

AP Language and Composition: AP English 11

Summer Reading Assignments

No sources, other than the sources listed on this assignment handout, may be consulted for this assignment. All books can be purchased from Amazon.

1. **Read the Nonfiction Reading Assignment listed below.** Pick one of the books listed and annotate according to the instructions.
2. **Read *Into The Wild*** by Jon Krakauer. Complete the reading assignment on the next page.
3. **Be prepared** to participate in discussions, give a presentation, and write an in-class essay on the summer reading during the first week of school. Annotated books are due on the first day of class.

Questions?

AP English 11 Summer Reading Contact:

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Nonfiction Reading Assignment – Learning to Think Like a Writer

AP Language and Composition is a very writing-intensive course. By the end of the year, you will have to demonstrate mastery of analytical, synthesis, and argumentative writing. To become stronger writers, you must learn to “think like a writer.” Listed below are three books on writing – they explore the thoughts of writers, the habits of writers, and the influence of the writers’ lives on the texts. **Pick ONE book from the list below to read.** Annotate information about writing from the perspective of an author. What influences writers? What methods do they practice for writing? How do they think about their craft? Do they really consider all of the things we tend to talk about in the English classroom when they write? When you complete your assignment on this book, you will be discussing what you learned about the way authors write and think about their work.

Option 1 – On Writing by Stephen King

King’s memoir about his development as a writer begins with a section entitled, “C.V.” [curriculum vitae] in which he writes an autobiographical account of his development into a person who writes for a living; this section is OPTIONAL. **Please read the second part of the book that begins with the section entitled “Toolbox.”** As you read, **annotate the “tools” King says should be in every writer’s “toolbox.”** In other words, what are the rules to good writing, according to King? What does he think about when he crafts stories?

Option 2 – bird by bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life by Anne Lamott

In her book about writing, Lamott gives instructions to future writers by narrating her own experiences as someone who sometimes struggles to write. The book gives insight about the way that writers approach their work and about the ways in which their lives become inspiration for their work. You may choose to skip *Part Three: Help Along the Way*, which isn’t as helpful to our understanding of writing as the rest of the book.

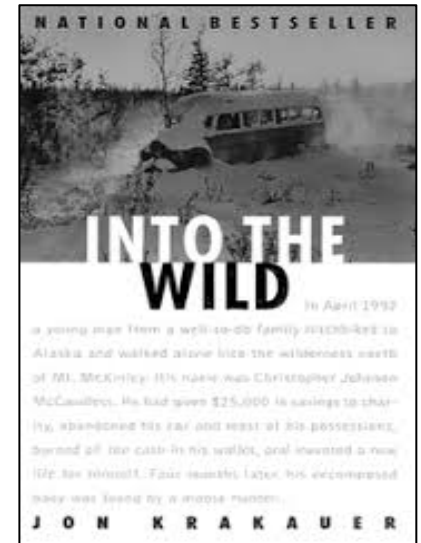
Option 3 – Zen in the Art of Writing by Ray Bradbury

Author Ray Bradbury takes us on a journey through many of his books (including *Fahrenheit 451*) while explaining his experiences and writing methods. If you choose to read this book, you may want to skip the sections on filmmaking and poetry (*The Secret Mind, Shooting Haiku in a Barrel, and . . . On Creativity*), which won’t be applicable to our discussion about writing.

Into The Wild by Jon Krakauer

In April 1992 a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. His name was Christopher Johnson McCandless. He had given \$25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter...

When McCandless's innocent mistakes turned out to be irreversible and fatal, he became the stuff of tabloid headlines and is dismissed for his naiveté, pretensions, and hubris. He was said to have had a death wish, but wanting to die is a very different thing from being compelled to look over the edge. Author Jon Krakauer brings McCandless's uncompromising pilgrimage out of the shadows, and the peril, adversity, and renunciation sought by this enigmatic young man are illuminated with a rare understanding--and not an ounce of sentimentality. Mesmerizing, heartbreaking, *Into the Wild* is a *tour de force*. The power and luminosity of Jon Krakauer's storytelling blaze through every page.



ISBN-13: 9780385486804
(description from Amazon)

Reading Assignment for *Into The Wild* by Jon Krakauer

As you read the novel, **annotate** for the theme topics listed below. In addition to the theme topics, annotate your observations of Krakauer's writing style: pay close attention to the **narrators/point of view**, the **writing style changes** (with point of view changes), **setting**, and **symbols**.

Theme Topics for Annotations

1. The Allure of the Wilderness and Danger
2. Ultimate Freedom
3. Valuing Principle over People
4. The Elusive Identity
5. The Father-Son Relationship
6. Isolation versus Intimacy

Finally, in addition to the above themes, **annotate for examples of authorial bias and intention in the narrative**. In other words, find places where Krakauer seems to be influencing the narrative through his own perspective and opinions, or else skewing the narrative to reflect his own ideas.

Annotations will be assessed the first day of class; in addition, a reading comprehension quiz will be given within the first week of school, and a literary analysis essay will follow.