



AP Language Summer Reading 2021

Below is a selected list of current and class nonfiction texts that suggest the range and type of reading you may expect to encounter in AP English Language and Composition. We encourage you to try out one of these titles in order to engage with big ideas, strong writing, and persuasive thinking. Let's talk about what you read when you return in the fall!

The MCPS School Library Media Programs (SLMP) team has curated a list of free, online resources where students can access a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, including some of the titles listed below. These may be accessed at [MCPSTeensREAD](#)

[The Anthropocene Reviewed](#) by John Green
[Are Prisons Obsolete?](#) by Angela Y. Davis
[Between the World and Me](#) by Ta-Nehisi Coates
[Blue Highways](#) by William Least Heat-Moon
[The Devil in the White City](#) by Erik Larsen
[Eating Animals](#) by Jonathan Safran Foer
[Eight Men Out](#) by Eliot Asinof
[Fast Food Nation](#) by Erik Schlosser
[The Fire Next Time](#) by James Baldwin
[The Fire This Time](#) edited by Jesmyn Ward
[Freakonomics](#) by Stephen J. Dubner and Steven Levitt
[The Girl Who Smiled Beads](#) by Clemantine Wamariya and Elizabeth Weil
[How to Be an Antiracist](#) by Ibram X. Kendi
[How the Word Is Passed](#) by Clint Smith

[The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks](#) by Rebecca Skloot
[Just Mercy](#) by Bryan Stevenson
[King of the World](#) by David Remnick
[Nickel and Dimed](#) by Barbara Ehrenreich
[No Time to Lose](#) by Peter Piot
[The Omnivore's Dilemma](#) by Michael Pollan
[The Perfect Storm](#) by Sebastian Junger
[Pilgrim at Tinker Creek](#) by Annie Dillard
[Plastic: A Toxic Love Story](#) by Susan Freinkel
[Salt: A World History](#) by Mark Kurlansky
[Stiff](#) by Mary Roach
[The Tipping Point](#) by Malcolm Gladwell
[Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom](#) by Lynda Blackmon Lowery
[Unbroken](#) by Laura Hillenbrand
[Unorthodox: The Scandalous Rejection of My Hasidic Roots](#) by Deborah Feldman

Please note that the books listed above may or may not be part of the standard MCPS curriculum and may not be approved for instructional/classroom use. Please have a conversation with your family about the appropriateness of any specific text for independent reading. Links are to book synopses on [Goodreads.com](#).



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Below are some ideas for how we will approach the books we read in AP Lang. Think about these as you read the book you select. You do not need to turn anything in. This is simply an introduction to the slightly different focus we will take in the course next fall.

We can't wait to have these discussions with you!

How do authors make arguments?

As you read one of the books listed above, look not only for the usual elements (characterization, theme, plot) but for the book's **argument**, whether implied and direct.

Ask yourself:

- What is the entire book's central argument? (What does it want us to think about the issues presented?)
- How is the argument created? How is it strengthened?
- What sub- or side-arguments come up? How do they contribute to the central argument?

Example: In Green Eggs and Ham, Dr. Seuss implicitly argues we should be open to new experiences. This is strengthened by making the unnamed character exaggeratedly grumpy. His scowl, dismissive posture, and unearned opinion make his rejection seem unreasonable and therefore not something the audience should side with. Seuss manipulates the audience even further by making his foil, Sam-I-Am, so cheerful and likable. Without knowing anything about the food itself, we're inclined to trust it simply because of who is endorsing it and how much he contrasts with the loathsome person denouncing it.