



Biscayne Bay Campus

SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT FOR AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE & COMPOSITION

Overview

Miami-Dade County Public Schools recognizes the importance of ensuring that students continue to strengthen reading skills and develop a passion for reading beyond instructional requirements. Experience and current research support the idea that students who are actively engaged in reading throughout the summer demonstrate improved academic performance during the following school year. Cultivating pleasurable reading helps build reading skills and enriches students' knowledge base. In addition, increased independent summer reading of both literary and non-fiction text helps prepare students to be successful in meeting more rigorous academic standards as schools transition to Language Arts Florida Standards.

Summer reading provides students with an opportunity for recreational reading, personal exploration, and continued intellectual growth. It serves as an essential component of the instructional process in schools. As stated above, research has shown that students who engage in reading throughout the summer improve academically during the following school year. However, school summer reading plans are not intended to be excessive or curtail students' participation in recreational and/or family activities.

Required Reading

All incoming AP Language & Composition students will read *In Cold Blood*, by Truman Capote (ISBN-13: 9780679745587). The book is available through numerous on-line providers for less than \$20.00.

Book Summary

On November 15, 1959, in the small town of Holcomb, Kansas, four members of the Clutter family were savagely murdered by blasts from a shotgun held a few inches from their faces. There was no apparent motive for the crime, and there were almost no clues.

As Truman Capote reconstructs the murder and the investigation that led to the capture, trial, and execution of the killers, he generates both mesmerizing suspense and astonishing

empathy. *In Cold Blood* is a work that transcends its moment, yielding poignant insights into the nature of American violence.

Assignment

Bring your copy of the book on the first day of school, August 20, 2018.

Your summer assignment to prepare you for the AP English Language and Composition course, which focuses on non-fiction works and analyzing how language functions, is to read the non-fiction novel *In Cold Blood*, by Truman Capote. In addition to the assignment below, be prepared to do a close-reading and write a rhetorical analysis of part of text the first week of school.

For each section of the text, keep a dialectical journal with two columns where you identify important thematic and stylistic moments in the text. On the left side, copy quotations that you feel are stylistically or thematically important and on the right side discuss your *specific* thoughts, comments, or questions about the quotation. You should have no fewer than 15 entries spread over the course of the text. ***More specific details are below:***

Dialectical Journal: Description and Examples

Dialectical (die-uh-LEKT-i-cul), n.: the art or practice of arriving at the truth through logical arguments

Journal (JUHR-nul), n.: a personal record of events, experiences, and reflections kept on a regular basis; a diary.

A dialectical journal is another name for a double-entry journal or a reader-response journal. A dialectical journal is a journal that records a dialogue, or conversation between the ideas in the text (the words that you are reading) and the ideas of the reader (the person who is doing the reading). This is what you must do in your journal—keep a dialogue with yourself. In your journal, have a conversation with the text and yourself. Write down your thoughts, questions, insights, and ideas while you read. The important part is that you, the reader, are reading something and then responding to it with your feelings and ideas, with the goal of connecting memorable moments to the author’s purpose for writing this text.

Keep in mind that there is no “right” or “wrong” answer when keeping this type of journal. A dialectical journal shows your own thoughts and ideas about the texts we read.

Your journal should be either hand-written or typed, with clear columns and a minimum of 15 entries spread out over the course of every section. If hand-written, please staple all papers together to submit: do not turn in an entire composition book. If typed, please print out and staple together to submit the first day of class.

Your journal will use a two-entry form. ***Exemplary and inadequate examples are on the following pages.***

- Fold the page in half.
- In the LEFT COLUMN, write down parts of paragraphs from our books and articles, quotes, or notes from class that you think are interesting or important.
- In a small middle column, include the page # for each entry.
- In the RIGHT COLUMN, write down YOUR OWN thoughts, commentary, and questions about the information in the LEFT COLUMN.

Paragraphs and quotes from the book	Page #	Your thoughts, comments and questions related to the paragraphs and quotes

Exemplary Sample Dialectical Journal Entries (Quotes and Notes)

Student Name: Bea Smart
 Book Title/Author: *Hatchet*, Gary Paulsen
 Date: July 2013 Total Pages: 195

Quotes from Text	Page #	My Notes
“Thanks. It’s really nice.” But the words sounded hollow, even to Brian.	Pg. 8	Why does Brian feel that way about getting a hatchet from his Mom? If the words sounded hollow to Brian, he must not mean it. Why is he mad at his Mom? (<i>Asking questions</i>)
“No roads, no trails, no clearings. Just the lakes, and it came to him that he would have to use a lake for landing. If he went down into the trees he was certain to die.”	Pg. 23	I can’t imagine keeping my cool in a situation like this. I’d be on my cell phone, panicking, and trying to land the plane! I guess it’s important to keep your cool in a crisis. (<i>Reaction to text</i>)
“Now, with the thought of the burger, the emptiness roared at him. He could believe the hunger, had never felt this way. The lake water had filled his stomach,	Pg. 48	It’s weird how Brian’s stomach is like a character now, driving his behavior. I’ve been hungry before, but never like that. Is he going to start eating things that are poison because he is so hungry? (<i>Observation of author’s craft and connections</i>)

but left it hungry, and now it demanded food, screamed for food.”		
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An Exemplary Dialectical Journal Contains the Following:

- Each “from text” entry is one or more complete sentences.
- “From text” entries are from the entire book (beginning, middle, and end). This is indicated by page numbers.
- Each “from text” entry contains no spelling errors.
- All “from me” entries have two or more complete sentences and demonstrate fully developed thoughts or connections about the text.

Inadequate Sample Dialectical Journal Entries (Quotes and Notes)

Student: Ida Wanna

Book Title/Author: *Hatchet*, Gary Paulsen

Date: July 2013 Total Pages: 195

Quotes from Text	Notes from Me
“It kept coming back to that. He had nothing.” <i>(No page number indicated.)</i>	I know how that feels. I have nothing too. <i>(This connection is rather shallow. It needs more elaboration.)</i>
“Things wer bad, he thout, but maybe not that bad.” <i>(This text excerpt has 2 misspellings and does not include a page number.)</i>	I feel that way too. <i>(Again, this connection does not appear to have any thought behind it, just a hasty response to complete the task.)</i>

An Inadequate Dialectical Journal Contains:

- Quotations from the text contain many misspelled words.
- “From text” entries indicate the entire book may not have been read.
- “From me” entries demonstrate incomplete thoughts or connections and seem hastily written. Entries lack elaboration.
- No page numbers are indicated.