

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition

Summer Reading Assignment 2025

Assignment Overview:

- The summer reading assignment for students enrolled in the AP Language and Composition course for the 2025-26 school year is divided into two (2) tasks. The assignment requires students to read and analyze two (2) pieces of nonfiction: Barbara Ehrenreich’s *Nickel and Dimed* and one (1) choice text from the list provided on page 2 of this document.
- The summer assignment will count as a Q1 test grade. Work not submitted by the due dates will incur a late penalty.
- Titles are hyperlinked to Amazon, but copies may be obtained via booksellers and local libraries. Students will need access to the texts for the first two weeks of school as they will be used as part of an introduction to rhetoric unit. Electronic/digital copies are acceptable forms as long as students can access and cite from them.

Task 1: *Nickel and Dimed* by Barbara Ehrenreich

- Read and annotate [Barbara Ehrenreich’s *Nickel and Dimed*](#) according to the timeline listed below. After you complete the suggested chapters, compose a written analysis to the corresponding prompt (see below). Responses to *each* prompt should be *at least 2 full pages* and *cite specific evidence* from the text in order to support your thesis and supporting claims.
- Your responses should be **double-spaced** using size **12 Times New Roman** font; quotations should be formatted according to **MLA** guidelines.
- All responses are to be uploaded (in a single document) to [turnitin.com](#) by **August 18, 2025**.
- Response Prompts:
 - Prompt 1:
 - Discuss how and why Ehrenreich uses personal narratives in *Nickel and Dimed*. Focus on one (1) such example from a chapter, and analyze the author’s purpose in telling this individual’s story. In other words, how does the narrative support the author’s claim(s) of the specific chapter and the book as a whole.
 - Suggestion: Complete this after reading “Selling in Minnesota” to give you plenty of potential examples to discuss.
 - Prompt 2:
 - At the onset of her Evaluation chapter, the author seems to arrive at a new understanding of the phrase “unskilled labor” (193). Explain and analyze this new understanding. Then, discuss why Ehrenreich refers to low-wage workers, at the close of her book, as “the major philanthropists of our society” (221). Be sure to consider how the whole book serves to support this claim and cite evidence from throughout the text to support and illustrate your reasoning.
 - Suggestion: Complete this after you have completed reading the entire book.

Task 2: Dialectical Journal for a Choice Text

- You will read one (1) of the texts listed below:
 1. [*Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking* by Susan Cain](#);
 2. [*The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates* by Wes Moore](#);
 3. [*Banana: The Fate of the Fruit That Changed the World* by Dan Koeppel](#);
 4. [*Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers* by Mary Roach](#); or
 5. [*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot](#).

- Identify your selected text by completing [this Google Form](#) or via the link on Google Classroom. Text selection should be completed by **August 8, 2025** at the latest.
- In addition to actively reading and annotating the text, you are required to maintain a dialectical journal that adheres to the directions and guidelines listed below and articulated on page 3 of this document.
 1. Select ten (10) significant passages from the text, and analyze each passage's impact on the chapter in which it exists as well as to the text as a whole;
 - NOTE: A passage is an extended piece of text, not a single quotation. However, limit your focus to passages of no more than a paragraph.
 - Be sure to identify the specific text that is selected, including its page numbers.
 - Your entries should reflect the entire text, so be sure that you do not choose all of your passages from the first 100 pages. Use these entries to demonstrate your close and critical reading of the whole book.
 - See [this grading rubric](#) for scoring guidelines.
 2. Neatly hand-write the journals (using the same format as the template) in a clean notebook, or use [this digital template](#).
 - If you prefer to complete this electronically, then open the [Dialectical Journal Template](#) document, click on File, and select "Make a Copy" to get your own editable form.
 3. Your dialectical journals are **due in hard copy form on the first day of the 2025-26 school year**.
- NOTE: There will also be an **assessment** on your choice book within the first two weeks of school.

Communication Methods

- This course will utilize several methods of communication in addition to scheduled class meetings. Students should contact me via email (schofieldd@lincolnpd.org) with any questions about the assignments described in this document.
- Upon receipt of this assignment sheet, students enrolled in the course should create an account and log in to the following mediums of communication. We will use these mediums to correspond throughout the summer as well as the school year.
 - **Google Classroom:** Join the Classroom Summer Site using the following code: **pe4m7eet**.
 - **Turnitin:** Go to turnitin.com to create an account if you do not already have one. Please use your school email when creating an account. There should be an app option in Clever too. The Class ID is **48899171** and the enrollment password is **Schofield**. This password is case sensitive.

AP English Language and Composition Summer Reading Dialectical Journal Guidelines

What is a dialectical journal?

- “Dialectic” means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” A dialectical journal is a type of double-entry journal that requires interpretation and analysis. While it is an active reading experience, its overall purpose is to identify significant pieces of text and explore their significance in terms of the immediate (chapter/section) and larger (entire text/argument) contexts in which they appear. This dialectical journal should not be confused with a reader-response journal where you simply react to the text. Instead, this journal requires you to *focus on how the author develops an argument* through a close-reading of selected passages over the course of the text.
- Your ten (10) entries should demonstrate *a range of rhetorical features* from the text, and your analysis should explore **how** those features relate to the author’s overall purpose/argument (i.e. how does the passage reveal and support explicit and/or implicit arguments?) Consider the following prompts (but note this is not an all-inclusive list) as you compose your entries:
 - a. Form and Structure
 - i. What is happening? How much time is covered? What patterns do you notice? Why does the author choose to include this section in this particular part of the text?
 - b. Purpose/Tone/Style
 - i. What is the author trying to accomplish? What argument(s) is the author trying to make? What is the author’s attitude toward the subject? How is TONE revealed through DICTION (word choice) and SYNTAX (sentence arrangement/structure)?
 - c. Imagery and/or Detail
 - i. The imagery of a literary work comprises the set of images that appeal to the senses. Look for recurring images (light/darkness, colors, clothing, odors, sounds). Point out details (numbers, facts, description) the author uses to support the text’s argument. How are these images and/or details used? What emotions do they evoke?
 - d. Figurative Language
 - i. Look for the author’s use of features of language (e.g. tropes, patterns, etc.) to convey an argument to the reader. How does the reader use language to engage/motivate/shock/etc. the reader?

Sample Entry:

Quotation	Page#	Analytical Response
“If intelligence matters only up to a point, then past that point, other things--things that have nothing to do with intelligence--must start to matter more.”	86	Gladwell appeals to logic by citing the example of Christopher Langon, the genius who did not have practical life skills, and thus never experienced “success” as we might describe it. Next, Gladwell moves beyond anecdotal evidence by citing a Stanford University study of Lewis Terman, which followed young geniuses dubbed the “Termites” who were heavily influenced--both positively and negatively--by their surroundings. Additionally, Gladwell provides a list of Nobel Prize winners and their respective colleges--some from lesser known colleges and others from more prestigious colleges--to argue the Threshold Effect: the idea that intelligence matters only to a certain point. Gladwell makes a good point, and I would have to agree with him. From my personal experience, students in my AP Lang are very intelligent; however, success seems to stem from hard work and diligent perseverance. In fact, sometimes students who received a B sophomore year, embrace criticism wholeheartedly with the sole purpose of self improvement tend to do better than someone who earned an A the previous year without much effort, proving the idea that intelligence matters only to a certain point and effort makes up the difference.