

## **AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT**

This assignment is comprised of **two parts**.

### **Part I—Biography Reflection, Analysis, and Connection**

To prepare for this course, each student should purchase a copy of *His Excellency: George Washington*, by Joseph J. Ellis. Upon reading the book, the student should then should answer each question in the following three sections. The answers should be **handwritten on notebook paper** using complete sentences and proper grammar.

This assignment should be submitted to your teacher on the **first day of class**.

#### **General Reflection:**

- 1) What did you find most interesting about George Washington's life? Why?
- 2) What did you learn about yourself or the world by reading this biography?
- 3) If you could ask George Washington one question, what would it be?

#### **Analysis:**

- 1) What were the biggest challenges Washington faced?
- 2) What were the key turning points in his life?
- 3) What was Washington's biggest strengths and weaknesses?
- 4) What was his most significant achievement?
- 5) How might the world be different if this person had not lived?

#### **Connection:**

- 1) How does George Washington inspire you?
- 2) What character traits do you admire in Washington?
- 3) What could you learn from his life?
- 4) How does Washington's life relate to your own?
- 5) What lessons from this biography can you apply to your own life?

### **Part II—Book Critique**

Each student should select and read **one other novel** from the *Recommended List* below to complete this portion of the AP Summer Reading Requirement. After reading the book, write (**handwritten on notebook paper**) a one paragraph critique of the book. What did you like and why? What did you dislike and why?

Did the book change you or change your way of thinking? Explain. Critique the author's writing style. You should provide specific examples from the text to support your statements.

This assignment should be submitted to your teacher on the **first day of class**.

**Parents:** Below you will find a list of engaging and well-written books that represent a variety of genres. While we endeavor to choose books that are representative of appropriate content, age level, and maturity, we recommend each family research the suggested selections on the Recommended Reading List. You may find sites such as [www.squeakycleanreviews.com](http://www.squeakycleanreviews.com), [www.commonensemedia.org](http://www.commonensemedia.org), or [www.thrivingfamily.com](http://www.thrivingfamily.com) helpful as you discern the best publication for your student.

### **Selected Recommended Reading List for AP English Language and Composition**

#### **Colonial to Mid-19th Century**

Cooper, James Fenimore—novel--The Last of the Mohicans  
Douglass, Frederick—autobiography—Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave  
Franklin, Benjamin—autobiography--Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin  
Hawthorne, Nathaniel—novels--The Scarlet Letter OR The House of Seven Gables  
Melville, Herman—novels—Moby Dick OR Billy Budd  
Riley, James—memoir--Sufferings in Africa  
Thoreau, Henry David—memoir--Walden's Pond  
Vidal, Gore—biography—Burr

#### **Civil War and Late 19th Century**

Alcott, Louisa May—novel—Little Women OR Little Men OR Jo's Boys  
Ambrose, Stephen—nonfiction—Undaunted Courage  
Brown, Dee—novel—Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee  
Cather, Willa—novel—My Antonia OR Pioneers!  
Crane Stephen—novel—The Red Badge of Courage  
Mitchell, Margaret—historical novel—Gone with the Wind  
Poe, Edgar Allan—short stories and poems—The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe  
Shaara, Michael—historical novel—The Killer Angels  
Stowe, Harriet Beecher—novel—Uncle Tom's Cabin  
Twain, Mark—novel—A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court OR Huckleberry Finn  
Watkins, Sam R.—memoir—Company Aytch: A Side Show of the Big Show  
Vidal, Gore—biography--Lincoln

#### **Early 20th Century (1900-WWII)**

Baldwin, James—semi-autobiographical novel—Go Tell it on the Mountain  
Burns, Olive Anne—historical novel—Cold Sassy Tree  
Chopin, Kate—novel—The Awakening  
Faulkner, William—novels—The Sound and the Fury OR Absalom, Absalom OR As I Lay Dying  
Haley, Alex—nonfiction—Roots  
Hemingway, Earnest—novels—The Sun Also Rises OR For Whom the Bell Tolls OR A Farewell to Arms  
Hurstun, Zora Neale—novel—Their Eyes Were Watching God  
Smith, Betty—novel—A Tree Grows in Brooklyn  
Steinbeck, John—novels—The Grapes of Wrath OR Of Mice and Men  
Wharton, Edith—novel—Ethan Frome OR Innocence

### **Later 20th Century (WWII-present)**

Capote, Truman—nonfiction—In Cold Blood  
Dilliard, Annie—autobiography—An American Childhood  
Knowles, John—novel—A Separate Peace  
MacLeish, Archibald—drama—J.B. (a modern re-telling of the book of Job)  
Miller, Arthur—drama—The Crucible OR Death of a Salesman  
O'Connor, Flannery—short stories and essays—The Collected Works of Flannery O'Connor  
Skloot, Rebecca—nonfiction—The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks  
Welty, Eudora—autobiography—One Writer's Beginnings  
Wilder, Thornton—drama—Our Town  
Williams, Tennessee—drama—The Glass Menagerie OR A Streetcar Named Desire

### **Note on Plagiarism**

Students should strive to display honor in all written responses, using the assigned novel and novel of choice as their primary sources of understanding, rather than relying on the internet or other outside sources for assistance. The school will employ outside resources to determine plagiarism. Any evidence of plagiarism will be handled according to the school's discipline policy.