

**AP Capstone Program - AP Seminar
Pre-Course Reading Assignment**

Directions: As required summer reading for AP Seminar, you are to complete two tasks.

Task #1: Nonfiction Analysis – 25 points

Read closely one of the following nonfiction books and complete a SOAPStone text analysis:

- *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School at a Time* by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin
- *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner
- *The Gatekeepers: Inside the Admissions Process of a Premier College* by Jacques Steinberg
- *The Great Influenza: The Epic Story of the Deadliest Plague in History* by John M. Barry
- *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up For Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb
- *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal* by Eric Schlosser

In addition to the BCHS library, the local library, and book stores, used texts may also be purchased on-line (for example, on Amazon.com).

As you read, remember that good readers read closely and interact with their texts by annotating. Follow the attached guidelines, “*Twelve Ways to Mark Up a Book*,” to aid in your annotations. If you do not literally mark up your text, then please use Post-It notes. Remember, good readers are active readers, and annotation is a requirement for all texts read in AP Seminar.

Task #2: Argument Analysis - The New York Times: Room for Debate – 25 points

You will be reading, annotating, and responding to five editorial groupings based on current events (see assignment on following pages). The documents you will choose can be found on the *New York Times*’ “Room for Debate” site (<http://roomfordebate.blogs.nytimes.com/>).

You should organize your responses and *New York Times* annotations in a 3-ring binder for work to be collected during the first week of school.

If you have questions regarding the assignment, you may contact me via email.

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Assignment for Nonfiction Selection

For this book selection, you will be using SOAPStone to analyze the text. SOAPStone (Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject, Tone) is an acronym for a series of questions that a reader must first ask him/herself, especially when reading nonfiction.

Read the descriptions below and complete the assignment for each bulleted prompt.

Who is the Speaker?

The voice that tells the story.

As you are reading, consider the authority and credibility of the writer. How does the writer establish his or her credibility in the text?

- Find 3 specific passages that establish the writer as a trustworthy and/or qualified speaker.
- Below each quote, explain how the passage establishes the writer's credibility.

What is the Occasion?

The context that prompted the writing.

As you are reading, analyze the reason(s) the writer is choosing to approach the topic at this particular moment in time. Is he/she writing in reaction to a specific event or person? Discuss how the occasion is revealed in the text.

- Why did the author choose to write this text at this time?
- How do you know?

Who is the Audience?

The group of readers to whom this piece is directed.

As you are reading, determine to whom this piece is directed. How do you know who the audience is? How is the audience defined? Discuss how the writer demonstrates understanding of the audience and how he or she uses that understanding to accomplish his or her goals.

- Who is the audience?
- How do you know?

What is the Purpose?

The reason behind the text.

As you are reading, analyze the purpose/argument/claim of the writer. Explore the purpose beyond its basic informative nature. Discuss how the purpose is revealed in the text.

- Are the purpose and occasion similar or different in this piece? Explain your reasoning.

What is the Subject?

Students should be able to state the subject in a few words or phrases.

As you are reading, consider the general topic, content, and ideas contained in the text. Does the writer explicitly state the subject or is it implied?

- Pick three subjects the author writes about and create a sentence for each subject that reveals the author's message about this subject.

Example from Romeo and Juliet:

- Subject: hatred
- Message: Unexamined hatred has far-reaching consequences, often affecting the lives innocent victims.

What is the Tone?

The attitude of the author.

As you are reading, analyze the attitude of the writer. Tone extends meaning beyond the literal. Examine the choice of words, emotions expressed, and imagery used.

- Identify 3 tones the author creates in the text.
- For each tone, find one example from the text illustrating the tone.
- Explain how the tone affects the effectiveness of each passage.

Sample tone words:

These are just a sample. There are MANY, MANY more tone words you may use.

animated	ambivalent	apathetic	accusatory
amused	disapproval	aggressive	cautionary
angry	belligerent	assertive	distressed
arrogant	detached	awestruck	admiring
admiring	assertive	ardent	earnest
nostalgic	benevolent	bitter	optimistic
empathetic	cynical	condescending	disheartened
disparaging	depressed	comic	unbiased

Adapted from:

AP Central: http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/preap/teachers_corner/45200.html and

Methods of Rhetorical Analysis: ww2.hoover.k12.al.us/schools/hhs/faculty/mcooley/Documents/soapstone-spater.pdf

Assignment for *New York Times* Articles

Students must have a context for answering impromptu questions on topical issues. The opinion essay clusters will also help generate possible ideas for forming a balanced evidence and logic-based argument, a major component of this course. Additionally, the article clusters provide close reading of contemporary essays.

Follow these steps for the assignment:

1. Go to <http://roomfordebate.blogs.nytimes.com/>
2. The left-hand side of the page has the week's featured topics for discussion, labeled "Recent Discussions."
 - You will need to scroll down the page to see the different topics.
3. When you click on a topic title, a list of debaters and their essay titles will appear. Click on "Read the Discussion" to access the first article in the grouping.
4. Click on each of the essay titles to read the other essays in the grouping.
5. You must read all of the articles in the grouping. Be sure to read the entire article, not just the excerpt!
6. Print the full-text articles in the grouping, read and annotate the articles, and complete the journal assignment (outlined below).
7. Repeat this procedure for four other topic groupings (You will read five different topics in all).

