

Welcome to junior Advanced Placement. Students will be evaluated on summer reading during the first two weeks of school. In preparation for this course work, which emphasizes nonfiction selections and examination of argument, students must read a total of **TWO** books over the summer. An additional suggested reading list is included at the end of the packet.

Books may be ordered from The Book Oasis on Main Street or borrowed from the Stoneham Public Library.

**1) *Thank You for Arguing*** by Jay Heinrichs. READ THIS ONE FIRST to prepare you for a better understanding of *A Walk in the Woods*. This book introduces what Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson can teach us about the art of persuasion. “Knowing how to use the proper words is an art... Words are treacherous, they can either explain or conceal.” Get ready to open up a rhetorical toolbox that includes the language and composition tools of the trade!

It is recommended that students purchase *Thank You for Arguing* as annotation would allow students more effective use of the book as a resource throughout the year. Students will refer to these annotations for discussion and group presentations. {This book is also available as an eBook.}

- ✓ Use close reading strategies such as annotation, highlighting with annotation, sticky notes, or note-taking.
  1. Pay attention to the title and epigraph at the beginning of each chapter. It is your responsibility as an A.P. student to define *epigraph* and apply it to your understanding.
  2. Focus on the *purpose* of each chapter.
- ✓ Bring your copy of your annotated book or your notes to use in our initial discussions to discuss rhetoric and the tools a writer uses. You can refer to your notes in our on-going conversations. We will start the year with cooperative presentations pertaining to this book.

**2) *A Walk in the Woods*** by Bill Bryson. For reasons even he does not understand, Bill Bryson decided in 1996 to walk the 2,100 mile Appalachian Trail. Winding from Georgia to Maine, this ‘hiker’s highway’ sweeps through the heart of some of America’s most beautiful and treacherous terrain. Nonfiction.

- ✓ Complete the *Independent Reading Guide for Nonfiction* (see attached) on *A Walk in the Woods* in preparation for an in-class writing assignment and Socratic Seminar discussion. This assignment will count between a quiz and a test grade.

**Independent Reading Guide for Nonfiction  
MUST BE TYPED**

Please go to the school website and download this form as a word document onto your computer. **NUMBER** and **TYPE** your responses (Times New Roman size 12, double-space), print them out and bring to class the first day. All responses should be *thoughtful and thorough*. *Suggested length 6-8 sentences depending on the question*. You are expected to respond to *all parts* of each question. If necessary, use more space than what is provided.

Title: A Walk in the Woods Author: Bill Bryson

This nonfiction book: (underline all that apply)

Instructs      Informs      Describes      Persuades      Entertains

### **Elements of Nonfiction:**

1. What is the author's purpose(s) for writing this? Consider the word choices above. Be specific. Answer in your own words. Explain your choices.
2. What kind of information, facts, or examples does the author include to support the purpose(s)? Identify and provide examples for each type of information.
3. For which groups of people (audience) would this book be most appealing? **Specifically** what does the author include to appeal to these audiences?
4. Choose one specific chapter and discuss the technique(s) the author uses to appeal to the reader. Check all that apply and provide at least one specific example for each from the chapter. **Identify the chapter.**

*Description –*

*Emotional Language –*

*Argument –*

*Quotations –*

*Comparison and contrast –*

*Personal recollections –*

5. From this **same** chapter – identify and summarize the thematic concept or central idea of this chapter.

6. Support the above-stated thematic concept with a TYPED sentence or short passage that **includes a page #**.

7. What segment, portion or focus of this book (not the chapter you wrote about before) would make a good documentary? Explain. Be specific. Be sure to know the definition of a documentary before responding to the question.

8. If you had a chance to interview the author Bill Bryson, what three questions would you ask him? These should be *thoughtful* questions. Really think about this.

9. What steps do you think Bryson took to research and write this book?

10. What do you think is this author's greatest strength as a writer? Provide a short paragraph to explain your reason and provide examples from the selection to support your reason. This should accompany your response.

**Note:** Since class discussion is a vital part of the A.P. class, please come to class prepared to participate in a discussion about *A Walk in the Woods*. The more thoughtful and complete your responses are in the nonfiction report, the more effective your class participation will be in the Socratic Seminar Discussion.

**SUGGESTED/RECOMMENDED READING LIST** in addition to the required two books.

Students have asked for a separate, suggested reading list of books that will enhance their repertoire. These titles show up frequently on other Advanced Placement Language suggested reading lists. You may want to consider reading one, some, or all!

***Their Eyes Were Watching God*** by Zora Neale Hurston is a Southern love story full of heartfelt wisdom. Told in the captivating voice of a woman who refuses to live in sorrow, bitterness, fear, or foolish romantic dreams, it is the story of fair-skinned, fiercely independent Janie Crawford and her evolving selfhood through three marriages and a life marked by poverty, trials, and purpose. Fiction.

***October Sky*** by Homer Hickman. It was 1957, the year Sputnik raced across the Appalachian sky, and the small town of Coalwood, West Virginia, was slowly dying. Faced with an uncertain future, Homer Hickam nurtured a dream: to send rockets into outer space. The introspective son of the mine's superintendent and a mother determined to get him out of Coalwood forever, Homer fell in with a group of misfits who learned not only how to turn scraps of metal into sophisticated rockets but also how to sustain their hope in a town that swallowed its men alive. As the boys began to light up the tarry skies with their flaming projectiles and dreams of glory, Coalwood would never be the same. Looking back after a distinguished NASA career, Hickam shares the story of his youth in a coal mining town. Nonfiction.

