

Summer Reading

Advanced Placement

English Language and Composition (apenglish9.blogspot.com)

Summer Reading Program 2011-2012

School of the Arts

Ms. Gamzon (mlgamz@aol.com)

OVERVIEW:

This summer, you will complete the standard SOTA Commencement Reading List items (2 novels from the selections on that list, 11th grade). In addition, you will need to read the following reading selections in preparation for Advanced Placement English Language and Composition this fall semester. Your first compositions in class will be based on one or more of these readings, and we will study them further during the first unit; therefore, you should make sure that you have a thorough understanding of these works.

1. **Eats, Shoots and Leaves**, Lynn Truss (for grammar review, available in library)

2. **The Elements of Style**, Strunk and White (for style review)

3. In addition to the books above, read at least five essays from among the following essayists (many of these writers have essays online):

Joseph Addison, Margaret Atwood, Francis Bacon, James Baldwin, Wayne C. Booth, Joan Didion, Annie Dillard, W.E.B. Dubois, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Ellen Goodman, Nadine Gordimer, William Hazlitt, bell hooks, Thomas Jefferson, Martin Luther King, Charles Lamb, Barry Lopez, Norman Mailer, Nancy Mairs, Toni Morrison, George Orwell, Carl Sagan, Richard Steele, Henry David Thoreau, James Thurber, Alice Walker, Eudora Welty, E.B. White, or Virginia Woolf.

Where to find essays: <http://grammar.about.com/od/60essays/a/classicessays.htm>

Answer the following questions for EACH essay:

- What is the author's SUBJECT?
- What is the OCCASION?
- Who is the AUDIENCE?
- What is the PURPOSE of the essay?
- Who is the SPEAKER (what kind of person is the author based on and how he/she writes the essay)?
- What is the TONE of the essay?
- How does the essay begin? (i.e. with an anecdote, or question or description, etc.)
- How does the essay end?

You will need to turn in your answers on the first day of class. Write an essay analyzing each of the 5 essays you have read. Your essays should be 1-2 pages long, double-spaced.

SOAPSTONE

SOAPSTone (Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject, Tone) is an acronym for a series of questions that we must first ask ourselves, and then answer, as we begin to plan our compositions, or if we're analyzing others' essays and writings.

Who is the Speaker?

The voice that tells the story. Before we begin to write, they must decide whose voice is going to be heard. Whether this voice belongs to a fictional character or to the writers themselves, students should determine how to insert and develop those attributes of the speaker that will influence the perceived meaning of the piece.

When analyzing others' writing, we ask ourselves who is speaking? Is it the writer? A persona? How can we tell? What does the writing say about the speaker?

What is the Occasion?

The time and the place of the piece; the context that prompted the writing. Writing does not occur in a vacuum. All writers are influenced by the larger occasion: an environment of ideas, attitudes, and emotions that swirl around a broad issue. Then there is the immediate occasion: an event or situation that catches the writer's attention and triggers a response.

Why are we writing? What am I concerned with? Or, when analyzing others' writing, what are they writing in response to? What's happening in the larger world? What is the specific reason the person is writing (or speaking)?

Who is the Audience?

The group of readers to whom this piece is directed. As we begin to write, we must determine who the audience is that we intend to address. It may be one person or a specific group. This choice of audience will affect how and why we write a particular text.

When analyzing others' writing, we have to determine who the writer had in mind, as well, and why.

Questions to keep in mind: Is the writing intended to challenge a predicted point of view? To build on a predicted shared point of view? Is the audience a peer group? Superiors? Other? Are there both intended and unintended audiences?

What is the Purpose?

The reason behind the text. We need to consider the purpose of the text in order to develop the thesis or the argument and its logic. We should ask ourselves, "What do I want my audience to think or do as a result of reading my text?"

When analyzing others' writing, we need to determine this same answer in regard to the purpose. What am we, as readers, supposed to think or do as a result of this person's writing?

What is the Subject?

We should be able to state the subject in a few words or phrases. This step helps us to focus on the intended task throughout the writing process.

As well, when reading others' writings, we should be able to state the subject in a few words or phrases, as well, especially if the writing is done well.

What is the Tone?

The attitude of the author, often toward his or her writing and/or topic. The spoken word can convey the speaker's attitude and thus help to impart meaning through tone of voice. With the written word, it is tone that extends meaning beyond the literal, and we must learn to convey this tone in our diction (choice of words), syntax (sentence construction), and imagery (metaphors, similes, and other types of figurative language). The ability to manage tone is one of the best indicators of a sophisticated writer.

Additionally, we should read others' writings carefully to understand tone, because this meaning is central to understanding. We look for clues that help us "hear" the writer, and thus make judgments about his or her tone.