For each article grouping, you must do the following:

- Create an MLA citation (works cited entry): use the entry information for an article from an online newswire or newspaper (see the Purdue OWL or the A+ style manual on the Web)
- In one typed page, under the MLA citation:
 - Identify the different issues presented regarding this topic.
 - Discuss how each side presents its argument.
 - Discuss which side you feel is more convincing in its argument and why.
 - Utilize at least 2 quotes from the articles for support.
- Print and annotate each article (see "*12 Ways to Mark Up a Book*" Handout for information on annotating).

Keep a digital copy of your work! These projects will be turned in during the first week of school, and you must submit your writing as one file to turnitin.com (once school starts).

Twelve Ways To Mark Up A Book

Books are a fantastic way to gain knowledge. With books, one can learn new techniques, gain new skills, and learn from role models who have been to where one wants to be and can show the way. There are many different ways to read books and just as many ways to remember their salient points. One of the most effective ways to get the most out of a book is to mark it up. There is no standard way to mark up a text, but below are a few ways that students have found effective in marking up a textbook so that one can see the important points quickly, make it more memorable, and make it easy to pick up years later and re-acquaint oneself with the major concepts.

What Not To Do

- Don't use a highlighter – Quality marking isn't done with a fat-tipped highlighter. You can't write, which is an important part of marking the text, with a large marker. Get yourself some fine point colored pens to do the job.
- Don't mark large volumes of text – You want important points to stand out. Although we all know that everything can't be important, we often highlight all of the text on the page. You want to find the 20% of the text that is important and mark that.
- Don't take the time to mark up items that you read on a daily basis – (e.g., magazines, newspapers), unimportant or irrelevant items.
- Don't mark the obvious – Don't waste time marking up things that are already in your knowledge-base or skill set. If you already know it, you don't need to mark it.

What To Do

- Mark the text with a pencil, pen, or, even better, colored fine-tipped pens – Remember, you are not highlighting, you are writing.
- Know your preferences – Some of you have an aversion to mark directly in the text. Books are precious things to many people and they want to protect them from damage and even the wear and tear of everyday use. If this describes you, grab some Post-It brand notes and do your marking and writing on them. This also gives you the advantage to move and reorganize them should you see fit. As for me, I like to mark directly on the page. I find that my books become more valuable to me when I add my contributions to the information that they contain.
- Underline the topic sentence in a passage – Remember, each paragraph has one topic sentence. The rest is supporting information and examples. Identify the topic sentence to find it easier.
- Use codes – Flag text with codes (e.g., Question marks to indicate disagreement, Exclamation marks to note agreement or to flag a strong statement, triangles to indicate a change in thinking, or a star for the topic sentence).
- Write the passage topic in the margin as a reminder – Just a word or two.
- Write questions in the margin – When you don't understand something or when you don't understand the author's thought process on a particular topic; write the question in the margin as a reminder to settle the question.
- Circle new and unfamiliar words – Look them up as soon as possible.
- Add your or other author's perspectives in the margins. Other authors have surely written on the subject. What do they say? Do they agree with this author? If not, what do they say? Add these in margins.
- Add cross-reference notes to other works on the same topic – Use the author's name and a shortened version of the other book's title.
- Add structure to a narrative text – Use 1, 2, 3, 4...or an outline format I. A. B. C. 1, 2, 3, a, b, c...to add a structure that you understand.
- Draw arrows to related ideas – Or unrelated ideas...
- Summarize – Add your own summary after the last paragraph. That simple exercise will crystalize your thinking on the topic. If you can't write it, you don't understand it.

Extras

Post-It Notes are great ways to also mark locations within books, much like bookmarks do. With Post-It Notes, however, you can mark on them so you can see where you are turning before you start flipping through the pages. One can also use colored paper clips to identify pages or chapters that are important.

Conclusion

The idea is to enter, by way of your markings, into a conversation with the author so that his knowledge is added to yours so that a synthesis occurs and you gain a new understanding.

A new — or new looking — book is a treasure. In my experience, however, I have found that a well-marked book becomes more like a treasured friend — one that you enjoy seeing again and again. It becomes much more enjoyable than a sterile copy that comes straight from the bookstore. Don't be afraid to mark up the books that you love.

Part I: NONFICTION Selection (25 pts.)--SOAPSTone

____(6) Speaker: 3 passages with explanations

____(2) Occasion: Why did the author choose to write at this particular time? How do you know?

____(2) Audience: Who is it? How do you know?

____(3) Purpose: What is it? How is it revealed in the text? Explain—Are purpose & occasion similar or different?

____(6) Subject: 3 subjects and author's messages

____(6) Tone: 3 tones with textual examples & explanations

____/25 TOTAL POINTS

Part II: The *New York Times* opinion articles (25 pts.)

____(5) MLA citation (Works Cited entry)

____(15) One page response which:

- identifies the issues presented
- discusses how each side presents its argument
- addresses which side is more convincing and why
- uses textual evidence to support ideas

____(5) Printed and annotated article

____/25 TOTAL POINTS

50-45 = A
44-40 = B
39-35 = C
34-30 = D

Total for Summer Project: _____ /50

Optional Instructor Comments: _____
