

AP American Studies Summer Assignment 2017

Course Background: This team taught interdisciplinary course offers a rich intellectual discourse, which results in a unified grade for each student. This course uses an integrated approach to examine the development of the American character and culture through the study of history, literature, and varied artistic expressions. Numerous interpretative possibilities are brought forth as students are encouraged to reflect upon the interesting interplay between literature and history. The goal is that this immersion will not only acquaint students with the ideas that formed our country but also encourage students to create their individual positions which will empower them as citizens. Students are expected to take both the AP U.S. History and AP Language and Composition tests in May. **Completion of this summer work is a course requirement and students can expect multiple summative assessments upon their return to school in the fall. All work is due on the first day of class at the start of your class period.**

English Assignment

American Studies is a college-level course that demands careful, analytic reading and writing. Specifically, students are required to identify and analyze the rhetorical strategies used by authors across a range of writing; clearly articulate, support, refute or modify the central argument in a text; and synthesize a variety of sources. This summer assignment is designed to assess your skills in rhetorical analysis, argument, and synthesis, while also introducing you to one of the overarching questions of the course: how do the stories we tell about the past shape, aid, and/or distort our understanding of history?

Reading: You will read three book-length works: *A Voyage Long and Strange* by Tony Horwitz (nonfiction), *Caleb's Crossing* by Geraldine Brooks (novel), and *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller (play). As you read, you should use sticky notes to track the following ideas, or "threads," throughout each work:

- The influence of religion on individual and cultural identity
- Gender roles (particularly in *Caleb's Crossing* and *The Crucible*)
- Discovery/the "known" and "unknown" worlds (consider this in both the literal and spiritual sense)
- The nature of truth (consider how the relationship among facts, experience, and perception plays out in each text)
- Pivotal moments of transition for individuals, cultures and civilizations
- The craft and purpose of storytelling across our three texts

Your notes, while they will not be collected, should prepare you to write analytically about these books in class within the first week of school. Also, use the glossary provided below to prepare for our discussion of the summer reading.

Glossary of Key Terms:

Rhetoric: The effective use of language; also, the study of effective language use. The term can also be used negatively, as when it is said that a particular argument is really just using rhetoric, that is, using words persuasively (perhaps by making emotional appeals) without making a solid argument.

Argument: Writing that attempts to prove a point through reasoning. Argument presses its case by using logic and by supporting its logic with examples and evidence.

Evidence: The facts that support an argument. Evidence takes different forms depending on the kind of writing in which it appears, but generally is concrete, agreed-upon information that can be pointed to as example or proof.

Audience: As actors have audiences who can see and hear them, writers have readers. Having a sense of audience is important in writing because we write differently depending on who we think will be reading our work. If the audience is specific, we write in such a way that will appeal to a small group; if it is general, write in such a way that as many people as possible will listen to, and be able to hear, what we have to say.

Purpose: The author's goal or aim in writing a given piece.

Tone: refers to the author's attitude toward the reader (e.g. formal, intimate, pompous) or to the subject matter (e.g. ironic, light, solemn, satiric, sentimental).

Diction: refers to the choice of words used in a literary work. A writer's diction may be characterized, for example as formal, colloquial, abstract, concrete, literal or figurative.

Imagery: refers to the use of language in a literary work that evokes sense-impressions by literal or figurative reference to perceptible or "concrete" objects, scenes, actions, or states as distinct from the language or abstract argument or exposition. The imagery of a literary work thus comprises the set of images that it uses to appeal to senses (including, but not limited to sight).

Symbol, Symbolism: A symbol is something that stands for something else. Unlike allegory, symbolism is multi-dimensional--it may convey a number of meanings. The symbol of the great white whale in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, for example, may stand for the devil, nature, the forces of the universe or ?

Style: The way a writer writes. Any of the choices writers make while writing—about diction, sentence length, structure, rhythm, and figures of speech—that make their work sound like them. The tone of a particular work can be due in part to a writer's style.

Voice: A writer's unique use of language that allows a reader to perceive a human personality in his or her writing. The elements of style that determine a writer's voice include sentence structure, diction, and tone. The term can also be applied to the narrator of a selection.

Assessment: During the first week of school, you will complete a timed writing assessment which will require you to draw on your nuanced understanding of the assigned readings.

Some Final Words: Late work will not be accepted. Completion of the summer assignment is a prerequisite for enrollment in the class. If you have any questions about the English portion of the assignment, please contact us via email at khilton@fairfieldschools.org and/or dnulf@fairfieldschools.org. Last minute emails are discouraged.

History Assignment

The purpose of the summer work is to help you practice independent learning. You will teach yourself the first unit (Contact and Exploration, approximately 1491-1607) through the activities listed below. Your textbook reading will help you understand the historical context of the three books you will be reading this summer.

Tasks:

- Read “AP US History Exam Description” at AP Central <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/ap/ap-us-history-course-and-exam-description.pdf>
 - Read and take notes on Chapters 1-3 (“A New World,” “Beginnings of English America,” “Creating Anglo-America”) in *Give Me Liberty*. The e-book can be found at http://wnorton.com/ebooklite/givemelibAP3e_chs0_4/welcome.asp.
 - As you take notes—consider perspectives on what you are reading (i.e. *A Voyage Long and Strange* by Tony Horwitz, *Caleb’s Crossing* by Geraldine Brooks) how would they perceive these events/telling of history from the text?
 - Notes should be about 2-3 pages per chapter.
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**A hard-copy of ALL notes must be submitted on the first day of school during your class period.
Late work will NOT be accepted.**

***Please note that the school’s policies against plagiarism and cheating will be strictly upheld.
Please see the Student Handbook for details.***

Assessment: A content-specific assessment will be administered on the first day of school.