

# Advanced Placement English Language & Composition

## Summer Assignment 2021

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Welcome to AP Language and Composition! To get ready for next year, you will practice your critical reading and writing skills this summer. The tasks below give you an introduction to the kinds of reading you may see during the course and some of the analysis that will be required of you.

**1) Sign up for AP Lang on Turnitin.com.** Sign in to your Turnitin.com account and add "AP Language 2021-2022" by using the info below. Submit your completed letter (see number 4) to Turnitin. Class ID → 29951069 / Enrollment Key → APLang

**2) Study the "Rhetorical Choices & Terms" (see pages 2-3).** You will need to familiarize yourself with some specific terms to support your work in AP Language. To better understand these terms, make flash cards, study a list, use an app, etc. Consider using some of these terms to help you write your letter (see number 4, below).

**3) Choose one of the following non-fiction books to read. Take notes as you read.**

- *In Cold Blood*, by Truman Capote
- *Born a Crime*, by Trevor Noah
- *Educated*, by Tara Westover
- *All You Can Ever Know*, by Nicole Chung

Obtain one of the above books (all non-fiction) via your local library, bookstore, or find it used. (The NYPL's free reading App "Simply-E" also allows NYC residents to sign up and take out books remotely.) As you read, 1) Enjoy! Read for your own enrichment! 2) Take notes in some form (post it notes, annotate, type into a doc, or write notes in a notebook) – these will be helpful to complete step 4.

**4) Write me a letter explaining the following (your letter need not follow the order of the question below – but be thoughtful about your *organization* and *paragraphing*):**

- Introduce yourself! Tell me briefly about *you* as a reader and writer.
- Why did you choose the book you chose to read? (What drew you to it?)
- What would you say is/are the *topic(s)* of this book or major *themes* of this book? How can you tell?
- *Why* do you think the author *wrote* this book? What was his or her intended *purpose* in writing it?
- Include 2-4 quotes that struck you (cite pages) and discuss them in some way. Consider using these quotes to help you *address the questions above* and/or to discuss *how the writer crafted this book* – in other words, why did the writer make the choices he/she did in writing this book?
- *Optional: What did you like and/or dislike about this book?*

**5) READ! (Yes, more!)** To develop your reading skills, to stay informed on current events, and to expand your general knowledge (all important on the AP exam!) *read weekly* from the following non-fiction sources. This reading will not be checked in written form but will be *invaluable* in helping you practice skills and gain knowledge important in AP Language class. (Note: Be wary of reading news and other articles only from what you find posted on social media – go to the source! Good sources!)

<https://longform.org/>  
<https://longreads.com/>  
<http://www.nytimes.com/>  
<http://www.newyorker.com/>  
<http://nymag.com/>

<http://www.wired.com/>  
<http://time.com/>  
<http://www.economist.com/>  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/>  
<https://www.wsj.com/>

<http://www.theatlantic.com/>  
<http://www.slate.com/>  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/>  
<http://www.theguardian.com/us>  
<http://www.bbc.com/>

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## **Rhetorical Choices & Terms**

**Allude/Allusion** – To directly or indirectly reference something commonly known, such as an event, book, myth, place, or work of art. Writers often allude to historical, literary, religious, current, or mythical events. *Ex: He was destined to fail; he always flew too close to the sun. (The author alludes to the Greek myth of Icarus to emphasize what can happen when one disobeys those who strive too far.)*

**Analogy** – Making an analogy can explain something unfamiliar by associating it with or pointing out its similarity to something more familiar. *Ex: Getting politicians to agree is like herding cats. (In other words, it's very difficult!)*

**Audience** – Who an author is directing his or her message towards (whether speaking or writing). Consider direct audience (*Ex: In a State of the Union address, Congress*) and indirect audience (*the American people*).

**Comparing and Contrasting** – Discussing similarities (comparing) and differences (contrasting) between two things for a persuasive or illustrative purpose. *Ex: Hybrid cars have a much smaller carbon footprint than traditional midsize vehicles. (The underlined detail works to contrast the two different types of cars.)*

**Connotation** – The *implied* meaning of a word; words can broadly have positive, negative, or neutral connotations. Connotations may involve ideas, emotions, or attitudes. *Ex: the connotation the word “knife” might be fear, violence, anger, foreboding, etc.*

**Context** – The “extra-textual environment” (i.e. beyond/outside of the text) in which a text is being delivered or written. *Ex: If delivering a congratulatory speech to awards recipients, the immediate context might be the award ceremony itself; the broader context might be the purpose or significance of the actual award.*

**Denotation** – The strict, literal, dictionary definition of a word, devoid of any emotion or attitude. *Ex: the denotation of a knife would be a tool used to cut.*

**Diction** – Refers to a writer’s word choices, especially with regard to correctness, clearness, or effectiveness for a particular audience or situation. **Be able to describe an author’s diction** (ex: formal or informal, ornate or plain) and understand the ways *diction can complement an author’s purpose* – **never just say “the writer uses diction”** (that’s like saying the writer uses words!).

