

AP English Language 2009  
Summer reading and essay assignment  
Dr. Draper: avenue59@sbcglobal.net  
Ms. Derdzinske : nad9396@lausd.net

1. Reading: You need to obtain the following books to read over the summer. If you check them out from the library, be sure to renew them in September; we will be discussing these books during the first few weeks of school.

In AP English Language, we focus on argument, rhetoric, style, audience, tone; the task for the reader is to determine how an author conveys their meaning through the use of language. Each of the following three books employs a different non-fiction style to convey the author's purpose.

1. Dreams from my Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance by Barack Obama
2. Slouching Towards Bethlehem by Joan Didion
3. Hunger for Memory by Richard Rodriguez

Take notes, and be prepared to discuss the different methods each author uses to convey meaning/purpose. What are the advantages to these methods, how effective are they in persuading readers, what audience are they trying to reach? How does each author convey *ethos* (ethical stance or moral authority) in choosing their subject, their examples, their personal appeals and reflections? Locate specific examples in all three texts that are persuasive to you, and then determine what rhetorical strategy the author uses. There will be a test on all three books during the first week of the fall semester.

2. Essay: The essay prompt is on the back of this sheet. It is from an AP English Language test. The suggested time to complete this essay is 40 minutes; I suggest you take more time. Follow the directions in the prompt carefully; you are being asked to write an essay that "defends, challenges, or qualifies Horace's assertion about the role adversity plays in developing a person's character" - you are not being asked to either evaluate the quote or analyze it. The prompt also asks that you "support your argument with appropriate evidence from your reading, observation or experience." Develop your ideas persuasively; use topic sentences in each body paragraph; respond to the prompt clearly in the introduction - this response will serve as your thesis. ***This essay is due on the first day of class in September.***



**AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

**Question 3**

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents which in prosperous circumstances would have lain dormant.  
—Horace

Consider this quotation about adversity from the Roman poet Horace. Then write an essay that defends, challenges, or qualifies Horace's assertion about the role that adversity (financial or political hardship, danger, misfortune, etc.) plays in developing a person's character. Support your argument with appropriate evidence from your reading, observation, or experience.

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**

