



Home of the New Braunfels Unicorns!

NEW BRAUNFELS HIGH SCHOOL

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English 3: AP Language and Composition Optional Summer Reading Assignment 2019

Your summer reading assignment will focus on either *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson or *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot. In its Advanced Placement: English Language and Composition Course Description, the College Board states that the “course guides students in becoming curious, critical, and responsive readers of diverse texts, and becoming flexible, reflective writers of texts addressed to diverse audiences for diverse purposes. . . While most college rhetoric and composition courses perform the academic service of preparing students to meet the literacy challenges of college-level study, they also serve the larger goal of cultivating the critical literacy skills students need for life-long learning. . . .To support these goals, rhetoric and composition courses emphasize the reading . . . of analytical texts . . . in combination with . . . texts representing English-language literary traditions.”

Reading challenging works over the summer will keep students’ minds engaged as well as add to the number of literary works the students will have read by the time they graduate. Both of these texts serve a dual purpose: 1) to expose students to a contemporary American non-fiction literary classic and 2) to provide a text through which opposing viewpoints can be addressed. Creating arguments requires students have a wealth of information at their disposal; great pieces of nonfiction often provide evidence for these arguments. With this in mind, students should, therefore, plan to read either of these works slowly and thoughtfully, paying particular attention to each author’s style as well as to the various themes. Students should annotate the work as they read, marking literary elements, interesting quotes, and possible themes. It is essential that students read and analyze the original work. They must understand that simply reading a synopsis of the plot (to include “SparkNotes” or any other “study guide”) or searching online for analysis will not substitute for understanding the original work and will not allow for successful use on the AP exam.

Another advantage of this summer reading is the opportunity to have an extra test grade for the first grading cycle. As such, students should be prepared to write an argumentative essay and/or take an objective exam to include questions related to the text as well as AP multiple choice style analysis. This could positively affect the overall grade average. If a student chooses not to do the summer reading, there will be no penalty, but the opportunity for the additional test grade will not be offered. **The due date for the summer reading activity is Friday, September 13, 2019. There will be no late submission accepted.**

Purchasing a copy of either text will allow students to annotate it, a skill that must be practiced throughout the year to ensure success on the AP Lang exam as well as honed for use in college courses. Of course, students might also utilize the public library, but they will be unable to mark the text. Also, several websites offer the full text of Carson’s work and it may be found online by searching for “Silent Spring online text.” The NBHS library and the New Braunfels Public Library both have copies of *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* that can be checked out. You may also search local used book stores for copies of either text.