

AP English Language & Composition

2018 Summer Assignments

These assignments are due the first day of AP Lang. & Comp. class. If you have questions, please contact me via email (jenniferczechowski@ccs.k12.nc.us) or Google Classroom (see below).

I have set up a Google Classroom for you; the code is **5a358c3**. You will find all the handouts you need there, and you may turn these assignments in there as well. In addition, please introduce yourself by posting your favorite (school-appropriate) meme. (I am easily amused.)

Assignment 1: *The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace OR The Overachievers*

1. Read either of the books listed above. You may purchase your own copy or check it out from the public library.
2. Complete a dialectical journal on the book. (See attached instructions.)
3. Write a 3-4 page essay (typed, double-spaced) in which you identify the author's argument and agree or disagree with it. Be sure to use specific references to the book in order to support your thesis. You may also use information from current events or history as support.

Assignment 2: Columnist Project

For this assignment, you will read and analyze opinion columns/op-ed pieces. You are to select three columnists from among The New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com/topic/subject/columnists>), The Washington Post (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/>), The Boston Globe (<http://archive.boston.com/bostonglobe/columns/#editorial>), The Miami Herald (<http://www.miamiherald.com/site-services/columnist-directory/>), The Los Angeles Times (<http://www.latimes.com/opinion/>), and The Chicago Tribune (<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/columnists/>). **For clarity's sake: you will be choosing a total of three columnists, NOT three columnists from each publication.**

Read a minimum of three pieces by the each writer. For each column, you will write a rhetorical précis. To conclude your focus on each columnist, you will write a detailed 1-2 paragraph critique of that columnist, analyzing each for their writing style, subjects they choose to cover, any political bias they showed, and how credible and informed their opinions are. In order to completely understand the context for any current events that writer is focusing on, you may have to do some background reading on the events the columnist is interpreting for the opinion piece.

Rhetorical Précis Format

Sentence 1:

Name of author, [optional: a phrase describing the author], the genre and title of the work, date in parentheses (additional publishing information in parentheses or note), a rhetorically accurate verb (such as "assert," "argue," "suggest," "imply," "claim," etc.), and a THAT clause containing the major assertion (thesis statement) of the work.

Sentence 2:

An explanation of how the author develops and/or supports the thesis usually in chronological order. **Sentence 3:** A statement of the author's apparent purpose, followed by an "in order" phrase.

Sentence 4:

A description of the intended audience and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience. (54)

Example

Sheridan Baker, in his essay "Attitudes" (1966), asserts that writers' attitudes toward their subjects, their audiences, and themselves determine to a large extent the quality of their prose. Baker supports this assertion by showing examples of how inappropriate attitudes can make writing unclear, pompous, or boring, concluding that a good writer "will be respectful toward his audience, considerate toward his readers, and somehow amiable toward human failings" (58). His purpose is to make his readers aware of the dangers of negative attitudes in order to help them become better writers. He establishes an informal relationship with his audience of college students who are interested in learning to write "with conviction" (55).

Notice that Woodworth's example follows her pattern exactly. The **first sentence** identifies the author (Baker), the genre (essay), the title and date, and uses an active verb (asserts) and the relative pronoun *that* to explain what exactly Baker asserts. The **second sentence** explains the first by offering chronological examples from Baker's essay, while the **third sentence** suggests the author's purpose and WHY (in order to) he has set out that purpose (or seems to have set out that purpose -- not all essays are explicit about this information and readers have to put the pieces together). The **final sentence** identifies the primary audience of the essay (college students) and suggests how this audience is brought into/connected to the essay's purpose.

(Adapted from Valdes, 2012)