FWHS Advanced Placement English Language and Composition Summer Reading 2015

Welcome to AP English Language and Composition. The assignment will commence as your rigorous study of the American experience is summer reading. Over the course of the summer, you will read a one major text, a short essay, and view a documentary from the list provided below. You will also craft a few relatively short writing pieces in response to the texts. This writing should move beyond summary to demonstrate the critical thinking capabilities of ***questioning, evaluating, and synthesizing***. All thoughts presented in your writing ***must*** be original, and if additional sources are referenced in your written analysis, cite them in proper **MLA format.** This work is a requirement of the course and must be completed. Be prepared for a graded **Socratic seminar** of the summer reading on the first day of class.

PART 1: FWHS (school wide) Summer Reading

You will participate in the FWHS Summer reading book chat. Your English teacher will provide you with the list of summer reading books and the required assignment. We highly recommend *Clouds of Glory: Life and Legend of Robert E. Lee* by Michael Korda as it can help you understand how an author shapes an argument about history or *A Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess to evaluate the use of language to shape characterization.

PART 2: AP English Language and Composition

A. **The Case for Abundance**

Task: Read and annotate Andrew Carnegie's "The Gospel of Wealth." Annotations should consist of critical commentary and questions. When possible, annotations should also show an awareness of the style and structure of the argument.
After reading and annotating, you will write a response (one-page **maximum**) addressing all of the following tasks:

- Identify one main claim of the essay.
- Evaluate how Carnegie developed his argument.
- Determine whether or not you would agree or disagree with his claim; use appropriate supportive evidence from your reading and observations to strengthen your stance.

B. **The "Other" America**

Critically read, evaluate, and annotate Jeanette Walls' *The Glass Castle*. In a dialectical response (two-page **maximum**), you will select three salient passages from the novel. These passages should be anecdotes or personal experiences that shaped Walls' perception of socioeconomic class in America. In your dialectical response, please consider the following questions:

- Why did you select this passage as a poignant depiction of class struggles?
- How is the anecdote structured? Consider the impact of craft.
- Based on Walls' experiences, what claim can be made about social class in America?
- To what extent would you agree with her assertions? Explain using supportive evidence when appropriate (articles, reading, and/or personal observations).

C. **"My Side" of the Story**

View one of the following video clips and be prepared to reference specific portions of the film for our seminar. As you examine the film, do not simply accept the argument being presented, but instead, discover which portions you could defend or challenge.

1. **"Born Rich" Jamie Johnson (Johnson & Johnson)**
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unZmiEsgzno
   Jamie Johnson, the heir to the Johnson & Johnson fortune interviews several of the people in his social circle to uncover what it is like to be born rich in American society. Johnson discusses topics like inheritance, philanthropy, and social class. The film would be best used in class if juxtaposed next to a tale of poverty or middle class life described in several other video recommendations from this chapter.
2. **"Senator Rubio Delivers Address on 50th Anniversary of the 'War on Poverty'"**
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yK4MRzGgPSA
3. **"Walmart: The High Cost of Low Prices"**
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXmnBbUjsPs
   The film exposes Wal-Mart's unscrupulous business practices through interviews with former employees, small business owners, and footage of Walmart executives.

Summary of Assignments:

1. Write a response to "The Gospel of Wealth" (maximum 1 pg.)
2. Write three dialectical entries based on *The Glass Castle (*maximum 2 pgs.)
3. View one video clip and take notes
4. Participate in a Socratic Seminar on the first day of class

Socratic Seminar

What is a seminar?

A seminar, as the term is used here, refers to a group of people who share a common interest, have done some advanced reading and preparation, and come together to share insights, explore ideas, and learn from one another through a process of discussion. A specific text provides the focus for the discussion, and the goal is to collectively "mine" the text (book, poem, film) by unpacking it as a group, questioning it, exploring it, probing it, and thinking out loud about it.

Objectives:

- To create a community of learners by drawing upon diverse insights, experiences, and perspectives.

How does one prepare for a seminar?

Although a seminar is a group activity, it requires solitary advanced preparation. Preparation includes actively reading and often re-reading a text. As you read, you should underline, highlight, make margin notes, or other notes (if making notes outside the book, always specify the page and paragraph you are responding to so you can reference it during the seminar discussion).

How will our seminar proceed?

