

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition Summer Reading Assignment

Reading List: These texts are required, and it would be a good idea to own these copies for use throughout the course. I recommend reading all books, with a pencil in hand. You must practice underlining, annotating, and cross-referencing as you read. Also, you must mark particularly important pages with sticky notes. These active reading skills will help prepare you for AP-level work.

***The Elements of Style* by William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White**

A fundamental resource for writers, editors, and students since 1959, the slim volume known simply as "Strunk and White" distills the combined wisdom of Cornell University English professor William Strunk Jr. and legendary *New Yorker* writer E. B. White. Though there are other books on the market that delve more deeply into matters of grammar and style, this is the best single source for anyone who desires a pithy, lively guide to the essentials of effective writing. In prose that is itself a paragon of clarity, the authors indicate how to apply the basic principles of grammar and punctuation, how to properly construct a sentence and a paragraph, how to use words and expressions in their proper form and context, and how to avoid the mistakes and mannerisms that make for turgid, pretentious, or simply unintelligible writing.

***Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi's** is a memoir of growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution. In powerful black-and-white comic strip images, Satrapi tells the story of her life in Tehran from ages six to fourteen, years that saw the overthrow of the Shah's regime, the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, and the devastating effects of war with Iraq. The intelligent and outspoken only child of committed Marxists and the great-granddaughter of one of Iran's last emperors, Marjane bears witness to a childhood uniquely entwined with the history of her country. *Persepolis* paints an unforgettable portrait of daily life in Iran and of the bewildering contradictions between home life and public life. Marjane's child's-eye view of dethroned emperors, state-sanctioned whippings, and heroes of the revolution allows us to learn as she does the history of this fascinating country and of her own extraordinary family. Intensely personal, profoundly political, and wholly original, *Persepolis* is at once a story of growing up and a reminder of the human cost of war and political repression. It shows how we carry on, with laughter and tears, in the face of absurdity. And, finally, it introduces us to an irresistible little girl with whom we cannot help but fall in love.

On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft written by Stephen King documents his experiences as a writer and relays his advice for aspiring writers.

***On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction* by William Zinsser**

On Writing Well has been praised for its sound advice, its clarity, and its warmth of style. It is a book for anybody who wants to learn how to write, whether about people or places, science and technology, business, sports, or the arts. Its principles and insights have made it a cherished resource for several generations of writers and students.

Assignment: Write an essay discussing how Stephen King's memoir applies the principles as discussed in Part 1 of Zinsser's *On Writing Well*. The essay should be 3 double-spaced pages and use parenthetical citations (e.g. (Zinsser 35) or (King 45) after quotations). For the remaining chapters of *On Writing Well* take notes commenting on any interesting, enlightening, confusing, logical/illogical points made. You must also write about how you have applied these lessons or how you might apply them in any future writing.