

**RISING 11<sup>H</sup> GRADE AP LANGUAGE  
2018 SUMMER READING  
AND  
DIALECTICAL JOURNAL**

Dear Student:

Welcome to 11<sup>th</sup> Grade AP Language. I'm looking forward to a successful year with you! Please be advised that this is a reading-intensive course. As such, you will read three texts over the summer **and complete a Dialectical Journal assignment for TWO of these texts.** Be advised that you will still need to answer questions and knowledgeably discuss ALL the texts despite keeping a journal for only two.

AP Language focuses on rhetoric and argumentation. With these things in mind, you are required to acquire and read the following non-fiction texts:

- Frederick Douglass's *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
- Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers*
- Susan Vowell's *Assassination Vacation*

I have found that it is beneficial for students to have their own copies of the texts to highlight important passages and write notes in the margins. While you are not required to purchase the books, **you will need copies of them for the first few days of class—plan accordingly.**

As you read through these texts, you will keep a Dialectical Journal. The term “Dialectic” means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with your book as you read it.

**This assignment is due on the first day of school.** Your journal should contain a minimum of one passage per chapter for each text. You should format your journal as follows.

\*\*\*Please note, unlike a work of literature, with these texts you will pay special attention to the author’s argument. What is the purpose of their argument? Who is their audience? What is the tone? What rhetorical strategies does the author employ? **Please select passages that you find to be particularly compelling or problematic in terms of the argument the author is making.**

\*Example taken from *Nurture Shock* by Po Bronson

Passage	Pg. #	Response
“In taking our marital arguments upstairs to avoid exposing the children to strife, we accidentally deprived them of chances to witness how two people who care about each other can work out their differences in a calm and reasoned way.”	Pg. 34	The author assumes that most married couples believe that shielding children from arguments is the best way to handle the situation; however, when the couple is challenged to “argue in public,” they will likely do so in a more controlled and reasonable way. Perhaps making sure children are present helps the adults handle their personal problems in a more rational way.

All the best,  
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