In order to keep focused on the text at hand, we will strive to use the following questions as tools for our discussion:

1. **What exactly does the text say?** (i.e., point everyone else to the exact page and paragraph you are interested in discussing so they can read along as you introduce it for discussion)
2. **How do you understand the text?** (i.e., explain or interpret the passage using your own words, as you understand it; or ask others for clarification if you do not)
3. **Why is the text interesting or relevant or important to you?** (i.e., what insights do you get out of this point? do you agree or disagree? why or why not? how does this idea relate to other ideas in this text, or to other texts in this course, or to insights from other courses, or to other life experiences? why should we care about this point?)

For example, a student might say to the seminar group:

On page 42, in paragraph 3, in the 3rd and 4th sentences, the author writes "--------- ------ ------- -- ---------- ----- ---- -- ----". As I understand it, the author seems to be saying --------- ------ ------- -- ---------- ----- -- --- -------- ------ ----- -- ------- . I find that very interesting because --------- ------ ------- -- ---------- ----- ---- ---------- -- -- --- -------- ------ ----- -- ---------- --- ------ ------- -- yet I can also think of exceptions to what the author is saying here. For instance, --------- ------ ------- -- --------- ----- ---- ----------. In any case, the point still seems to be generally valid, and it raises some important concerns about --------- ------ ------- -- ---- ---------- -- -- --- -------- ------ ----- -- -------. What do other people think about this point? Does it seem valid? Do you all share the concerns I just raised?

Sometimes the seminar will be focused on the exploration of a single point like this for some time -- searching, questioning, probing deeply, and possibly making connections to other points. Other times the discussion will be more free-flowing and will feel more shifting or even disjointed. Sometimes the discussion will lead to open-ended and divergent opinions; other times the group will come to shared conclusions. The important thing is that the seminar is a space for the discovery of new ideas, the re-examination of old ideas, the development of connections between ideas, and the evaluation of ideas and assertions.

The role of the teacher is not to lead the seminar but simply to model seminar participation as one participant among many. Everyone is responsible for co-leading the process. To accomplish this, participants must learn to speak openly to the entire group, to actively listen to one another, and to be sensitive to the needs of all other participants. The natural talkers must exercise self-discipline in order not to dominate the discussion. The

naturally quiet people must stretch themselves to contribute regularly, even if this means moving outside their normal comfort zone. If you notice that someone is not contributing, feel free to invite their contribution. If the discussion stalls, it is everyone's individual responsibility to keep it going. Everyone will need to speak in turn, let others finish their thoughts, and refrain from interrupting. Also, try to introduce ideas or assertions by connecting them to what others have said. In addition, it will sometimes help to summarize the point you are responding to before offering your own thoughts. Finally, if you leave the seminar with more questions than you started, if you leave feeling unsettled or confused, if you are overwhelmed with new insights or ideas, or if you experience cognitive dissonance by considering perspectives that do not conform to your previous ones, these are all signs of success.

A seminar discussion is not a competitive or adversarial debate. The goal is not to change one another's views or persuade one another of the "rightness" of your own views. Rather, the goal is to draw everyone into the discussion by creating an inviting atmosphere in which everyone feels comfortable contributing -- even when they hold different views. This requires courtesy, mutual respect, and frank, yet considerate, modes of expression.

Evaluation:

Seminar Participation Student: _____

outstanding = 5
very good = 4
satisfactory = 3
unsatisfactory / not possible to evaluate = 1

Consistently raised questions that challenged and expanded the thinking of others.
Referred to notes or to the text when analyzing a specific portion of the text.
Came prepared with comments and questions to enhance the discussion.
Contributed regularly to the seminar discussion.
Focused contributions on the comments of others.
Contributed to the depth and insight of the seminar discussion.
Helped create an inclusive atmosphere in which everyone felt comfortable contributing.
Total: / 35

Dialectal Journal

The term "didactic" means "the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer." Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with the text as you read. Use your journal to initiate critical and insightful commentary on the social issues raised within the novel. As you are reading, examine how the text crafts a broader claim about life in America. The purpose of a dialectical journal is to identify significant pieces of text and explain their significance in relation to essential questions. It is another form of highlighting/annotating text and should be used to think about, digest, summarize, question, clarify, critique, and remember what is read.

