AP English Language and Composition Reading List
2019 Summer Assignment (AP LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION)
Read and annotate ONE book from the following list of autobiography, biography, and memoirs. You will bring your annotated book to class during the first week of school and will be assigned an in class essay on which you will be expected to use quotes and specific examples from your reading.

GENERAL NONFICTION
Ambrose, Stephen. Undaunted Courage. Follows the Lewis and Clark expedition from Thomas Jefferson’s hope of finding a waterway to the Pacific, through the heart-stopping moments of the actual trip, to Lewis’s lonely demise on the Natchez Trace. For readers who love detailed history.
Barry, John M. The Great Influenza. A detailed description of the scourge of the "Spanish flu" of 1918 with interesting elements of the practice of medicine and medical school in those days. Especially appealing for students who are science oriented.
Rising Tide. An account of the flood of the Mississippi River in 1927. Elements are remarkably similar to the Katrina disaster. Students whose bent is engineering will find the fight of man vs. nature interesting. Connects well to American history, politics.
Capote, Truman. In Cold Blood. Truman Capote reconstructs the 1959 murder of a Kansas far family and the investigation that led to the capture, trial, and execution of the killers…the story of the lives and deaths of these six people, the victims and the murderers. Ground breaking journalism that reads like fiction.
Foer, Franklin. How Soccer Explains the World. Soccer is much more than a game, or even a way of life. It is a perfect window into the cross-currents of today's world, with all its joys and…sorrows…a wide-ranging work of reportage…a surprising tour through the world of soccer, shining a spotlight on the clash of civilizations, the international economy, and just about everything in between…an utterly original book that makes sense of our troubled times.
Gladwell, Malcolm. Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference. Explores the tipping point phenomenon—what causes a fashion trend, the popularity of a new product, or a drop in the crime rate.
Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking. A book about how we think without thinking, about choices that seem to be made in an instant…that aren’t as simple as they seem…cutting edge neuroscience and psychology
Outliers: The Story of Success. Outlier" is a scientific term to describe things or phenomena that lie outside normal experience. In the summer, in Paris, we expect most days to be somewhere between warm and very hot. But imagine if you had a day in the middle of August where the temperature fell below freezing. That day would be outlier. And while we have a very good understanding of why summer days in Paris are warm or hot, we know a good deal less about why a summer day in Paris might be freezing cold. In this book I'm interested in people who are outliers—in men and women who, for one
reason or another, are so accomplished and so extraordinary and so outside of ordinary experience that they are as puzzling to the rest of us as a cold day in August.

*What the Dog Saw*: Malcolm Gladwell's new book, presents nineteen brilliantly researched and provocative essays that exhibit the curiosity his readers love, each with a graceful narrative that leads to a thought-provoking analysis.

Junger, Sebastian. *The Perfect Storm*: A True Story of Men against the Sea. Back cover description:

In 1991, as Halloween nears, a cold front moves south from Canada, a hurricane swirls over Bermuda, and an intense storm builds over the Great Lakes...forces converge to create...a 100-year tempest that catches the North Atlantic fishing fleet off guard and unprotected. Readers weigh anchor with sailors struggling against the elements; they follow meteorologists, who watch helplessly as the storm builds; and, by helicopter and boat, they navigate 100-foot seas and 120-mph winds to attempt rescue against harrowing odds.

Krakauer, Jon. *Into Thin Air*: A Personal Account of the Mt Everest Disaster.—A harrowing tale of the perils of high-altitude climbing, a story of bad luck and worse judgment and heart breaking heroism || (People) The stuff of classic adventure tales…


Manchester, William. *A World Lit Only by Fire: The Medieval Mind and the Renaissance*: Portrait of an Age. This is the preeminent popular history of civilization's rebirth after the Dark Ages.


Sacks, Oliver. *The Man Who Mistook His Wife For a Hat: And Other Clinical Tales*. Psychology one of the great clinical writers of the 20th century (New York Times) recounts the case histories of patients lost in the bizarre, apparently inescapable world of neurological disorders...stories of individuals afflicted with fantastic perceptual and intellectual aberrations.


