

**AP LANGUAGE & COMPOSITION  
SUMMER PROJECT**

**PART I**

**SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT**

**PART II**

**SUMMER GRAMMAR ASSIGNMENT**

**TEXTS:**

*A Walk in the Woods*

*by*

Bill Bryson

**&**

*One text from the selection on the next page*

# PART I

## SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT FOR AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

As you already may know, the focus of AP Language and Composition is the study of non-fiction reading and writing. There is little doubt that what we choose to read has a direct correlation to our stylistic choices in writing. As a summer “tune-up” for the course, you are required to read *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson and at least one of the following non-fiction works. Titles should be generally available at the public library or bookstores.

*Into Thin Air*—John Krakauer

*A Memoir of the Craft: On Writing*—Stephen King

*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*—Rebecca Skloot

*The Motorcycle Diaries: Notes on a Latin American Journey*—Ernesto Che Guevara

*An American Childhood*—Annie Dillard

*Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith*—Anne Lamott

*In Cold Blood*—Truman Capote

*The Swerve*—Stephen Greenblatt

### **Directions:**

You are to be prepared with copies of the books in September, ready to discuss, and ready to write. You are also required to turn in a typed synthesis\* essay based on your reading of *A Walk in the Woods* and the book you chose from the list above. You are to write this essay using a strong and well-developed thesis statement that focuses on the subject of journeys or pilgrimages (it would be best not to focus on the literal meaning of journey). Be sure to incorporate quotations in your writing. If you use an outside source to help in developing your ideas, be sure to use MLA-style in-text citation and have a works cited page. Plagiarism of any sort will result in a zero for that particular essay. The essay is due one week from the day we return from summer break. Here is an excellent MLA style guide:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

**\*Synthesis:** *The combining of separate elements or ideas to form a coherent whole.*

### **Criteria:**

- Use both texts in the essay to create and develop a thesis.
- Use quotations from each text and properly cite them: “I knew it was God’s plan that I meet every stupid person in the world...” (Bryson 23).
- Read and follow the format for transitional topic sentences and ABC paragraphs.
- Include page numbers and proper in-text citation.
- Write in the literary present.
- Write a detailed outline first, and then write the essay.
- Turn in the outline with essay.
- Edit for standard written English.

## THESIS & TRANSITIONAL TOPIC SENTENCES

So your essay is coherent, each body paragraph should begin with a *transitional topic sentence*. The *Transitional topic sentence* has a three-fold function:

- Refers subtly to the idea discussed in the previous paragraph
- Refers briefly to the overall thesis idea
- Refers more specifically to any new ideas to be discussed in the new paragraph; for example:

**Thesis:**

*Throughout Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte, Jane Eyre uses her dominant personality traits of passion, independence, and faith in God to make important decisions with confidence.*

**Transitional Topic Sentence #1 (for first body paragraph):**

*Jane's sometimes concealed but ardent passion defines many decisions in her life.*

**Transitional Topic Sentence #2 (for second body paragraph):**

*In addition to being passionate, Jane is a very independent person who insists on distinguishing her views from others in order to make intelligent decisions.*

**Transitional Topic Sentence #3 (for third body paragraph):**

*Over and above Jane's passion and independence, faith in God leads Jane along the right path, grants her the gift of unconditional love, and wisely influences her decisions.*

Notice this structure in transitional topic sentences 2 & 3:

First part (transitions idea from previous paragraph)

+

*Second part (makes a connection to a part of the thesis statement)*

+

Third part (fine tunes or makes more specific the idea to be discussed in this paragraph)

## GENERATING AN IDEA FOR A THESIS

*At first it may seem difficult to create a thesis for two books that seem so different from each another. It is only difficult if you try to find similarities in their particulars. However, if you start with a broader idea, you will have the beginning of a great thesis. For example,*

**Broader idea:** Family

+

**Extension:** *Even if a family is successful in staying together, it will inevitably experience change that rocks its foundation.*

+

**Titles:** Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller, Fences by August Wilson, The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck.

=

**Controlling idea:** *In Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman, August Wilson's Fences and John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath, the beautiful yet soul-wrenching struggle of a family's attempts to stay together is poignantly and realistically displayed. However, even if a family is successful in staying together, it will inevitably experience change that rocks its foundations.*

## ABC PARAGRAPH

<p><b>A</b></p> <p>Always have a Transitional Topic Sentence.</p>	<p>Always put the transitional topic sentence first. This sentence will help focus your paragraph so that it stays on one topic. Keep your thesis in mind when writing this sentence; they should connect together logically.</p> <p>**Be sure to write in the literary present.</p>
<p><b>B</b></p> <p>Back it up Jack! Use specific examples to support your main idea. This is the biggest part of the paragraph</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This section should start with introducing an event, character, symbol, or some item in the text that helps develop your thesis.</li> <li>2. Then, develop that item from the text with a direct reference or quotation:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The book says...</li> <li>b. For example...</li> <li>c. On page 15 paragraph 3,</li> <li>d. The author says "....."</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>**Be sure to write in the literary present.</p>
<p><b>C</b></p> <p>Comments/Connections</p> <p>Make a statement about how your example supports your transitional topic sentence.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It becomes clear that...</li> <li>2. This shows that...</li> <li>3. This could mean...</li> <li>4. One begins to understand that...</li> <li>5. This furthers the idea/notion/belief...(make clear connection to thesis).</li> </ol>
<p><b>SAMPLE</b></p> <p>Writing ABC paragraphs is sometimes hard. It is hard because you really have to think of important information to defend your point of view. You also have to remember to write a comment that shows how your example supports your main idea. Even though ABC paragraphs are challenging, I like to write them.</p>	

You will be expected to read 1000 pages each marking quarter. Your summer reading for AP Language can be applied to this requirement. Required reading for any other class may not be counted toward this requirement.

I will give you the rubric for this essay in class at the start of the school year.

You will need to be prepared to complete a reading quiz and participate in other class activities that pertain to these texts.

# PART II

## SUMMER GRAMMAR ASSIGNMENT FOR AP LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

Directions: Use the websites below, and any other resource you find helpful to study and take notes on the terms listed below. Be sure to type these notes and include definitions and examples of these grammatical terms. If it is helpful, you can cut and paste from grammar websites, just be sure to cite the sources you are taking them from. Be sure that you have mastered these terms as there will be a test on them early in the school year.

- the 8 parts of speech (nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, articles, prepositions, conjunctions)
- clause
- subject (of a sentence)
- predicate
- Objects (of verbs and of prepositions)
- independent clause
- dependent clause
- phrase (be sure to understand how it is different than a clause)
- appositives
- absolutes
- conjunctions:
  - coordinating conjunctions
  - correlative conjunctions
  - subordinating conjunctions
  - conjunctive adverbs
- proper nouns

Here are two helpful grammar websites:

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/index.htm>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/5/>

**NAME:**\_\_\_\_\_

**PERIOD:**\_\_\_\_\_

**RUBRIC FOR  
SUMMER GRAMMAR ASSIGNMENT**

**Notes are:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Typed**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Well organized. (Anyone looking at your notes should be able to learn from them)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Easy to read.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Include definitions and examples for all of the terms.**

**Score:**\_\_\_\_\_