



Dear A.P. English Language and Composition Student,

You have elected to take a most exciting class this year, which requires a great deal of dedication and effort.

Please scroll down for the summer reading assignments for this course. Read the material carefully before beginning the assignments. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to email me. Be sure to complete all the assignments by the end of the first week of school. Assignments in this class are only accepted on or before the due date and all work must be submitted in a hard copy and through turnitin.com. By preparing in advance, you will enhance the possibility of achieving a score of 4 or 5 on the A.P exam, as well as easing the burden of the heavy reading necessary for this college level class. Don't forget that you will have other responsibilities during the coming year, but not to the exclusion of your obligations for this class!

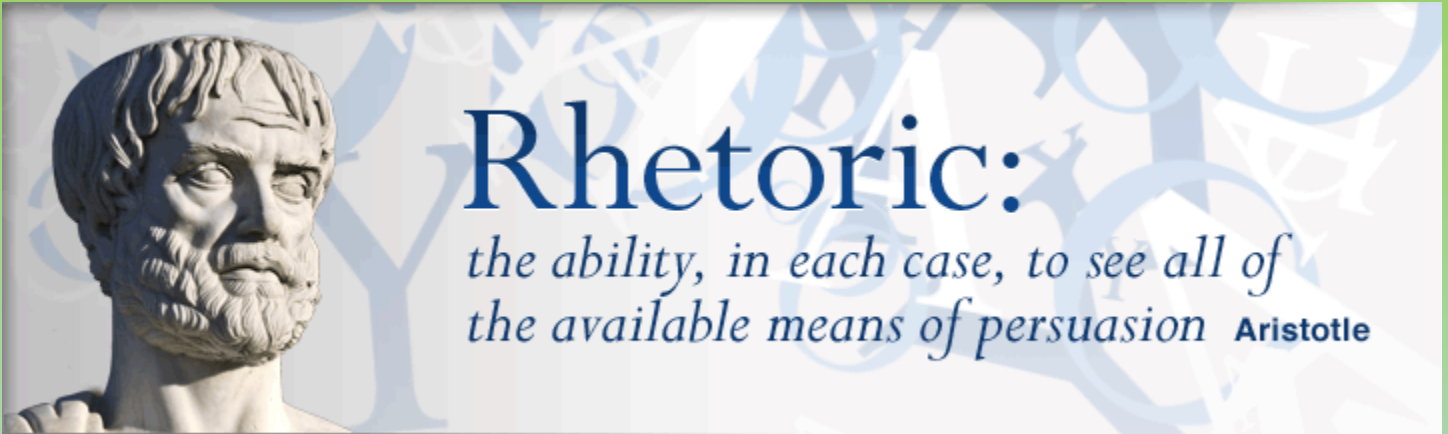
In addition, I am including a supplementary [recommended reading list](#) for your reading pleasure. The more you read the better reader you will become. Have a well-deserved rest and a great vacation!

Sincerely,

Mica Bloom

English Department Chair

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

SUMMER ASSIGNMENTS

Yes, assignments plural! Please note that it does not say “*Summer Reading Assignments*” as there is a lot of writing involved. First words of AP Lang wisdom- do not, do not, do not, DO NOT wait until the weekend before school begins to start your work! You have THREE assignments to complete and hand in by the end of the first week of school.

All writing assignments must be MLA format and stapled. Do not forget to clearly label your work. If you finish your work early over the summer, you are encouraged to e-mail your completed assignments to [bloomsmailroom@gmail.com](mailto:bloomsmailroom@gmail.com)

ON YOUR FIRST DAY BACK ALL ESSAYS WILL BE SUBMITTED TO TURNITIN.COM

PART I: ASSIGNMENT I - Read *The Glass Castle* by Jeanette Walls



I. Assertion Short Write Response:

Select TWO (2) of the prompts from the next page and say whether or not you agree (defend), disagree (challenge), or qualify (agree in some aspect but disagree in others). You cannot respond the same way twice, so make sure that you agree, disagree, or qualify one time only. Your answer should include examples from the memoir's contents, your personal experiences, and/or what you have learned previously (through reading or historical examples). Your response should be 500-700 words per entry.

Your response should contain an inviting introduction with a clear thesis, supporting body paragraphs, and a satisfying conclusion. Keep in mind to include examples from the text, from your personal experience, and/or examples from other books you have read or examples from history. As you compose your response, please consider the following:

- Make sure you cite the page numbers (in parenthesis) when you quote from the book.
- Provide specific evidence from personal observation, experience, and/or reading to support your position.
- Note its complexity (nuances) and forge connections between your position and that of the writer. Resist the temptation of oversimplification!
- Provide a conclusion that does not merely summarize, but rather addresses the "so what?" issue: How should educated, informed citizens continue to think about the issue at hand? How will it continue to influence readers' lives?
- *Quotes and author should be typed at the top of the page. The words in the quote do NOT comprise part of the 500+word response.*

PROMPTS:

Select only TWO quotes from the choices below. You can only defend, challenge, or qualify ONE time.