Soja, Edward. *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*. The book's central argument is that spatial thinking, or what has been called the geographical or spatial imagination, has tended to be bicameral, or confined to two approaches. Spatiality is either seen as concrete material forms to be mapped, analyzed, and explained; or as mental constructs, ideas about and representations of space and its social significance. Edward Soja critically re-evaluates this dualism to create an alternative approach, one that comprehends both the material and mental dimensions of spatiality but also extends beyond them to new and different modes of spatial thinking.


Zakaria, Fareed. *Post-America World*. An important book by one of today's most influential journalists.
Woolfe, Virginia. *A Room of Own’s One*: Surprisingly, this long essay about society and art sexism is one of Woolfe's most accessible works. Woolfe, a major modernist writer and critic, takes us on an erudite yet conversational--and completely entertaining--walk around the history of women in writing, smoothly comparing the architecture of sentences by the likes of *William Shakespeare* and *Jane Austen*, all the while lampooning the chauvinistic state of university education in the England of her day. When she concluded that to achieve their full greatness as writers, women will need a solid income and a privacy, Woolfe pretty much invented modern feminist criticism.

*Three Guineas*: Like Virginia Woolfe's better known *A Room of One's Own*, *Three Guineas* is still timely and well worth the effort required to read it. In this book-length essay, an English writer responds to a letter - from a society for preventing war and protecting culture and intellectual liberty - which asks "How in your opinion are we to prevent war?" and requests a one guinea donation.

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY, BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIR**

Alexander, Caroline. *The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Expedition*. Back cover description: The Imperial Transatlantic Expedition, Sir Ernest Shackleton's daring but ill fated attempt to cross the South Pole, comes to life in pictures…and in the words of the men who lived the extraordinary Antarctic adventure…an exhilarating account of one of the greatest episodes in the history of polar exploration…one of history's all-time great survival stories.

Chen, Da. *Colors of the Mountain*. —"I was born in Southern China in 1962, in the tiny town of Yellow Stone..."

Frankl, Viktor E. *Man's Search for Meaning*. Psychiatrist's memoir of life in Nazi death camps and its lessons for spiritual survival. Has sold more than 10 million copies in twenty-four languages…listed in a Library of Congress survey as among the ten most influential books in America as —a book that made a difference in your life. May be of special interest to students who liked Elie Wiesel's *Night*.

Hillenbrand, Laura. *Seabiscuit*. Sports biography of a great American race horse in Depression era America.

Kennedy, Caroline. *Profiles in Courage for our Time*. From Publishers Weekly: —"In 1990, the Kennedy family resurrected the concept and established the Profiles in Courage Award for selfless public service. Now, in this expertly packaged anthology, Caroline Kennedy and over a dozen prominent writers bring the sacrifices of those award winners to life…a stirring look at people who rarely thought about what they could do for themselves, but always about what they could do for their country.”

Kennedy, John F. *Profiles in Courage*. —"This is a book about the most admirable of human virtues—courage. ‘Grace under pressure,’ Ernest Hemingway defined it. And these are the stories of the pressures experienced by eight United States senators and the grace with which they endured them.” (Kennedy). Pulitzer Prize, 1957. Of special interest to students interested in politics, public life…about the kind of courage America needs— moral courage, the courage of personal integrity.

Manchester, William. *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur 1880-1964*: Inspiring, outrageous... A thundering paradox of a man. Douglas MacArthur, one of only five men in history to have achieved the rank of General of the United States Army. He served in World Wars I, II, and
the Korean War, and is famous for stating that "in war, there is no substitute for victory." AMERICAN CAESAR examines the exemplary army career, the stunning successes (and lapses) on the battlefield, and the turbulent private life of the soldier-hero whose mystery and appeal created a uniquely American legend.

Markham, Beryl. *West With the Night*. Moving memoir of early 20th Century woman aviator in East Africa.