

Welcome to AP Language! This course is unlike a traditional literature course as the focus is on non-fiction, rhetorical analysis, and the close examination of language and its various constructions and effects. Over the summer, you are to **1) read one non-fiction book 2) read one book on rhetoric 3) view one documentary**

- 1) **Read a non-fiction text:** Choose *one Non-Fiction text from the AP Language Outside Reading List (attached) and . . .*

As you read, create a **Dialectical Journal** (see sample) to take notes on anything that helps you to understand the author's *purpose* and what he does as the writer to achieve this purpose. All year, our focus will be on what the author is doing and why. Your Dialectical Journal should be typed and will need to be submitted through **turnitin.com** the first week of classes. Please number each journal entry and number each page. Your Dialectical Journal should include a **minimum of 20 entries which represent the entirety of the text**—beginning to end. Read over the handout "A Guide to Rhetorical Analysis" (attached). This handout should be useful in helping you to choose and analyze key aspects of the author's style and rhetorical strategies to discuss in your Dialectical Journal.

- 2) **Read a book on rhetoric:** *Thank You for Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson Can Teach Us About the Art of Persuasion*, by Jay Heinrichs

“A rhetorical cocktail party where the guest list includes Britney Spears, Saint Augustine and Queen Victoria. From MTV to Aristotle, Heinrichs entertains, enlightens, and even teaches us a little Greek, persuading us that the big battles and daily combats of work, love and life can be won. If argument is the cradle of thought, Thank You for Arguing makes us all better thinkers. So listen up!” ~ Sarah McGinty; author of *Power Talk: Using Language to Build Authority and Influence*

As you read, **ANNOTATE** this book – Underline, highlight and make notes in the margins about interesting ideas, questions you have, comments, etc. You will need to purchase your own copy of this book as you can obviously not write all over a library book. You will need to bring in your annotated copy of *Thank You for Arguing* the first week of school. **There will be a quiz during the first few weeks of school on the book (specifically on the terms found within the chapters and in the glossary).**

A Guide to Rhetorical Analysis and Critique

Read the text once.

- Focus on getting the general idea. As you read, underline sentences that you think are important and circle any words that you don't understand, but don't stop reading to ponder these things.

Read the text again, more slowly and carefully

- Try to identify and underline the thesis statement. Identify and underline any sentences that contain major supporting points. As you get to words you circled the first time, see if you can figure out the meaning without looking them up and write the meaning in the margin. If you can't figure out the meaning, look it up and write the definition in the margin in your own words. Imagine you are having a conversation with the writer: as you get to places you don't understand or you disagree with, write questions in the margin. As you get to places you like or agree with, put something in the margin to remind you of this place.

Start drafting your analysis and critique.

Explain, in your own words, the author's main point.

- Is the main point stated or implied?
- Is it at the beginning or end of the article?
- If it is implied, how did you figure it out?

Discuss each of the supporting points in the text.

- Explain how the points relate to each other? That is, how does the writer create connections between her ideas?
- How does the writer develop ideas?
- Are there methods of developing ideas in this text that are particularly effective? Here are *some* ways that writers develop ideas: listing, defining, providing examples, explaining, reporting, comparing, contrasting, describing, providing anecdotes (personal stories), concrete profiles, and/or statistics and facts.

Identify the overall argument style the writer is employing

- Is it a logical argument, an argument which appeals to the emotions, or an argument which relies on the writer's persona?
- Is it some combination of the above?
- How do you know this (find places in the text that illustrate the author's style of argument)?

Based on the above information, critique the text.

- Is the writer's argument effective? Why or why not?

Combine and revise the above information so that you move from analysis to critique.

- Treat your analysis like an argument: you are persuading your audience that you carefully read the text and that your critique is well-founded and reasonable.

Non-Fiction Book Title

Dialectical Journal Template

In the first column: Write down a direct quote from the text with the page cited.

In the second column: Explain why you selected this quotation. Briefly put the quotation in context, and explain its meaning and significance. Does it help to illustrate a theme? Does it convey mood or tone? Is it an example of logos, pathos or ethos? Etc.

Quotation From the Text	Page Number	Response

Non-Fiction Book Suggestions

Choose one from the following list, or choose your own non-fiction book for my approval:

Nickled and Dimed, by Barbara Ehrenreich (Subject: Getting by in America)

Autobiography of Malcolm X, by Malcolm X and Alex Haley (Subject: Outlines the philosophy of Malcolm X)

The Audacity of Hope, by Barack Obama (Subject: Views on the American Dream)

Three Cups of Tea, by Greg Mortenson and David Relin (Subject: Educating girls in Afghanistan)

On Writing, by Stephen King (Subject: Writing / Literature)

Into Thin Air, by Jon Krakauer (Subject: Mount Everest Expeditions)

In Cold Blood, by Truman Capote (Subject: Follows the trial of killers)