

# AP COMP SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

June 2010

Dear AP English Language and Composition Student:

Welcome to Advanced Placement Composition! In order to keep your reading and writing skills sharp and to begin your course immediately when you return to school in September, your AP Comp teachers have given you a reading and writing assignment. As a member of a writing group, you owe it to yourself to read and to write as often and as much as possible. To start you on your way, your teachers ask that you complete these activities before the beginning of the school year.

- 1) **Keep a journal.** As an AP student, regular writing is most important. **Please purchase a bound journal in which you make at least 15 entries, which will serve as a springboard for some of the writing you will use throughout the course.** Your journal is neither a diary nor a listing of events and appointments--although these may be the starting point for personal comment and reflection. Your journal is, however, a collection or compilation of your personal reactions and observations regarding experiences, events, people, readings, etc., which affect you, as well as reactions to films, literature, and news articles.
- 2) **Discover writing as craft.** The focus of AP Language and Composition is less on literature and more on writing style. In order to become more familiar with this shift in perspective, please **read the attached excerpt from Brenda Ueland's *If You Want to Write*.** Please take notes and highlight parts of this text which you find particularly insightful and informative. **As part of your journal, respond to two different pieces of advice and explain how they are applicable to you as a writer.** Be specific in your discussion.
- 3) **Become a regular reader with a newspaper,** particularly the *New York Times*, as part of your daily/weekly reading. An easy way to access the paper is on line at [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com). On the **Op-Ed page**, read feature articles and columnists such as Thomas Friedman, Anthony Lewis, Bob Herbert, Maureen Dowd, Frank Rich, et al. **Cut out applicable articles to include in your journal. In three separate journal entries, you must have at least two op-ed articles, and one of the following documents: a political cartoon, a letter to the editor, an objective news article, and a photograph. Provide individual analysis of the topic discussed in each of these documents as part of your journal entry requirement.**
- 4) **Read a classic.** In light of Brenda Ueland's theory that skilled writers must observe the world around them, please **read the novel *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton.** You can purchase a copy of the book, take it out of the library, or sign out a copy from the school. Mark passages which strike you as particularly descriptive or observant. **As part of your 15 journal entries, write an analysis of at least three of those passages, including the page number.** What images do they evoke? How do you relate to them on a personal level?

**\*\*Optional Reading Assignment and Reflection:** join a community of writers by reading from some of the best. The following is a list of memoirs by well-established writers about their personal experiences with writing and the practices that work best for them. Select one listed

below or discover another on your own and read to learn this writer's perspective on the craft. In addition, **write a 1-2 page reflection in your journal** on what advice this author has to offer you.

**Suggested Readings:**

- Bird by Bird* by Anne Lamott
- One Writer's Beginnings* by Eudora Welty
- On Writing* by Stephen King
- The Writing Life* by Annie Dillard
- Zen in the Art of Writing* by Ray Bradbury
- A Circle of Quiet* by Madeline L'Engle

Remember that **all work must be brought to school on the first day of class**. All responses should be highly introspective and detailed, reflecting work on an AP level. They must also be neatly written and presentable. Date your entries and clearly mark which entries are related to newspaper articles, personal observations, and your readings. Completion of this activity will prepare you for success this course and will be a factor in your first quarter grade.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to find us in the English workroom or telephone us at 203-3600, ext. 3231.

We look forward to working with you this coming school year in this very engaging course.

Sincerely,

Ms. Bouler, Ms. Gulitti, Mr. Kramer, and Mr. Romano

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**Final Checklist for Your Journal Entries**

- \_\_\_\_\_ **2 Brenda Ueland Entries**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **3 *Ethan Frome* Entries**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **3 Newspaper Entries**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Optional Reading Assignment Entries**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **15 Entries Total**

**\*\*\*PLEASE BE SURE TO PUT THIS CHECKLIST INSIDE YOUR JOURNAL FOR THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.**