AP Language and Composition

Summer Work 2024-25

1. Join the AP Language and Composition Remind account before you leave school for the summer (see the separate handout). I will contact you in July, before your junior year officially begins, and you might need to contact me. You may also reach me via email at tayloju@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us.
2. **Carefully** read the “non-fiction novel” *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote. When I say “carefully read,” I mean that this process should not be quick. You should read closely and think deeply about the story. Annotating what you read is a good way to get in the habit of reflective questioning, something we will work on all year. If the copy of the book is not yours to keep, you can either write notes in a separate notebook or make annotations on sticky notes that can be removed from the book later. Below is the picture of the copy I would prefer you to purchase. It is published by Vintage International, and the ISBN is 978-0-679-74558-7. You can buy a different edition, but this is the one we will be using in class, and I will have activities that require you to refer to specific page numbers.



1. After you have completed reading the book, prepare a critical literary analysis of *In Cold Blood*. Literary Critics often look at a text through the lens of a specific philosophical or social perspective. Some of the most common “literary lenses” are Archetypal, Authorial, Feminist, Marxist, and New Historical. I have provided brief descriptions of these types of literary criticism for you, and you are welcome to do more research online if you like. But you are ONLY allowed to research the literary criticism, information about Capote, or historic facts related to the time the book was written; you are NOT to research HOW the critical lens could be applied to *In Cold Blood*.

Instead of searching online for different interpretations of Capote’s “non-fiction novel,” let’s put Artificial Intelligence to the test. After determining which critical lens you want to consider in relation to *In Cold Blood*, go to ChatGPT (<https://chat.openai.com/>). Ask ChatGPT to provide an analysis of the book using the critical slant you have decided on. For instance, you might type in “Feminist analysis of Truman Capote’s *In Cold Blood*.” ChapGPT will generate some content ***that may or may not be accurate;*** that’s the thing about AI: it pulls from the entire internet, and there is a lot of information out there, correct and incorrect! Copy and paste what ChatGPT generates into a Microsoft Word document, save it, and print it. Handwrite annotations on this document. When do you think ChatGPT provides an accurate analysis? What information do they offer that seems incorrect and why? These are the things I want you to note in your handwritten analysis of ChatGPT’s output.

By this point, you should have a fairly good understanding of what it means to analyze a text using a specific perspective. Once you have dissected ChatGPT’s analysis, make bullet points adding your own observations about how the different people, events, and style of writing can be best understood in terms of that single critical perspective. You should have a minimum of five (5) unique critical observations (Resist the urge to research this – I want to know what YOU see, not what Capote scholars see!). On the first day of school, I will take up this work and grade it; later during that first week, we will discuss your findings in a class discussion.

1. Take an objective reading-check assessment during one of the first few days of school. On this assessment, you will be expected to know the names of the key people Capote describes in his story; the events that he chronicles from their lives; and, in some cases, the specific details that he either repeats or highlights. I will not ask obvious or “easy” questions.
2. If you have any questions or just want to discuss an aspect of *In Cold Blood* with me before school starts, feel free to send me a Remind message.

**Important note**: I want to make it clear that for the study of this book or anything else we read in AP Language and Composition, there is to be NO collaboration with other students or sole reliance on the internet, movies, or secondary sources such as Sparknotes, Shmoop, Wikipedia, etc. Unless I recommend it, working with other students - or using any sources other than the primary text(s) and your own thoughts - will be considered cheating. I create my own reading-check assessments by looking at the online reading guides that students often use in place of reading the story, so please don’t rely on them. Reading guides are intended to do just that: guide your reading. They are not intended to *replace* your reading of the text, and if you rely solely on them to learn the book, your understanding of it will be cursory and limited. Be smarter than that! Reading the text yourself is the only way to develop critical and analytical skills. If you read early in the summer, make sure you review notes before school starts so you can recall details from the story.

I hope you have a wonderful summer!