

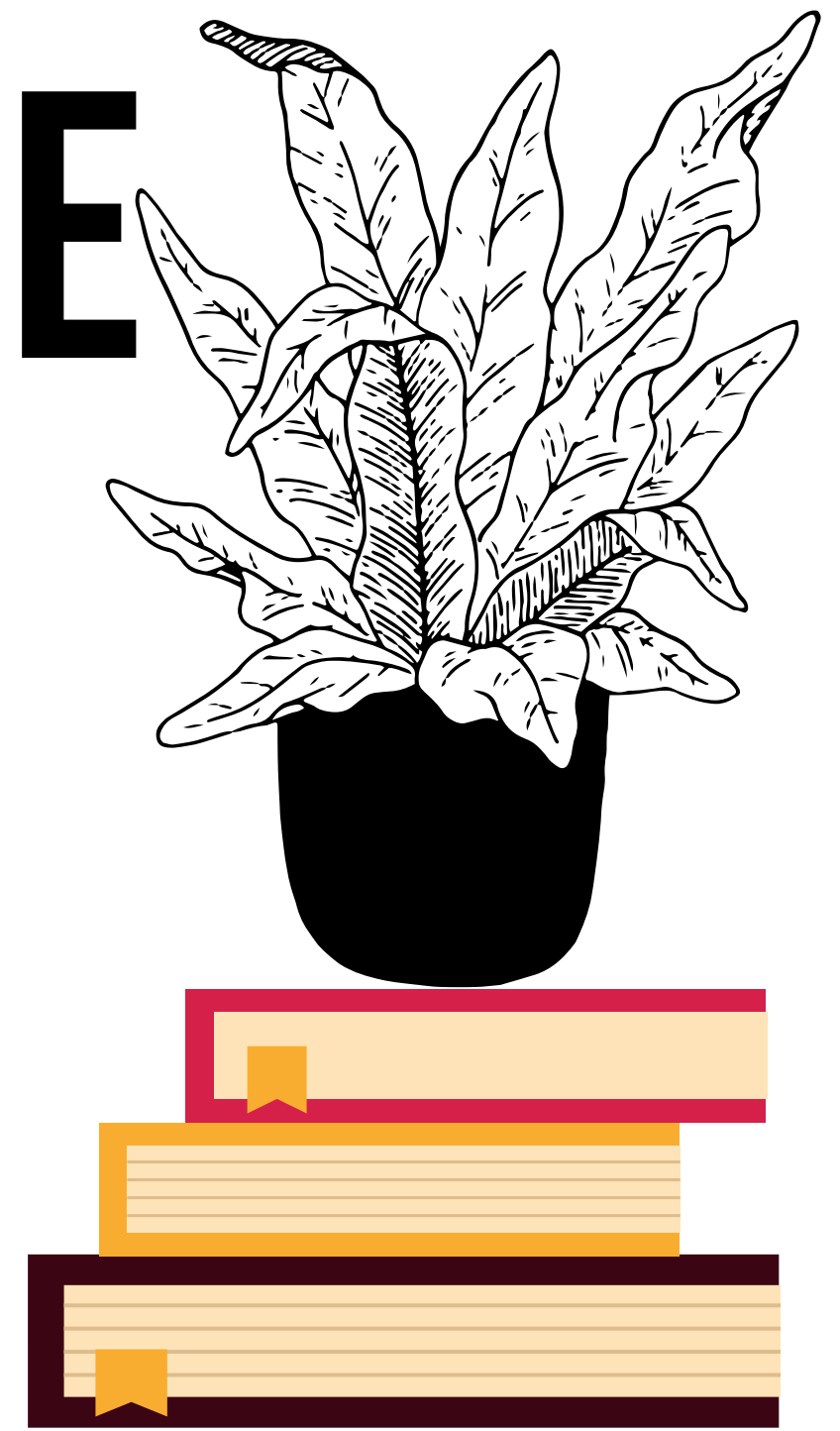
50

Points Possible

AP LANGUAGE

Assignment Overview

You are required to take part in the summer reading portion of the AP Language and Composition course. This summer, you will be reading Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers: A Story of Success*. As you read, you will maintain reading logs to demonstrate critical analysis. AP Language is primarily designed to focus on nonfiction texts and rhetorical awareness. While your English class training in the past has revolved largely around the literary techniques within works of fiction, this course delves into real-life accounts of political, social, psychological, and economic occurrences.



Learning Objectives

The summer reading requirement is intended to get you in the practice of (1) understanding an author's specific audience(s) and purpose(s), (2) identifying and explaining HOW an author achieves (or falls short of achieving) their intended purpose(s), and (3) identifying the piece's potential or literal effects on/in our society and/or a global community and culture.

