

AP English Language and Composition Summer Reading Project

2020

Why are we doing this? This project is designed to help prepare you for the rich non-fiction component of 11AP Language and Composition. English class next year will focus heavily on composition skills and how the English language functions to communicate meaning to the reader. This is what you will begin to study on your own this summer. **NJ Standards: RI.11.1,2,3,4,6 W.11.1,2,4,6,8**

What are we doing? Your summer project will be based on readings (selected by you) from the website of *The New York Times* newspaper. You will also create an essay based on a prompt taken directly from the AP Language and Composition Exam. *The New York Times* site was selected because the content is interactive, updated frequently, and it is one of the few daily periodicals written on a level to challenge a student preparing for college-level work. The essay was chosen to begin to introduce you to the types of writing assignments you will encounter next year.

How do we do it? Complete the following steps:

The summer reading assignment can be broken down into two major parts:

Part I:

In **Part I** of the summer project you will create an argumentative essay based on the following prompt.

Part I of the summer reading will be submitted to turnitin.com by August 1st. Any essay turned in after August 1st will receive a grade no higher than a 68.

The following passage is from *Rights of Man*, a book written by Thomas Paine in 1791. Born in England, Paine was an intellectual, a revolutionary, and a supporter of American independence from England.

Read the excerpt from *Rights of Man* carefully. Then write an essay that examines the extent to which Paine’s characterization of America holds true today. Use at least three pieces of appropriate evidence to support your argument. This evidence must be taken from a reputable news source (a list of suggested news sources is on my main homeworkknow.com page) and cited using a journalistic style in this way: According to a 2012 article by Jim Smith written in *The New York Times* titled, “The rich get richer” the gap between the rich and the poor has increased dramatically...

Notice how the name of the news source, the author's name, the title of the publication and the year of publication are included. You must do this for each piece of evidence. Please note that the name of the publication goes in italics and the title of the article goes in quotes. Five points will be deducted for each incorrect citation. Do not include a separate works cited page.

Here is the excerpt from Paine's book you will base your essay upon:

“If there is a country in the world, where concord, according to common calculations, would be least expected, it is America. Made up, as it is, of people from different nations, accustomed to different forms and habits of government, speaking different languages, and more different in their modes of worship, it would appear that the union of such a people was impracticable; but by the simple operation of constructing government on the principles of society and the rights of man, every difficulty retires, and all the parts are brought into cordial unison. There, the poor are not oppressed, the rich are not privileged... Their taxes are few, because their government is just; and as there is nothing to render them wretched, there is nothing to engender riots and tumults.”

Remember: Make sure to craft a clear thesis statement near the end of the opening paragraph. Follow this by using a clear topic sentence at the beginning of each body paragraph and by using at least one **vivid, specific and detailed example and piece of data/evidence** in each body paragraph followed by a reputable and cited source. Make sure to write in the **active voice** and **avoid vague and general language**. Words and phrases to avoid in particular are “people” (what people?), “nowadays” (use “today”), and “been around.” You should address at least one counter-argument at some point in your essay. This should be done in the form of a AAA or CAR (counter-argument-refutation) paragraph at the conclusion of your essay. If you don't know what these terms mean, please ask me or another English teacher for help. You should write 1000-1300 words in response to this question. Please do not exceed 1300 words.

Make sure to proofread your essay very carefully before submitting to turnitin. Essays that contain excessive errors will not score well.

Part II:

Go to **nytimes.com** and familiarize yourself with the content of the website. The section you will be using for the summer project is the Opinion/Editorial (Op-Ed) **section which is located on the upper right-hand side and cascades down the right side of the page.**

Important Note: *The New York Times* website will limit the number of articles you can read freely at ten per month. If you need to view/read more articles than that, go to the website and select the article you'd like to read. Highlight and copy the title of the article. Next, go to Google and search for the title of the article and keyword "New York Times." Google will bring you directly to the text of the article, bypassing the NY Times' firewall.

Another possible option is to Enter incognito on Chrome or Private Browsing on Safari to go around the firewall.

In part II of the summer reading assignment students will follow the chart below:

Read **ten** articles from the "**Opinion/Editorial**" section and then do the following:

1. Record the title of the article, the date it was posted, and the name of the author.
2. Answer the following questions:

A. What is the **main argument** (point) the author is attempting to communicate? What does the author want the reader to believe and think, feel or do?

B. What specific **evidence** does the author supply to substantiate her point? Make sure to describe at least two pieces of specific evidence the author uses in an attempt to sway the reader. For example, this evidence could be the experiences of specific people or research data. This evidence might also include direct quotes from interviewees. Any information that substantiates or clarifies the main idea of the article is evidence. Try to paraphrase the article and avoid excessively cutting and pasting direct quotes from the article. **If you come up with a plagiarism percentage above 25% on turnitin.com you are not paraphrasing well enough. If you create a project with a plagiarism rate above 25% your project will not be accepted.**

C. What attempt does the author make to consider ideas, opinions, evidence, and viewpoints that do not match with her own? Most opinion articles will always try to at least mention an opposing point of view even if it is with the intent of disputing that point of view.

D. What is the **tone** of the piece? Tone is how the author feels about the subject she is discussing. The tone might be “serious”, “indignant”, “humorous”, “informative”, “fascinated” or “gloomy.” Try to quote small bits of specific language you feel reveals the author’s tone. There are many other words that could be used to describe tone as well. You can easily find resources to provide you with a long list of tone words by searching online.

E. Choose a minimum of **three vocabulary words** you do not know per article and define them. If you know almost all the words in the piece, record the three words you feel are the most sophisticated and would help you in your writing and studying for your SAT’s.

3. Type up your responses in a digital file and proofread carefully. **Part II** of the summer reading is due to turnitin.com by **September 1st**.

How you will be graded: The Summer Project will count as a major test grade for the first marking period. You will be graded on the depth and the amount of detail you include as well as the mechanical quality of your writing. “A” projects in the past have been about 1000+ words for Section 1 and about 3000 words for section 2. These projects also were well proofread with a minimum of awkward sentences and small mechanical errors. “A” projects usually do not try to build the word count by quoting a large volume of material. It’s a good idea to quote from an article when you write, but long and voluminous quotes tend to bore readers. Try to keep direct quotes to no more than ten words.

Very Important: Completion of the summer reading project is mandatory for AP students. If you feel that this is too much work for you to accomplish over the summer or if you have other responsibilities that might prohibit you from completing the summer project, you should inform your guidance counselor and drop 11AP English immediately.

How to submit your work to turnitin.com. Please note that no summer reading assignments will be accepted outside of turnitin.com.

Step 1: Log into turnitin.com or register on the website.

Step 2: Log into the “summer reading project class.” The enrollment i.d. is **25170354**.
The password to enroll is Adams.

Step 3: Follow the directions to submit your assignments by the appropriate deadlines. Make sure that you keep hitting the “submit” button until you receive a digital receipt. If you do not receive a digital receipt, it means that your assignment was not submitted.

If you have any questions, you can contact me at cadams@bergenfield.org. Please feel free to email me with any questions and I will get back to you ASAP. I will be on vacation the first two weeks of August but will be available after that. Good Luck!