

## **AP Language and Composition - Summer 2022 - Stafford High School - Mohr**

Dear AP Scholar,

Welcome! I'm so glad you have chosen to take AP Language and Composition this coming year. As an AP class, it is faster-paced and more rigorous, so getting started in the summer is a great way to prepare for class in the fall. As you'll quickly realize, everything is an argument. This class is all about having opinions and then learning to back them up with evidence and commentary. You'll write a lot, so get ready to grow into a strong writer who can see the world through a critical eye and join what we call "the discourse community" - a world of thinkers, writers, authors, analysts, and researchers who are already talking about issues that affect you, right where you are in high school.

I can't wait to hear what you have to say! Welcome to the discourse community. :)

-Ms. Mohr

### **Here are a few checklist items for you to get ready for this year:**

1. Pick up the following book with this handout. This is a consumable book, meaning it is your copy and you may - and should! - write in it and you may keep it. You will need to bring it with you the first day/week of class.

*Columbine, by Dave Cullen*

2. You must complete the tasks for the summer reading assignment. Be sure to respond to each task thoroughly and completely, as your responses will count as a major grade for the first marking period. You should make sure your ideas are both organized and presented clearly and thoroughly. Please remember that this is an AP class, so I expect well-developed and thoughtful responses to each task. If you pace yourself over the summer, you should easily be able to read through this book. It is also a compelling story and part memoir, and I think you will like it.

Note: it is expected that you complete your summer assignments **on your own**. Although you may struggle, put forth your best effort and complete all of what is detailed below. It is unacceptable to come in with incomplete work and claim "I didn't get it." If you have any questions, please email me at [meredith.mohr@staffordmsd.org](mailto:meredith.mohr@staffordmsd.org). I am here to help you!

## **Assignment for *Columbine* by Dave Cullen:**

**Read the entire book.**

Dave Cullen, a reporter who covered the Columbine tragedy on April 20, 1999, is a first-hand observer of everything that happened that day. But he also did extensive research as a journalist to compile and write this book that asks you to consider myths and theories about the incident, public perception of school shootings, initiatives made in the last 23 years to address student mental health, gun control, school safety and training, etc., and the aftermath of the shootings, not just on the community but on the nation and world. Your goal is to identify what claims or arguments he is making, to consider what audiences he is addressing, and how he accomplishes communicating his arguments effectively to persuade the reader (you.)

**As you read, annotate each chapter and complete a dialectic journal for each chapter.** Essentially this is a Cornell notes structure:

- At the top of the page, write your name, the date(s) you read the chapter, and the chapter title.
- On the left-hand side of the page, you will write down quotes or data (evidence) that you think is significant to the author's claims, or that you find interesting.
- On the right-hand side of the page, you will write down what claim Cullen is making and how this connects to the themes/major claims of the book. In this column, you will also write your own notes about what you're reading. We will call this "Thoughts/Questions/Epiphanies (TQEs)" in class. If you have questions or wonder about something, write them down. If you realize something or connect with the text in some way, write it down.
- Be sure to include page numbers for any quotes.
- You will use these notes to participate in a Socratic seminar in class, so make sure you have detailed notes/thoughts so you can contribute!
- At the bottom of each page for the chapter, you will write down a claim that summarizes that chapter.

**Your annotation will be a grade the first week of school. It should include underlined quotes, marks where you identify claims and evidence, and your thoughts/questions/or epiphanies as you read. Your goal should be to make notes throughout every chapter - this will also help you complete your Dialectic Journal.**

When you are finished reading, select one of the essay topics below to answer. Your essay must include textual evidence (direct quotes) from the book. Be sure to cite sources as page numbers (your journal notes should help you with this.)

1. Research one of the major Columbine myths (bullying, Goths, jocks, outcasts, gay students, the third shooter, the Trench Coat Mafia, the Christian martyr). Write a cause and effect essay where you analyze how the myth began and what effect it had on the investigation, public perception, and the aftermath of the shootings.