**Ethos\*** – **Appeal to credibility and ethics.** Setting up a source, including oneself, as credible and trustworthy. *Ex: “Given my PhD in the subject and years of experience in the field” helps establish the writer/speaker’s credibility.*

**Exigence** – The issue, problem, or situation that *causes* or *prompts* someone to write or speak. (Or, what motivates a writer/speaker to argue in the first place.) See also “Occasion,” below. *Ex: A minister writes and delivers a eulogy at a funeral. The exigence is that it is customary to reflect on a deceased person’s life and accomplishments.*

**Figurative Language** – General term for any artful deviation from the ordinary mode of speaking or writing *Exs: metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, and many others.* The general thinking is that we are more likely to be persuaded by rhetoric that is imaginative, even artful, rather than mundane.

**Imagery** – *Sensory details* or figurative language used to describe, arouse emotion, or represent abstractions. On a physical level, imagery uses terms related to the five senses: visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory. On a broader and deeper level, however, one image can represent more than one thing. *Ex: It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions... (1984)*

**Irony** – In the most basic sense, saying the opposite of what you mean; also used to describe situations in which the results of an action are dramatically different than intended. *Ex: “I do so hope there are more papers to grade,” is something that a teacher might say ironically.*

**Juxtapose/Juxtaposition** – When a writer places two or more ideas side by side in a text for the purpose of developing comparisons and contrasts. *Ex: It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness... (A Tale of Two Cities)*

**Logos\*** – **Appealing to an audience’s sense of concrete facts, reason, and logic.** *Ex: Citing peer-reviewed scientific studies or quotes by expert on a topic helps a writer or speaker use logic and reason.*

**Metaphor** – Comparing seemingly unlike things or substituting one for the other, suggesting a similarity. Metaphorical language makes writing vivid, imaginative, thought provoking, and meaningful. *Ex: With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. (Martin Luther King)*

**Occasion** – The reason or moment for writing or speaking. *Ex: When giving a graduation speech, the occasion is graduation.* (Also see the definition for “Exigence” above.)

**Organization** – How the different parts of an argument are arranged in a piece of writing or speech. *Ex: Think about an outline you write in preparation for drafting an essay and you'll have an idea of what organization is.*

**Pathos\* – Appeal to emotion.** *Ex: Animal shelters ads with pictures of cute sad animals and dramatic music appeal to viewers' emotions – specifically, their feelings of pity for the animals.*

**Paradox** – An apparently contradictory statement that nevertheless contains a measure of truth. *Ex: Whoever loses his life, shall find it. (Matthew, 16:25)*

**Purpose** – An author's persuasive intention. *Ex: If trying to convince your parents you should get a dog, your purpose in an essay on the subject would be to convince them you should get a dog.*

**Parallelism** – Similarity of structure in a pair or series of related words, phrases, or clauses (nouns with nouns, prepositional phrases with prepositional phrases, adverb clauses with adverb clauses, etc.) *Ex: So Janie waited a bloom time, and a green time and an orange time. But when the pollen again gilded the sun and sifted down on the world she began to stand around the gate and expect things. (Their Eyes Were Watching God)*

**Repetition** – Duplication, either exact or approximate, of any element of language, such as a sound, word, phrase, clause, sentence, or grammatical pattern. Used for effect or emphasis.

**Rhetorical Question** – Asking a question, not for the purpose of eliciting an answer, but for the purpose of asserting or denying something indirectly. *Ex: Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? / Thou art more lovely and more temperate. (Shakespeare, Sonnet 18)*

**Speaker** – The persona adopted by an author to deliver his or her message; may or may not actually be the same person as the author. Similar to the difference between author and narrator in a work of fiction.

**Syntax** – The way an author chooses to join words into phrases, clauses, and sentences. Think of syntax as the way a writer organizes groups of words or clauses – *sentence structure.*

**Symbolism** – Using something concrete (an object, person, place) to refer to an idea or concept. *Ex: "Fire" is commonly used a symbol for passion and/or anger.*

**Synthesis** – Combining sources or ideas in a coherent way with the purpose being to make a larger point. *Ex: A typical research paper involves synthesizing various sources to make a broader point about the topic.*

**Tone** – Describes an author's *attitude* toward his/her material, the audience, or both. Considering how a work would sound if it were read aloud can help in identifying an author's tone. A few words describing tone are *playful, serious, businesslike, sarcastic, humorous, formal, ornate, sardonic, somber*, etc. **When writing about tone, make sure to describe the writer's tone.** To make sure you understand the concept of tone, which is tricky, watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mW2VTUOSWs>

**Transition** – A word or phrase that links different ideas. Transitions effectively signal a shift from one idea to another. *Ex: furthermore, consequently, nevertheless, for example, in addition, likewise, similarly, on the contrary, etc.* More sophisticated writers use more subtle, but also purposeful, means of transition.

\*Starred items (*Ethos, Pathos, Logos*) are jointly referred to as Rhetorical Appeals. Instead of saying a writer “uses” *ethos, pathos, or logos*, describe what the writer does to use it – *Ex: By logically rebutting his opponent's argument in using carefully chosen testimony from experts on the topic, the writer persuades his audience.*