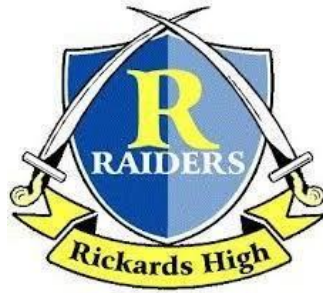


James S. Rickards High School Summer Reading

Attention: Parents and Students!



WHO: James S. Rickards High School Students taking AP English Language and Composition.

WHAT: The following information outlines the assignment we have given to our Advanced Placement (AP) Language and Composition students for the 2025 James S. Rickards Summer Reading Program. This assignment is an addition to the school-wide Summer Reading Program and is intended for students enrolled in the AP Language and Composition course for the 2025-26 school year. This rigorous course requires that students analyze rhetoric by evaluating a speaker's strategic choices in addressing a specific audience. A requirement of the course is the AP Language and Composition Exam, which is created by College Board and administered at the conclusion of the year. This assessment includes writing three essays: synthesis, rhetorical analysis and argument. The following assignment will prepare students for what to expect.

Students are expected to complete the assignment by themselves, only using the power of their brain. If a student is caught plagiarizing, they will receive a 0%.

This assignment should be completed via a Word document. Students are encouraged to use their Leon County School's Office365 account, which can be accessed through ClassLink.

WHEN: This assignment will be collected within the first week of class during the 2025-26 school year.

CONTACT INFO: If you have any questions regarding our JSRHS Summer Reading Program, please feel free to contact Mrs. G. Cooper, JSRHS ELA Department Chair, (cooperg2@leonschools.net) and/or Dr. Joe Williams, JSRHS IB Coordinator, (williamsj@leonschools.net).

James S. Rickards High School Summer Reading

Attention: Parents and Students!



Assignment:

Introduction

Your summer assignment is a chance for you to explore your ideas through listening to podcasts and writing in response to what you are listening to and thinking about. The assignment has three parts and all work is **due the second Friday of the year: Friday, August 22nd**. Contact Mrs. G. Cooper (cooperg2@leonschools.net) if you have any questions.

As Voltaire said, “Think for yourself and let others enjoy the privilege of doing so too,” Enjoy the privilege of listening to great stories and ideas. Enjoy the listening and writing process. In short, have a great summer!

Part 1 – Choose and Listen to a Podcast

Assignment: Choose a podcast from the list of options below. Most of them are available free on Spotify, iTunes, or the podcast’s website. **Listen to at least 10 episodes, or 1 complete season** if the season is episodic. You may want to google a few of the options to learn about them to find one you like.

Why it is important: Because there are a variety of podcast options, you are able to choose from diverse voices. Also, being able to learn through listening podcast has many benefits like broadening your background knowledge and making connections to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, and personal experiences.

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Assignment:

Subject	Podcast Title	Subject	Podcast Title
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -1619 Project -Revisionist History -Stuff You Missed in History Class -The History Chicks 	Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -This American Life -Dolly Parton's America -Radio Diaries -30 for 30
Crime/Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Breakdown -Ear Hustle -Serial -The Grift 	Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Flash Forward -Sawbones -The Hidden Brain -The Sustainable Futures Report
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -50 Things That Made the Modern Economy -Freakonomics -How I Built This -Planet Money 	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Getting In -Talks with Teachers
Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -CodeSwitch -LBGT Stories -Other: Mixed Race in America -What Would a Feminist Do? -This Teenage Life 	Philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps -Philosophize This!
Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Dissect -Fresh Air -Pop Culture Happy Hour -Song Exploder 	Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Gastropod -The Dinner Party Download

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Assignment:

Part 2 - Journal Writing

Assignment: For each episode you listen to, you will keep a reading journal. This can be a physical journal, a stack of sheets of paper, or a document you create and keep online. Use the journal options below as a guideline for different ways you can write your journal. You can choose one type or use a mixture.

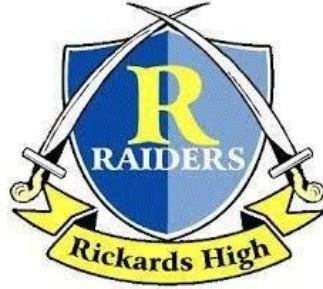
In addition to your own original journal, use the podcast discussion questions to guide your journaling and reflections. The discussion questions can be found on pages 3-4 of this document.

Why it is important: Consolidation helps organize and solidify learning, and while you are listening to your podcast, you will need a place to consolidate your thinking about what you hear. This journal will serve as a means to consolidate what you have learned while listening, allowing you to retrieve the significant learning you are doing.

