

Miami Coral Park Senior High School
AP English Language and Composition
Summer Reading
2025-2026

Dear AP Student,

Welcome to AP Language and Composition, a course primarily designed to teach you the art of rhetoric, or effective persuasive writing analysis. The main objective of the course is to further develop your understanding of language, how meaning is established and the various strategies writers use to achieve their intended goals. The more important aim of the course, though, is to equip you with the means to respond to life by strengthening your understanding and experience of the world and what it means to be a part of it. In some ways, it is the foundation upon which the vast majority of academic pursuits are built. Every time you write an essay, explain a problem, or give a presentation, rhetoric is at play. The better rhetor you become, the greater your ability to chart your own course. To use language well is to provide a clearer vision for your dreams, greater advocacy for yourself, and deeper understanding of others.



Assignment:

Choose one speech from the website (below), one podcast of your choice AND one documentary of your choice for review. Then, complete the following task for **each** that you review. Again, you will submit three assignments: one for the speech, one for the podcast, and one for the documentary. This will be due upon our return to school in August.

Website for speeches: <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/top100speechesall.html>

Instructions for Annotations and Notetaking:

Annotate either on your own copy, a separate piece of paper, a typed document, or through sticky notes. Annotations should demonstrate a thorough and thoughtful reading of your chosen book. You will use these annotations later in the aforementioned analysis.

Use the following list to help direct your notations as you read. Under each category, you will find possible focus areas for your notes/annotations.

1. **Reader Response:** Be able to trace your reactions and to remind yourself when you find answers to earlier questions. This should help you to note the writer's effectiveness.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- Your reactions/emotional responses (humor, surprise, sadness, anger, frustration, disappointment, tension/suspense, disgust, criticism, disagreement, confusion).
- Your questions or lack of understanding or doubts (ask "Why?")
- Your revelations: when "things" become clear to you when you make links.
- Similarities to other works: "Reminds me of..."
- Wonderful writing- passages that strike you artistically/aesthetically and why.

2. **Speaker:** Think about who the writer is and what he/she knows is communicated. This should help you decide the author's credibility.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- Introductory facts: author backgrounds and relationship to the topic, bias, etc.
- Ethos- how the author establishes credibility and character on the given topic
- Note words and language that indicate the author's attitude or tone and where it shifts or changes and why.
- When the author directly or indirectly states how he/she feels.
- Note key lines that stand out as crucial to the author's argument.

3. **Occasion:** Think about what caused the author to write about this topic and whether or not it is a valid reason.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- The author's reasons for writing- what is the motivation?
- Historical, political, social issues surrounding the topic.
- The author's personal reasons as well as the greater world/national reasons for the piece

- Evidence of views characteristic of the time period and culture surrounding the work.
- Descriptions of class judgments, racism, gender biases, stereotypes, etc.

4. **Audience:** Think about what kind of person or people the author intended as the audience and whether the author is able to connect with that audience effectively.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- Evidence of whom (and it can be more than one) the author is trying to reach.
- Where the author directly or indirectly addresses a specific audience.
- Any “Call to Action” that the author is issuing to the reader.
- Pathos- where the author appeals to your sense of emotion through anecdotes and figurative language.

5. **Purpose:** Think about the author’s purpose in writing this book and whether or not they are effective in that purpose.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- Specific reasons for writing: informing, persuading, arguing, refuting, exemplifying- but make sure you note specifics.
- Logos: the author’s appeal to reason. Examine how he/she makes the reader believe in that purpose.

6. **Subject:** Think about what the book is discussing and whether or not the author shows why this subject is important.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- Elements related to the problem and issue.
- How the author develops or deepens the aspects of the problem/issue.
- How the author shows the complications related to the subject and the implication of it to you, the nation, the world, etc.

7. **Authorial Devices and Structures in the Argument:** Think about the author’s techniques in delivery and how effective author’s methods are for rhetorical purposes - the use of subtleties, patterns, style, structure, etc.

MAKE NOTE OF:

- Changes in point of view/emphasis
- Crucial language/vocabulary- not just a word that you don’t understand, but one that seems crucial to understanding the argument- look these up.
- Stylistic techniques: irony, satire, humor, exaggeration, repetition/patterns, possible symbols, significant metaphors, and other notable literary and rhetorical devices.
- How the author’s structure of the argument/book influence the reader and relate to the subject, audience, and purpose.