2026 Summer Assignment for Advanced Placement Language and Composition

AP Language and Composition is a course focused on nonfiction texts. Most of the texts we will read this year will be shorter than full-length novels and will come from a variety of contexts. Understanding the historical and social context of the texts will be important to your success in the class. Background information is crucial to supporting your writing this year, so you will need to expand your knowledge by reading, watching, and listening across a variety of subject areas.

Your summer assignment has two components:

1. *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson (NOT the Young Adult version!)
2. A memoir of your choosing **Do not submit an assignment based on a book you have read for another class. Choose a book that is NEW to you.**

Starting with these assignments and continuing throughout the course, all submitted assignments must be <u>your own</u> with <u>no help</u> from outside sources, including AI.

All assignments are due by Friday, August 14, 2026.

1. Read *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson. Create a hand-written/drawn one-pager about the author by dividing a piece of plain paper into five sections.

Your page should include:

- title, author, year of publication
- Four or five-sentence summary of the content
- At least one sentence describing the author's purpose
- Two important quotes with page numbers cited that reveal something about the author's character or beliefs
- A picture or drawing that visually symbolizes the content of the text

2. Choose a Memoir to read. Buy your own copy and annotate it as you read, making notes in the margins of the text. Pay particular attention to the work's structure, style, and themes, as well as its use of figurative language, imagery, and symbolism. Create a slideshow with at least five slides. (Google Slides, PowerPoint, and Canva are all good options.) Be creative with your use of color, images, fonts, etc.

Your presentation should contain the following:

- Title of work, author, year of publication
- Background information about the author
- Two important quotes with page numbers cited that reveal something about the message of the work as a whole
- A discussion of the author's style (What do you notice about diction, level of formality, sentence structure, figurative language?)
- A conclusion that includes what kind of audience would enjoy the novel.

Please note that because they deal with intense subject matter, many of the books may contain abuse, graphic content, harsh language, and disturbing imagery. Please choose material that fits with your family's values.

Here are suggested memoir titles:

A River Runs Through It by Norman Maclean

A Serial Killer's Daughter by Kerri Rawson

A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail by Bill Bryson

All Creatures Great and Small by James Herriot

All Over But the Shoutin' by Rick Bragg

Angela's Ashes by Frank McCourt

Born a Crime by Trevor Noah

Crying in H Mart by Michelle Zauner

Educated: A Memoir by Tara Westover

Extraordinary, Ordinary People: A Memoir of Family by Condoleezza Rice

Finding Me by Viola Davis

Greenlights by Matthew McConaughey

Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis by J. D. Vance

*Hope Heals (*or *Suffer Strong)* by Katherine Arnold Wolf

I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up For Education and Was Shot by Malala Yousafzi

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou

Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl by Harriet Ann Jacobs

Into Thin Air by Jon Krakauer

Lab Girl: A Memoir by Hope Jahren

Madison Park: A Place of Hope by Eric Motley

More Than a Bird by Liz Huntley

Shaken: Discovering Your True Identity in the Midst of Life's Storms by Tim Tebow

Sisters First by Jenna Bush Hager

Tuesdays With Morrie by Mitch Albom

The Glass Castle: A Memoir by Jeanette Wells

The Hiding Place by Corrie Ten Boom

The Stranger in the Woods: The Extraordinary Story of the Last True Hermit by Michael Finkel

The Water is Wide: A Memoir by Pat Conroy

Unexpected Spy by Tracy Walder

When Breath Becomes Air by Paul Kalanithi

Most of these can be found on Amazon for less than $20. **Please purchase your own copy so you can annotate it.**