***The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*** by Rebecca Skloot. Henrietta Lacks was a poor Southern farmer when her cells, taken without her knowledge, became one of the most important tools in medicine. Her cells, grown in culture, are still alive today, though she has been dead for more than 60 years. HeLa cells were vital for developing vaccines and cures and have been sold by the billions. Yet she remains buried in an unmarked grave. Nonfiction.

***The Road*** by Cormac McCarthy. A father and his son walk alone through post-apocalyptic, burned America. Their destination is the coast, although they don't know what, if anything, awaits them there. They have just a pistol to defend themselves against the lawless bands that stalk the road, the clothes they are wearing, a cart of scavenged food, and each other. The novel boldly imagines a hopeless future, but in which the father and his son, "each the other's world entire," are sustained by love. Mature. Fiction.

***The Help*** by Kathryn Stockett. Three ordinary women are about to take one extraordinary step. Skeeter, young and white has a degree but in 1962 Mississippi, all that matters is that she gets married. Abilene, a black maid, is raising her 17th white child. Minny is the sassiest woman in the state. These women will come together for a clandestine project that will put them all at risk. Historical fiction.

***The Grapes of Wrath*** by John Steinbeck. Steinbeck's Pulitzer Prize-winning epic of the Great Depression chronicles the Dust Bowl migration of the 1930s and tells the story of one Oklahoma farm family, the Joads—driven from their homestead and forced to travel west to the promised land of California. Out of their trials and their repeated collisions against the hard realities of an America divided into Haves and Have-Nots evolves a drama that is intensely human yet majestic in its scale and moral vision, elemental yet plainspoken, tragic but ultimately stirring in its human dignity. A portrait of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless, of one man's fierce reaction to injustice, and of one woman's stoical strength, the novel captures the horrors of the Great Depression and probes into the very nature of equality and justice in America. At once a naturalistic epic, captivity narrative, road novel, and transcendental gospel, Steinbeck's powerful landmark novel is perhaps the most American of American Classics. Historical Fiction.

***Profiles in Courage*** by John F. Kennedy Written in 1955 by the then junior senator from the state of Massachusetts, John F. Kennedy's *Profiles in Courage* served as a clarion call to every American. The inspiring true accounts of eight unsung heroic acts by American patriots at different junctures in our nation's history, Kennedy's book became required reading, an instant classic, and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize. Now, a half-century later, it remains a moving, powerful, and relevant testament to the indomitable national spirit and an unparalleled celebration of that most noble of human virtues.

***A Room of One's Own*** by Virginia Woolf. Woolf imagines that Shakespeare had a sister—a sister equal to Shakespeare in talent, and equal in genius, but whose legacy is radically different. This imaginary woman

never writes a word and dies by her own hand, her genius unexpressed. If only she had found the means to create, argues Woolf, she would have reached the same heights as her immortal sibling. In this classic essay, she takes on the establishment, using her gift of language to dissect the world around her and give voice to those who are without. Her message is a simple one: women must have a fixed income and a room of their own in order to have the freedom to create. Fiction.

***October Mourning: A Song for Matthew Shepherd*** by Lesléa Newman. On the night of October 6, 1998, a gay twenty-one-year-old college student named Matthew Shepard was lured from a Wyoming bar by two young men, savagely beaten, tied to a remote fence, and left to die. Using her poetic imagination, the author creates fictitious monologues from various points of view, including the fence Matthew was tied to, the stars that watched over him, the deer that kept him company, and Matthew himself. Mature Readers. Poetry.

***They Called Themselves the KKK: The Birth of an American Terrorist Group*** by Susan Campbell Bartoletti. In 1866, six young men, pulled pillowcases over their heads, hopped on horses, and cavorted through the streets of Pulaski, Tennessee. This is the story of how a secret terrorist group took root in America's democracy. Filled with chilling and vivid personal accounts unearthed from oral histories, congressional documents, and diaries, this account from Newbery Honor-winning author Susan Campbell Bartoletti is a book to read and remember. Very interesting. Many visuals. Nonfiction.

***Just Mercy: A story of Justice and Redemption*** by Bryan Stevenson. Bryan was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinkmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever. Nonfiction.

***Into the Wild*** by Jon Krakauer investigates the true story of student and athlete Chris McCandless, who, after graduating from college, gave away his entire savings account and hitchhiked to Alaska to live in the wilderness, meeting lots of characters along the way until he meets tragedy. The book is better than the movie. Nonfiction.

***In Cold Blood*** by Truman Capote. On November 15, 1959, in the small town of Holcomb, Kansas, four members of the Clutter family were savagely murdered by blasts from a shotgun held a few inches from their faces. There was no apparent motive for the crime, and there were almost no clues. As Truman Capote reconstructs the murder and the investigation that led to the capture, trial, and execution of the killers, he generates both mesmerizing suspense and astonishing empathy. This work transcends its moment, yielding poignant insights into the nature of American violence.