A. "Parents can only give good advice or put them on the right paths, but the final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands."  
Anne Frank

B. "Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them."  
James Baldwin

C. "Racism is still with us. But it is up to us to prepare our children for what they have to meet, and, hopefully, we shall overcome."  
Rosa Parks

D. "We could never learn to be brave and patient if there were only joy in the world"  
Helen Keller

E. "People are just as happy as they make up their minds to be."  
Abraham Lincoln

F. "Money has never made man happy, nor will it, there is nothing in its nature to produce happiness. The more of it one has the more one wants."  
Ben Franklin

G. "Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome."  
Booker T. Washington

**GRADING: Your typed response should be at least 500 -700 words and limited to one page typed, single-spaced. Each response will be evaluated according to the following criteria:**

Provide a clear explanation of the issue and the writer's assertion, contextualizing the issue at hand for readers, explaining to them briefly why educated, informed citizens ought to read on.

Support, challenge, or qualify your position on the issue implied by the assertion.

SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSE

PLEASE NOTE: THIS EXAMPLE IS NOT RELATED TO THE GLASS CASTLE, HOWEVER, IT DOES CONTAIN THE ELEMENTS OF A WELL CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE.

“Cruelty is, perhaps, the worst kind of sin. Intellectual cruelty is certainly the worst kind of cruelty.”

G.K. Chesterton

Premeditated, well-planned humiliation is one of the paramount things people wish to avoid in life, precisely because it is so painful to experience. One embarrassing experience can leave scars that linger, following a person through life, while the people responsible for the shame – the tormentors – may not even realize it. Why is it that being the target of deliberate mortification is something that no one wants for themselves, but they will accept and even participate in the degradation of others? This hypocrisy was noticed by Chesterton, and he asserts it to be the worst of the worst; however, this is not always true.

Cruelty is a slippery term, an idea not easily defined that can be manipulated by people in different contexts. One person’s cruelty can be another person’s justice. The term in and of itself is not a sin, but rather an act that is a product of sin; those who engage in it usually believe themselves to be justified. Many of those who take revenge believe it to be karma or fate, and so cruel actions are perfectly acceptable. And why is it that intellectual cruelty deserves to be at the top of the pyramid of evils? Although belittlement and deliberate intellectual attacks are agonizing experiences, a strong, brave person can, with some effort, move past these occurrences. Students bullied in high school can, hopefully, put it behind them as they join the adult world.

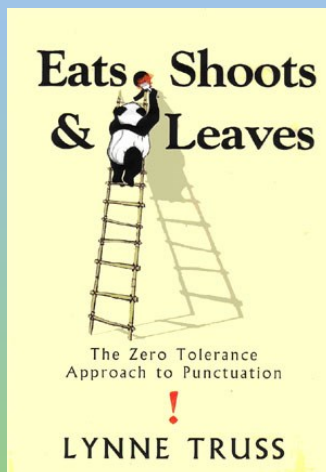
Up to recent times, cruelty, intellectual or otherwise, was an integral part of the law and culture of many societies, beginning in Babylon with Hammurabi’s Code. While the eye for an eye method can be considered cruel and unjust, it effectively controlled the people and kept them in line in ways other than resorting immediately to death as a means of domination. Control through the death penalty for grievous offenses was much more risky and tended to alienate the people as in the Chinese Qin dynasty, which used the death penalty as punishment for such miniscule offenses as being late. This eventually led to a rebellion and the dynasty’s downfall. Comparatively, Hammurabi’s Code seems much less harmful and more humane.

In regard to pure intellectual cruelty, among southeastern American Indian tribes that were constantly at war, the custom for a captured warrior was to incessantly taunt and insult his captors the entire time he was conscious. Verbal abuse was accepted, and to deviate from this code was disrespectful and would result in the warrior’s immediate death, as opposed to possibly being spared and adopted into the tribe.

It would appear that arguing about cruelty’s nature as being useful and “good” or as being pointless and “evil” is a circular argument, depending mostly on context and perspective. If a white supremacist who spent his life belittling others is punished by those he tormented, it seems like justice. The evildoer, the “cruel villain,” receives cruel treatment in return – a form of repayment. So was the cruelty warranted? To define cruelty relies on different viewpoints; however, this does not mean that intellectual cruelty is justifiable; many traditions with contemptible goals originated from it. For example, slavery could not come into existence without the presence of intellectual cruelty, which insisted that one race was flawed and thus its enslavement was justifiable. This reasoning itself can be considered cruel.

PART II: ASSIGNMENT II Read *Eat Shoots and Leaves* by Lynne Truss

(you may not use the illustrated version or the children's edition)



Assignment two: Lynne Truss abhors sloppy punctuation. In *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*, Truss argues for the importance of exactness in punctuation if exactness in meaning is to be accomplished. You must create a list of 10 punctuation errors you discover in books, magazines, newspapers, advertisements, anywhere that poor use of punctuation leads to ambiguity in meaning. You may not use examples from *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*. For each of the 10 examples on your list, you must

- ◇ record where you found the example,
- ◇ identify, explain, and correct the punctuation error,
- ◇ explain the literal but unintended meaning caused by the punctuation error, and
- ◇ paraphrase the writer's intended meaning.

**Please note you will have a punctuation TEST based on your reading during the second week of school!**

PART III: ASSIGNMENT III  
BOOK OF YOUR OWN CHOICE



Choose a book from *The New York Times* Best Sellers Hardcover **Nonfiction** or Paperback **Nonfiction** lists (Amazon has these lists on their website...you can also “google” *New York Times* Best Seller List). The book must be at an appropriate level for your abilities as an AP student and it must be SCHOOL APPROPRIATE. You may choose a nonfiction book from the list within the last 6 months. Upon your return to school you will be writing a timed in-class essay on your book—so read carefully and be prepared!