

AP English Language & Composition

Welcome to the best class that you will ever take! That said, it's important that you are taking this class for the right reasons. This class focuses on language and rhetoric and argument and writing. It relies on your ability to think critically and creatively. You will read; you will write; you will think; you will argue. You will also complete a summer project and three major projects throughout the year, not to mention numerous other assignments. Please make sure that you are up to the level of commitment that this class requires.

The Summer Project:

Part One: The United States is in the middle of a weird pre-election frenzy. Hillary. Donald. Bernie. Who will be our next president? In light of the current social and political goings on, I would like you to read Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed*. A journalist by trade, Ehrenreich holds a PhD in cell biology. Between 1998 and 2000, Ehrenreich went undercover to see if it was possible to survive on minimum wage in America. Ehrenreich makes no bones about her own views; she believes that low-wage workers are treated unfairly. Maybe you'll agree with her, maybe you won't. You'll argue the finer points with your classmates in the fall.

Please read and annotate (with Post-it notes) Ehrenreich's book. After you read the book, you will pick one of the following options:

- A. Write a one-page paper in which you argue whether or not the United States should implement a living wage. Be sure to investigate the exact definition of a living wage. You can even look up living wage amounts. Connect your argument to Ehrenreich's text.
- B. Find an additional text from or about the presidential campaign. Keep in mind that a text is anything that we can read. Examples of texts: book, magazine, article, essay, picture, tweet, snapchat, meme, comic, text message, and so on. Then write a one-page paper in which you connect your new text to Ehrenreich's text. What does Ehrenreich argue? What does the new text argue?

Your paper should be no more than 225 words. Please double space and use twelve-point font. Use MLA citation. Don't waste time recapping; just argue. For example, what do the two texts have in common? Do the texts call on us to change the world? Do the texts stand in opposition to one another? Is one text more correct than the other?

The paper is due on the first day of school. No excuses. Be ready to argue with your pals.

PART TWO OF THE SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

IS ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE.

Part Two: Write me a letter. I don't want an email; I want a letter. Send me the letter via snail mail. Please be sure to use proper letter format. You'll need a stamp too. My address is:

Mrs. Krieger
UEHS
1200 East Main Street
Endicott, NY 13760

You can write about anything you want, but here are a few ideas:

1. Why did you sign up for this class?
2. What are you doing over the summer?
3. What are your plans for the 20% Project?
4. What are some of your favorite lyrics and why?
5. What are your plans for the GRP?
6. What is your favorite book?
7. What's going on in your world?

Please send the letter so that it arrives by September 1.

Grading:

The paper is worth 100 points. Follow directions. Keep the word count in line with the requirements. Argue well. Cite your sources. Be risky.

The letter is worth 40 points. Get it to me on time.

If you need help or if you have questions, you can contact me at any of the addresses that I listed in the header information. I will be in Mexico and Los Angeles for several weeks, but I will have Internet access.

I am attaching a sheet that explains the major projects for next year.

The GRP “Great Rhetoric Project”: You will find and analyze 25 rhetorical devices from an artist, author, writer, politician, show, magazine, book, or movie of your choice. You will present your findings in a spectacular visual manner that honors your topic.

Some notables from years past:

- Hailee analyzed the movie, *Mean Girls*, and presented her findings in the Burn Book.
- Garrett analyzed the lyrics of the Grateful Dead and presented his findings on the top of a papier mâché hippie bus.
- Shannon analyzed the Harry Potter book series and presented her findings inside of the Goblet of Fire.
- TJ analyzed the speeches of Winston Churchill and presented his findings inside of a cigar box.
- Chris analyzed the television show, *Criminal Minds*, and presented his findings on an enormous FBI evidence board.

The 20% Project: During the spring semester, you will design and execute a project that speaks to your soul. I will give you 20% of your class time to work on your project. You will complete weekly blogs as part of your grade, but everything else is up to you.

Autonomy can be liberating, or it can also be paralyzing. You only have four months to work on this project so you may or may not “succeed” in your goal. I’m more interested in what you learn along the way. “You can fail the project, but you can’t fail to produce.” In other words, failure is part of learning. If you set a goal, but fail to reach that goal despite your efforts, then that’s just the way it goes. The great inventors, artists, and thinkers in history often failed. The only thing that will get you in trouble with me is if you don’t do anything. This is not a project that you can push off, pretend to do, or copy from somebody else. Start thinking now about something that you have always wanted to do. You may work alone or in teams. If you have an idea, let’s chat. Just remember that you need to pick a project that speaks to you and not somebody else. Several students have made themselves miserable by doing something that they weren’t truly interested in.

Notables:

- The Potato Posse broke a Guinness World Record.
- The Spaghetios raised \$1,600 for *Feeding America*.
- Alenna taught her Jack Russell terrier agility.
- Cara learned how to apply special effects make up.
- Kendall started a novel.
- Eric and Nicholas wrote a small symphony.
- Cassie learned PhotoShop and recreated her favorite book covers.
- Seth photographed the community.
- Jessica created street art and hung it around the school.

Creativity Portfolio: You will create several poems, stories, memoirs and artistic pieces. Don’t panic. Some of the best work over the years has come from students who don’t believe that they are creative. Keep in mind that “creative” and “artistic” are not the same things.