Choosing Passages from the Text:

Look for quotes that are significant, powerful, thought-provoking, or puzzling. You might want to consider some of the following examples for completing your dialectal journal:

- Author's effective and/or creative use of stylistic or literary devices
- Passages that makes a larger point about class in America
- A passage that made you question a personal assumption
- Examples of patterns: recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols, or motifs that contribute to an overall theme

You can respond to the text in a variety of ways: focusing solely on craft or content. The most important thing to remember is that your observations should be specific and detailed. Use tone word glossary to assist in your written examination of the three selected passages.

Expectations:

CRITICAL READER: detailed, elaborate responses. You can "read between the lines" of the text. You think about the meaning of the text in terms of a larger or universal significance, as aspect of self or life in general. You create your own meaning through personal connections and references to other texts. You consider different interpretations as you compose. You carry on an ongoing dialogue with the writer; you question, agree, disagree, appreciate, or object to her claims.

Tone Vocabulary Words

1. **allusive** – intimate, suggest, connote
2. **angry** – mad, furious, irate
3. **bantering** – good-natured teasing, ridicule, joking
4. **benevolent** – magnanimous, generous, noble
5. **burlesque** – mockery, sham, spoof, parody
6. **candid** – clear, frank, genuine, sincere
7. **clinical** - direct, detached, scientific, impersonal
8. **colloquial** -common – ordinary, vernacular
9. **compassionate** – kindly, sympathetic, benevolent
10. **complimentary** – flattering, approving, laudatory
11. **concerned** – touched, affected, influenced
12. **condescending** – scornful, contemptuous, disdainful
13. **confident** – positive, certain, assured
14. **contemptuous** – pompous, arrogant, superior, haughty
15. **contentious** – argumentative, quarrelsome, pugnacious
16. **cynical** – adverse, suspicious, opposed, doubtful, dubious
17. **detached** – separated, severed, apathetic
18. **didactic** – pointed, bombastic, pompous, terse
19. **diffident** – retiring, timid, hesitant, bashful
20. **disdainful** – haughty, arrogant, supercilious
21. **dramatic** – exciting, moving, sensational, emotional
22. **effusive** – talkative, verbose, profuse
23. **elegiac** – sad, mournful, plaintive (like an elegy)
24. **factious** – dissident, rebellious, insubordinate
25. **factual** – authentic, genuine, truthful
26. **fanciful** – capricious, extravagant, whimsical
27. **flippant** – offhand, facetious, frivolous
28. **impartial** – equitable, unbiased, dispassionate
29. **incisive** – cutting, biting, penetrating
30. **indignant** – angry, irritated, resentful
31. **inflammatory** – irritate, arouse, resentful
32. **informative** – acquaint, communicate, disclose
33. **insipid** – flat, bland, tedious, banal (commonplace)
34. **insolent** – insulting, brazen, rude, contemptuous
35. **ironic** – contradictory, implausible, incongruous
36. **irreverent** – profane, impious, blasphemous, ungodly

37. **learned** – skilled, experienced, professional
38. **lugubrious** – gloomy, dismal, melancholy, somber
39. **maudlin** – sentimental, mushy, gushing, insipid
40. **mock-heroic** – mimicking courage (pretend)
41. **mock-serious** – mimicking solemnity (pretend)
42. **moralistic** – virtuous, righteous, blameless
43. **objective** – impartial, detached, impersonal
44. **patronizing** – condescending, scornful, disdainful
45. **pedantic** – academic, bookish, scholastic
46. **petty** – trivial, insignificant, narrow-minded
47. **pretentious** – arrogant, boastful, conceited
48. **restrained** – unwilling, hesitant, reluctant
49. **sardonic** – cutting, biting, penetrating, satirical
50. **satiric** – lampooning, facetious
51. **scornful** – bitter, caustic, acrimonious, mordant
52. **sentimental** – emotional, mushy, maudlin (tearful)
53. **somber** – serious, gloomy, dismal, shadowy
54. **sympathetic** – supportive, favorable, considerate
55. **taunting** – contemptuous, insulting, derisive
56. **terse** – concise, succinct, pithy, pointed
57. **turgid** – pompous, bloated, swollen, distended
58. **urgent** – compelling, demanding, imperative, pressing
59. **vibrant** – resonant, active, resounding
60. **whimsical** – flippant, frivolous, light-hearted, dainty