Journal options:	
Two-column notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a two-column format (sample here) to engage in a written dialogue with each episode• In the left column, write important excerpts from the text.• In the right column, respond to the text -- explaining significance, logging questions, making connections, etc. This is where you can include your reflections, analyses and answers to the podcast discussion questions
Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a structured outline of each episode, focused on the theme and supported with textual evidence, guided by the podcast discussion questions.• It may be helpful to organize your outline based on the plot or section, if it exists in the text. (sample outline here)
Mindmap or Sketchnotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a visual representation of each episode. Use lines, arrows, bubbles and/or sketches to link notes to the theme.• Your notes, in any format, should be guided by the podcast discussion questions.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Mindmapping information here○ Sketchnotes Information here and here

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Assignment:

Part 3 - Complete a Project

Assignment: Once you have listened to your podcast and completed your journal, complete a visually appealing, compelling, and engaging presentation to synthesize what you have learned and reflected on. The audience for this presentation is your English teacher and class peers. Your presentation should include the following:

- The producer/narrator's background - Write about how their personal lives affected their writing, and why they chose to develop a podcast about this topic. You may use any information provided in the podcast or additional research.
- An analysis of the author's craft throughout the podcast - This could be about the narrator's tone, the structure of the episodes, the credibility of the evidence presented, and/or other rhetorical strategies such as repetition, rhetorical questions, imagery, etc.
- Overall evaluation - Choose THREE of the podcast discussions questions (found on pages 3-4), and use them to respond in detail to the podcast as a whole. Your response for each question must include at least two pieces of evidence from the podcast to support your answers. The evidence may be the same or different as evidence you selected in Part 2.
- Project Format - you can choose any format for your project: PowerPoint, Canva, Prezi, a physical poster, etc.

Why it is important: This is the first step in me getting to know you and your thought process. But also, a major part of our class is analyzing how writers (and speakers) use language to achieve their purpose, so thinking about this over the summer will help get you in the mindset for the upcoming year.

AP Language and Composition Students 2025

James S. Rickards High School Summer Reading

Attention: Parents and Students!

Assignment:

Podcast Discussion Questions – You'll use these questions in your journal and in your final project.

1. What about this episode caught your attention? What about the summary, reviews, cover, or background made you want to listen to it? Did the episode live up to the expectations created by these?
2. What is the narrator trying to accomplish with this episode? How well does the narrator do this?
3. How is the episode structured? Flashbacks? Linear? Does it jump around? How does that support what the narrators are trying to accomplish? Does it distract you from the episode or does it make the episode more interesting? Why?
4. What's a significant scene/moment in the episode that emotionally moved you, shocked you, surprised you, amazed you, or had some significant effect upon you? What happened? What was the effect?
5. If you could speak to the narrators and researchers, what changes would you suggest s/he make? What could be improved? How?
6. Was there a character or individual with which you felt a strong connection? Why? What about this character or individual caused this connection?
7. Was there a character or individual that disappointed you or angered you? What about this character or individual caused this reaction?
8. Would you encourage your high school peers to listen to this episode? Should this historical event/person be taught in high school classes? Why? Why not?
9. What line, scene, event, or person in this episode could be seen as inspirational for people? Why and how?
10. What did you learn from this episode? How does that knowledge potentially shape how you see yourself, your community, your world, etc?
11. Would this event or person make a good movie or television series (some of these topics already are)? Why or why not?
12. How would you convince people to listen to this particular episode? What would you say or reveal to promote their listening to this episode?
13. What from the narrators' styles of writing or rhetorical choices could you use in your own writing? How?
14. What lines from the episode had beautiful language and/or imagery that stood out to you? Why were these lines so powerful?
15. Was there something in the narrator's style that annoyed you? A phrase that was overused? A way of talking about others that bothered you? The way s/he structured argument? The examples used? The attitude or tone? Provide and discuss examples. Also, explain why it bothered you.
16. What ideas, personalities, events, issues are juxtaposed with each other? To what effect?
17. What role does irony or satire play in this episode? How? To what effect?
18. Did the narrator or topic change your mind? How so? Why not?
19. How did the narrator get you to sympathize with someone?
20. To what extent is the narrator biased on the issue being addressed? What evidence is there to support your opinion?

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Assignment:

Scoring:

	50% / F (Missing / Incomplete)	85% / B (Complete)	94% / A (Excellent)	98% / A+ (Mastery)
Journal	No journal notes were submitted -OR- The submitted notes do not yet indicate thorough understanding of the entire podcast	The submitted journal notes indicate complete understanding of the entire podcast, and may also consider some of the podcast discussion questions.	The submitted notes indicate thorough understanding of the entire podcast, and consideration of most of the podcast discussion questions	The submitted notes indicate thorough understanding of the entire podcast, and complete engagement with all of the podcast discussion questions.
Project	No project was submitted -OR- The submitted project does not yet indicate thorough completion of the assignment	The submitted project indicates completion of the assignment.	The submitted project indicates thorough completion of the assignment.	The submitted project indicates thorough completion of the assignment, and goes above and beyond instructions with an additional personal element.