

**EHS Gifted & Talented Academy  
AP English Language & Composition  
Summer Reading Assignment**

**Overview**

Summer reading is an integral part of the English curriculum of the EHS Gifted Academy, one that helps students to prepare for the challenges of the academic year ahead. Because the focus of this course is nonfiction, students are required to read two (2) books this summer: one nonfiction, and one fiction title. In addition to the close reading and annotation of each summer reading book, students will complete a short assignment for each text. The purpose of these assignments is to guide student thinking in the absence of a teacher. Students will write a formal essay based on the fiction book early in the fall semester; close reading of the text will prepare students for this essay. Students should bring both summer reading texts to our first class and be prepared to share their *thoughtful and thorough* annotations and notes in class discussion during the first week of classes.

The nonfiction title is William Strunk and E.B. White's short writing guide *The Elements of Style* (fourth edition or newer). This is a classic writing and style manual that is brief and easy to understand. It covers topics of mechanics and usage that all writing students should have mastered, but may have forgotten. *The Elements of Style* will be an excellent reference guide both for the remainder of high school and for college.

The fiction title is Aldous Huxley's classic novel *Brave New World*. This text is important to the course thematically, exploring ideas of freedom, control, and the individual and government's roles in society.

**Assignment for the Nonfiction Text**

Read and annotate the text. Annotations need not be extensive, but mark passages that reinforce past teaching or which contain new or helpful ideas. Then choose two principles, one from section II -- *Elementary Principles of Composition* -- and one from section V -- *An Approach to Style* -- that you find helpful and/or interesting. Write a 1-2 paragraph reflection on each, explaining why you chose them and how you can employ the ideas in your own writing. Note: failure to adhere to the basic rules and principles outlined in these sections will result in lower grades on student essays -- both formal and informal. Be smart. If you know that conventions are a relative weakness in your writing, practice them this summer.

**Assignment for the Fiction Text**

Actively read and annotate the text. Everyone annotates a little bit differently, but all annotations require the student to underline, highlight, or circle literary and rhetorical devices; ask questions of the author; locate examples of imagery and figurative language; and write margin notes about the devices the author uses. When reading, students should ask themselves questions, such as: What does this mean? What is the author's purpose? What is the function of this chapter? What is the author's tone? What statements does the author make through character? Through setting? What literary/rhetorical devices does the author employ? Is the author successful?

Although it is not necessary to purchase copies of the summer reading books, it is to a student's advantage to have his/her own copies of the texts. This allows students to highlight, annotate, and take margin notes in the text itself, which is an essential skill students will expand upon as they progress through high school. Paperbacks and used books are often the best value; both are readily available online at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), [half.com](http://half.com), or [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com).

Please address questions or concerns to the instructor at [lisasmith@u-46.org](mailto:lisasmith@u-46.org).