* is an excellent story; however, it is not for the faint of heart. If you object to reading it, *Crime and Punishment* may be read as a substitute text. Better yet – feel free to read both!

\*Helpful hint: Sparknotes, Cliffs Notes, etc., may be good for aiding in your understanding of the text, but they are no substitute for actual reading.

## Part 2 – Summer Writing

Having a broad range of experiences upon which one can draw is important to understanding the resonance of many of the works we read. In preparation, I would like for you to broaden your experiences this summer. As part of your summer activities, keep a journal.

Consider the following activities as springboards for your writing:

### Activity List:

1. Attend a summer festival. Try DollyFest, Knoxville Pridefest, the Oak Ridge Lavender Festival, Maryville's Big BBQ Bash, the Granger County Tomato Festival, or any others you can find.
2. Go to a museum or historic attraction. Try the Knoxville Museum of Art, East Tennessee History Center, Women's Basketball Hall of Fame, Oak Ridge's Museum of Science and Energy, James White's Fort, Blount Mansion, Museum of Appalachia etc., if you've never been.
3. Spend a day without electronics (no TV, cell phone, iPods, etc.) **I would love for everyone to try this.** You CAN survive without electronics.
4. Spend a day with animals. Go to the zoo or visit the Humane Society or Young-Williams animal shelter.
5. Hike at least five miles in the Smoky Mountains. Or, if that's too far, try a local hike like House Mountain.
6. Do some gardening.
7. Talk to a grandparent older adult (50+) about life in their younger years. Count this as two entries if you record it on Storycorps (<https://storycorps.org/>).
8. Go tent camping.
9. See a classic movie at the Tennessee Theatre. Their Summer Movie Magic series includes classic films on Fridays and Sundays all summer long.
10. Go fishing or horseback riding.
11. Eat a meal from a foreign culture (something you haven't tried previously).
12. Spend an evening playing cards or board games with your family or friends.
13. Volunteer at a shelter or a food pantry.
14. Attend the Juneteenth Memorial March & Parade in downtown Knoxville.
15. Visit with patients at a nursing home.
16. Prepare a meal for your family and enjoy it with them.
17. Pick berries and make a cobbler or pie.
18. Visit a quiet spot on a beach, by a lake, or beside a stream. Spend an hour in thought.
19. Attend a service of a different religion or interview someone who is of a different religion.
20. Repair or build something, or do some kind of maintenance (changing oil, rotating tires).
21. Do something you don't normally do (the point of this is to try new things in order to experience the world through a different lens).

### **But why journal?**

Some of you are probably wondering – “Why should I bother?” Answer: Writing is born out of experience. A large part of this class is about helping you find your voice. Finding your voice takes time. Writing throughout the summer will give you time to begin to figure out your voice. Be yourself when you write. Don’t try to be too serious or academic. Be funny. Be sarcastic. Be vulnerable. Be real. Your journal is for you.

### **What is a journal?**

A journal is what you make of it -- the more you put into it, the more benefit you will see. Hopefully your journal will be much more (and a little less) than a diary.

I hope that you will consider buying a bound journal that you really like -- something costing between \$5 and \$20. A cheap spiral notebook is often another way of saying, "My thoughts aren't really valuable." If you wish, you might even try constructing your own journal, but you should remember that what you put in the interior of your journal is most important.

### **Will Mrs. Monday read my journal?**

Nope.

Writing in your journal will benefit YOU. Writing improves your skill at writing which will mean that you are more prepared for the extensive writing that you will do in the course. Try to write at least three days per week.

At this point in your academic career, you should have the maturity to complete intellectually stimulating activities without anticipation of a grade. Will I know if you wrote over the summer? Maybe I will, and maybe I will not. You, however, will know, and that is what is most important.

### **Padlet**

Be sure to visit our class resource Padlet (QR code and link below) for extra information that will be useful for your reading. I will try to include links to info about journal activities there as well.



[https://padlet.com/rachel\\_monday/cz7swxmt6gsjb098](https://padlet.com/rachel_monday/cz7swxmt6gsjb098)

**Contact Info:** If you need to get in touch with me over the summer, feel free to



email me at [rachel.monday@knoxschools.org](mailto:rachel.monday@knoxschools.org) and I will be happy to answer any questions. Please allow at least 24 hours for me to respond. Have a great summer, and I look forward to meeting you!