Assignment Guidelines

- 1** Part I: Identify and explain Gladwell's overarching argument (the purpose) in *Outliers: A Story of Success*. Post Script: For my lovely, snarky, maybe-too-smart-for-your-own-good, future students, who love to find loopholes in educational practices, please be more elaborate than "a story of success" or "how success works." (A two or three sentence explanation will suffice.) (2 Pts.)

Part II: For each chapter (including the introduction and epilogue- there are eleven in total- four points each), analyze a supporting argument that builds on Gladwell's overarching argument. (44 Pts.)
(A) Explain WHAT the supporting argument entails.
(B) Back your identification and explanation with a direct quote (textual support).
(C) Elaborate on why the textual support you selected exemplifies the supporting argument.
(D) Explain why you agree or disagree with the supporting argument and/or its pairing with the overarching argument in the text.
- 2**
- 3** Part III: Throughout the entire text, brainstorm two critical questions regarding the reasoning and display of information within *Outliers: A Story of Success*. Pretend that you are the teacher (like one of those super intense, impossibly intellectual teachers) and you are writing two extended response or discussion questions for your students regarding the text. What would those two questions be? (4 Pts.)

- Please type your answers and bring a hard copy of the assignment on Friday, August 7th (start of class).
- You MUST use complete sentences.
- Each response for Part II (eleven in total) should be between 150-200 words.
- Use Times New Roman, 12pt. font. Single or double spacing is fine.
- When citing in-text citations, MLA format suffices. Refresher: (Gladwell page#), exp. (Gladwell 34).

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EXAMPLE WORK

Part One Example

Part I: [Overarching Argument] In Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers: A Story of Success*, he argues that multiple factors determine the American conceptualization of "success," thus challenging the predominant belief in meritocracy and individual merit in the United States. According to the traditional understanding of the American Dream, if someone works hard and puts in the time, anything is possible. While passion and work ethic might be factors in success, Gladwell explores the factors that are outside of someone's "control" to further investigate the notions and contemporary understandings of success.

(P.S. This is only one interpretation of the text. You might think he is arguing something else or something very consistent with the above synopsis. Feel free to be bold in your interpretations as long as you have textual support and keen logic to back up your personal synopsis of Gladwell's arguments.)

Part Two Example

Part II: [Supporting Argument] (Chapter 1 Example) [A] In order to support his critique of meritocracy, Gladwell explores what he calls "the Matthew Effect," underscoring research on hockey players in Canada. **[B]** He writes, "If you make a decision about who is good and who is not good at an early age; if you separate the 'talented' from the 'untalented,' and if you provide the 'talented' with superior experience, then you're going to end up giving a huge advantage to that small group of people born closest to the cutoff date" (Gladwell 25). **[C]** Since the cutoff date (age wise) for hockey players is January 1st, those individuals are physically more mature than those in the same age group born at the end of the year. This difference in physical maturity is often mistaken for early talent and ability exemplifying Gladwell's "Matthew Effect." In "the Matthew Effect," he who has will be given more. **[D]** In this line of thought, I agree with Gladwell's observations. Splitting students into groups at an early age, based on an arbitrary deadline, does hinder individuals from receiving opportunities. However, I am weary of using this as a platform to erase the existence of individual merit. There is something to be said about personal perseverance and work ethic within provided opportunities.

(P.S. This is only one example. You should have eleven of these when you finish. I know, especially for those of you who have probably always been "good" at English, it is tempting to exceed the word limit. Nevertheless, part of forming your writing skills entails working on the balance between elaboration and brevity. Work to keep your word count around 200 words ... 300 max. for those of you who just can't help yourselves.)

Part Three Example

Part III: [Critical Question] How might this argument change, or would it, if Gladwell analyzed "success" in a society that does not rely on a capitalist economic system?

If you have questions or mild panic attacks while completing this assignment, please email me (kfougerousse@flatrock.k12.in.us), and I will try my best to help guide you or answer your questions. I know summer reading assignments are less than ideal. However, this course will be a lot of work, inside and outside of class. Do your best. For more information and additional guidance materials, please refer to my website and the "AP Language" tab/page of my teacher website (fougieandthejets.weebly.com).

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OPTIONAL WORK



Rhetorical Terms	Rhetorical Devices	Writing Terminology	References
Rhetorical Appeal: Logos	Analogy	Nonfiction	The Rhetorical Triangle (Aristotle)
Rhetorical Appeal: Pathos	Antithesis	Thesis (Statement)	Rogierian Argument
Rhetorical Appeal: Ethos	Allusion	Argumentative Essay	Toulmin Argument
Strawman Argument	Rhetorical Question	Persuasive Essay	Etymology
Slippery Slope	Hyperbole	Synthesis	SOAPSTONE Method
Ad Hominem	Irony	Rhetorical Analysis	Rules of Standard English Grammar
Bandwagon Effect	Metaphor	Syntax	Linguistic Typology
Ambiguity	Parallelism	"Style" (Tone/Diction/Etc.)	OPTIC Strategy