**Suggested chapters to help you:**

Chapter 2 “Rebels” pp 6-12  
Chapter 4 “Rock ‘n’ Bowl” pp 16-18 1  
Chapter 6 “His Future” pp 26-28  
Chapter 8 “Maximum Human Density” pp 32-36  
Chapter 10 “Judgement” pp 40-44  
Columbine Myths pp 149-152, 155-159  
Eric Harris as a psychopath, pp 239-248

2. Research the Active Shooter Protocol, which was developed and widely adopted because of Columbine. Should law enforcement have practiced something similar on April 20, 1999? The team at Columbine followed the existing protocol they had trained under. Some SWAT members argued during the attack that the protocol should be disregarded and that they should rush in. Take a clear and defensible position and write a detailed paper arguing for what leaders should have done based on *what they knew and believed at the time*. (This paper could also be a compare/contrast essay.)

**Suggested reading to help you:**

Chapter 12 “The Perimeter” pp 52-57  
More on the perimeter, pp 56-57, 58, 59, 64  
SWAT teams, pp 61-63, 81-82, 96-97, 142-145, 352-353

3. Write a detailed essay comparing and contrasting the myths (bullying, Goths, jocks, outcasts, gay students, the Third Shooter, the Trench Coat Mafia, the Christian martyr) with the reality of Columbine in order to draw conclusions (make a clear and defensible claim) about culture and society. Consider the setting and time of Columbine (life in the 1990s, high school culture in 1990s-2000s, the introduction of the internet, life in Colorado where this happened, etc.)

**Suggested reading to help you:**

Chapter 2 “Rebels” pp 6-12  
Chapter 4 “Rock ‘n’ Bowl” pp 16-18 1  
Chapter 6 “His Future” pp 26-28  
Chapter 8 “Maximum Human Density” pp 32-36  
Chapter 10 “Judgement” pp 40-44  
Columbine Myths pp 149-152, 155-159  
Eric Harris as a psychopath, pp 239-248

You only need to choose ONE of the three topics to write about. The essay may be handwritten or typed. (if you type, I prefer you to double space so I can give you feedback!) This essay and the dialectic journal will be due within the **first week of school**. Length should be about 800 words or about 2-3 pages.

4. Review the essay rubric attached to this assignment. Every essay you write in this class will be graded by this rubric unless otherwise stated. This is the key to understanding how your Free Response Question Essays will be graded on the AP Lang Exam in the spring!
5. Read and sign the attached AP Student Code of Honor. Be sure you understand the expectations of this class in terms of academic work and behavior. The signature will be due on the first week of class as well.

## **Accelerated Placement Student HONOR CODE:**

All students are expected to abide by the honor code. By signing this agreement, you acknowledge you have read the requirements fully, agree to abide by them, and certify that you will wholeheartedly attempt to follow them yourself and hold yourself and your peers accountable.

AP students will act with integrity towards classwork, homework, and exam materials at all times, including in an official AP College Board setting, such as sitting for the required exam. Cheating and plagiarism will be treated with a zero-tolerance policy. Any student caught engaging in these activities will receive a zero on the assignment or exam and will have parent/AP contact.

AP students will engage thoughtfully and actively in class every day to the best of their ability, and will arrive to class prepared and ready to discuss/speak up, participate, work or listen. This includes, but is not limited to, phone usage, games, or socializing unless explicitly stated by the instructor.

AP students will focus their efforts on reading or writing to keep up with the pace of the class, not just for their academic grades but for their own progress in skills and growth as young adults in a collegiate setting. They understand that this course is a partnership with their instructor: grades are not handed out, they are earned, and there is always room for them to make mistakes as long as they help them learn.

AP students will engage respectfully and maturely with each other and with their instructor when presented with challenging material. They understand they will be exposed to a wide range of topics and themes. They understand that they may not always agree with the ideas presented personally and that nothing will be presented to them that is intentionally hurtful or disrespectful to another person/group. As such, they agree to cheerfully and cooperatively work with peers they may not know and to act with fidelity to their assignment, which is to think, read, and write critically and with an open mind.

**I, (first and last name)\_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the expectations of this class as outlined in this Honor Code, and I agree to faithfully conduct myself according to these guidelines all year.**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_