

To: Students, and their parents, taking Advanced Placement English Language and Composition (11th grade)

From: Teachers of AP English Language and Composition

RE: Summer Reading Program

The English Department of Lake Central High School would like to welcome you to AP English Language and Composition. As you know, the next year promises to be academically valuable as well as challenging. You will continue your in-depth study of language, writing, literature, and critical thinking in preparation for the AP English Language and Composition test, AP English Literature and Composition (as 12th graders), your future as a college student, and beyond into the workforce.

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition is a challenging and rigorous college-level writing course that investigates the uses, purposes, and effects of language. In order to prepare you for the material and skills you will encounter throughout the course, we are requiring you to participate in the Summer Reading Program. You will be reading works of literary merit and works that provide the specific and necessary background for further studies as well as completing relevant assignments that will augment your learning from day one in the AP program through your years at college.

Each student entering AP Language is required to read three books:

- One book of your choice from the Nonfiction list (attached)—Assessment of your knowledge of this book will take place upon your return to school.
- One book of your choice from the Fiction list (attached)—Assessment of your knowledge of this book will take place upon your return to school.
- *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien—You must write an essay over the summer, and will take a test upon your return to school. Essay instructions are attached.

Completion of these books/assignments is mandatory and will allow you to become an involved and effective student.

The assignments will be submitted both physically and electronically:

- The essay must be formatted according to MLA specifications, which includes 12 point Times New Roman font, one-inch margins, and double spacing. For complete insight into MLA requirements, the Purdue Online Writing Lab website is an excellent resource: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>
- Additionally, the essay will be submitted electronically through turnitin.com the evening of the first day of school. You will be provided with the turnitin.com login information during the first class period.

Any questions throughout the course of the summer can be sent to Mrs. Kathryn Clark at kclark@lcscmail.com. Although it will be summer break, I will make every effort to check my email regularly during those months.

Suggested Reading:

In addition to reading the three texts listed above, the following books are also suggested for summer reading, and for the following reasons:

- *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White. This text serves as a reference for grammar. We will directly cover very little grammar during AP Language; you are expected to have a certain level of grammatical mastery before entering the class. *The Elements of Style* text will fill in any gaps in your grammatical abilities.
- *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller. In addition to being a commonly read text for high school juniors, this drama will shed light on Puritan culture, which will help you when we read *The Scarlet Letter*, our first quarter book.

Remember, a large portion of being successful in education is discipline; make sure to stay on top of your studies and to schedule your work out in a way that will allow you to complete it well before the end of the summer. Then, and most importantly, stick to that plan!

Yours in education,

Kathryn Clark

Essay Assignment for Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*

The essay for *The Things They Carried* will be submitted to your teacher on the first day of class. The essay will also be submitted through turnitin.com the evening of the first class. The essay must follow MLA format, be properly headed and paged, and **contain quotations from the text with internal citations (no works cited page is necessary)**.

The essay topic is as follows:

The genre of autobiographical fiction blurs the once-clear line between fact and story. Many writers and readers, however, find more "truth" in fiction than in a factual account of the same events. In a well-written essay, discuss the distinction between reality and fiction as explored by the author Tim O'Brien and the character/narrator Tim O'Brien in *The Things They Carried*.

- A suggested addition: Bring your knowledge of the books you read from the Fiction List and the Nonfiction list into your argument. The focus of your paper should remain on O'Brien's book, but using the Fiction and Nonfiction book of your choice to bolster your argument could be a beneficial and impressive addition.

Two Requirements to Receive a Passing Grade on this Essay:

- Always avoid plot summary; assume your evaluator has read the work but needs your help to understand the relevance and importance of your topic.
- Visit the AP Language Canvas page at least twice over the summer. We will have writing lessons/tips posted for you there which you will be expected to incorporate into your essay.

Length: 3-4 pages

Summer Reading Presentations

AP English Language

Assignment: For the assessment for your FICTION and NONFICTION Summer Reading books, you will give a presentation to the class. For this presentation, you should focus on selling your book to your peers. Would you recommend these books to your classmates? Are they worth their time? What made the books amazing? or not?

Requirements (Your presentation should touch on the following aspects for EACH book):

- What led you to choose the books you read?
- If you initially chose a book then later abandoned it, why?
- Comment on the writing style of each book.
- Provide a brief analysis of each book.
- Quotations from your books are recommended.

Visual Aid (choose from the following):

- PPT/Google slides
- Prezi
- Poster board
- Book trailer (using iMovie, Windows Movie Maker, etc.)
- another format of your choice (discuss with teacher)

Length of Presentation: 5-6 minutes