

Summer Reading Assignment: AP English Language and Composition, 2023

For questions, contact Mr. Jonathan Herrera (herreraj@leonschools.net)

Per School Board Policy 2240, Leon County Schools recognizes that certain instructional materials may conflict with a student's or parent's value system. In such cases, a parent may request in writing an alternative summer reading assignment. Please direct inquiries to Jonathan Herrera (herreraj@leonschools.net).

Our class is a deep and thoughtful study of nonfiction—its various uses in our culture, the tools of its construction, and approaches to crafting it skillfully. So your summer reading this year is not a novel, but a collection of nonfiction pieces. We hope you'll find some surprises and some delights as you take the opportunity to study each piece in depth.

Get a copy¹ of *The Best American Essays of the Century*, edited by Joyce Carol Oates. Read the Introduction by Oates that begins on page xvii and consider her points about essays. Then choose **one** of the following sets of essays to read.² (Dates in parentheses are provided to help you locate each essay within the anthology, which is organized chronologically.)

List A

- "Once More to the Lake" by E.B. White (1941)
- "The Way to Rainy Mountain" by N. Scott Momaday (1967)
- "Women and Honor: Some Notes on Lying" by Adrienne Rich (1977)
- "Aria: A Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood" by Richard Rodriguez (1980)

List B

- "Pamplona in July" by Ernest Hemingway (1923)
- "How It Feels to Be Colored Me" by Zora Neale Hurston (1928)
- "A Drugstore in Winter" by Cynthia Ozick (1982)
- "Graven Images" by Saul Bellow (1997)

Assignment

You will submit your work electronically to Canvas during the first week of school, so type up and save all of your work as a single file. All answers should be in complete, well-crafted sentences and/or paragraphs, and your answers *must* reflect a sophisticated and academic reading of each essay. Textual evidence will really help. Label your answers with the title of each essay.

For each essay you read, answer the following:

1. What is the implied argument or central message of the essay? This will have to be inferred from a careful reading of the essay!
2. How would you describe the author's tone, style, or voice? Give two quotes that demonstrate your description and explain how those quotes enhance or further the author's message.
3. What do you like about the essay? Be specific! What do you dislike about the essay? Be specific!

After reading all of your essays, choose the *one* that you like best. In a formal, proofread, revised essay of at least 300 words, do one of the following:

Option A: Write an argument that agrees with the message of the essay, disagrees with the message of the essay, or agrees with some of its points and disagrees with others. Make sure you clearly and correctly identify the message of your essay, and support your own position with specific evidence from your reading, observation, or experience.

Option B: Write an essay about a topic of your choice that *mimics* the style of the essay you chose. To do this, you will need to identify at least five techniques or strategies that your author uses and incorporate them in a recognizable, respectful way into your own essay.

¹ To reduce cost, you can get an electronic copy, a used copy, etc.

² We will be referring to these essays and other essays in the anthology throughout the school year. Neither list is "better" or "preferable," and the two lists cover equal amounts of text. Choose based on your own interests.