

# AP LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION APPLICATION AND COMMITMENT FORM

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## English Teacher Recommendation:

Current (10<sup>th</sup>) Grade English Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Would Recommend: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_

- I am aware that AP Language and Composition is a demanding college level course based in classic rhetoric. I believe that I have the necessary academic background, commitment and motivation to succeed.
- I am prepared to actively engage in and complete a college level research paper as well as college level rhetorical exercises including analysis.
- I recognize that success in this course requires that I prioritize academic work and extra-curricular activities.
- I am aware that summer work—1 rhetorical essay and 1 non-fiction reading of choice—is required. The rhetorical analysis is due on the first day of class. A presentation on your non-fiction book of choice will follow in the first three weeks. (Any questions on these assignments must be addressed to instructor before June 20. Failure to complete these assignments will result in my placement in an alternative course.)
- I have discussed my decision for enrollment in AP Language and Composition with my current teacher, counselor, and my parents.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## AP LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION: SUMMER WORK

**Assignment #1:** Read and annotate the essays by EB White and Terry Tempest Williams. Notice that each write revisits a familiar place only to discover an unexpected truth. Write a well – developed and coherent essay in which you analyze how each author arrives at the truth. How do the authors reveal their emotional responses to the truth? What stylistic devices and techniques help us discover the truth along with the authors? Do these essays imply something important about the meaning in our own lives? **PLEASE CONSULT THE ATTACHED RUBRIC AND ESSAY TIPS. AVOID SUMMARY. LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

**Assignment #2:** Select a work from the list below. There is a required visual presentation associated with this non-fiction piece by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of school. We will discuss this during the first week of class. The list below stems from the AP College Board’s recommended titles as well as the ALA website for college bound students. Our goal is to enhance your ability to analyze literature and expository text more intelligently and to write effectively in a variety of rhetorical styles.

The Overachievers Alexandra Robbins

Freakonomics Malcolm Gladwell

Kabul Beauty School Deborah Rodriguez, Kristin Ohlson

How Starbucks Saved My Life Michael Gates Gill

Teacher Man: A Memoir FrankMcCourt

Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America Barbara Ehrenreich

Sugar Changed The World Marc Aronson, Marina Budhos

A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier Ishmael Beah

The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains Nicholas Carr

Profiles in Courage John F. Kennedy

Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business Neil Postman, Andrew Postman

The Botany of Desire Michael Pollan

## Reading #4

### ONCE MORE TO THE LAKE

E.B. White

August 1941

One summer, along about 1904, my father rented a camp on a lake in Maine and took us all there for the month of August. We all got ringworm from some kittens and had to rub Pond's Extract on our arms and legs night and morning, and my father rolled over in a canoe with all his clothes on; but outside of that the vacation was a success and from then on none of us ever thought there was any place in the world like that lake in Maine. We returned summer after summer—always on August 1 for one month. I have since become a salt-water man, but sometimes in summer there are days when the restlessness of the tides and the fearful cold of the sea water and the incessant wind that blows across the afternoon and into the evening make me wish for the placidity of a lake in the woods. A few weeks ago this feeling got so strong I bought myself a couple of bass hooks and a spinner and returned to the lake where we used to go, for a week's fishing and to revisit old haunts.

I took along my son, who had never had any fresh water up his nose and who had seen lily pads only from train windows. On the journey over to the lake I began to wonder what it would be like. I wondered how time would have marred this unique, this holy spot—the coves and streams, the hills that the sun set behind, the camps and the paths behind the camps. I was sure that the tarred road would have found it out, and I wondered in what other ways it would be desolated. It is strange how much you can remember about places like that once you allow your mind to return into the grooves that lead back. You remember one thing, and that suddenly reminds you of another thing. I guess I remembered clearest of all the early mornings, when the lake was cool and motionless, remembered how the bedroom smelled of the lumber it was made of and of the wet woods whose scent entered through the screen. The partitions in the camp were thin and did not extend clear to the top of the rooms, and as I was always the first up I would dress softly so as not to wake the others, and sneak out into the sweet outdoors and start out in the canoe, keeping close along the shore in the long shadow of the pines. I remembered being very careful never to rub my paddle against the gunwale for fear of disturbing the stillness of the cathedral.

The lake had never been what you would call a wild lake. There were cottages sprinkled around the shores, and it was in farming country although the shores of the lake were quite heavily wooded. Some of the cottages were owned by nearby farmers, and you would live at the shore and eat your meals at the farmhouse. That's what our family did. But although it wasn't wild, it was a fairly large and undisturbed lake and there were places in it that, to a child at least, seemed infinitely remote and primeval.

I was right about the tar: it led to within half a mile of the shore. But when I got back there, with my boy, and we settled into a camp near a farmhouse and into the kind of summertime I had known, I could tell that it was going to be pretty much the same as it had been before I knew it, lying in bed the first morning, smelling the bedroom and hearing the boy sneak quietly out and go off along the shore in a boat. I began to sustain the illusion that he was I, and therefore, by simple transposition, that I was my father. This sensation

persisted, kept cropping up all the time we were there. It was not an entirely new feeling, but in this setting it grew much stronger. I seemed to be living a dual existence. I would be in the middle of some simple act, I would be picking up a bait box or laying down a table fork, or I would be saying something, and suddenly it would be not I but my father who was saying the words or making the gesture. It gave me a creepy sensation.

We went fishing the first morning. I felt the same damp moss covering the worms in the bait can, and saw the dragonfly alight on the tip of my rod as it hovered a few inches from the surface of the water. It was the arrival of this fly that convinced me beyond any doubt that everything was as it always had been, that the years were a mirage and that there had been no years. The small waves were the same, chucking the rowboat under the chin as we fished at anchor, and the boat was the same boat, the same color green and the ribs broken in the same places, and under the floorboards the same fresh-water leavings and debris—the dead hellgrammite, the wisps of moss, the rusty discarded fishhook, the dried blood from yesterday's catch. We stared silently at the tips of our rods, at the dragonflies that came and went. I lowered the tip of mine into the water, tentatively, pensively dislodging the fly, which darted two feet away, poised, darted two feet back, and came to rest again a little farther up the rod. There had been no years between the ducking of this dragonfly and the other one—the one that was part of memory. I looked at the boy, who was silently watching his fly, and it was my hands that held his rod, my eyes watching. I felt dizzy and didn't know which rod I was at the end of.

We caught two bass, hauling them in briskly as though they were mackerel, pulling them over the side of the boat in a businesslike manner without any landing net, and stunning them with a blow on the back of the head. When we got back for a swim before lunch, the lake was exactly where we had left it, the same number of inches from the dock, and there was only the merest suggestion of a breeze. This seemed an utterly enchanted sea, this lake you could leave to its own devices for a few hours and come back to, and find that it had not stirred, this constant and trustworthy body of water. In the shallows, the dark, water-soaked sticks and twigs, smooth and old, were undulating in clusters on the bottom against the clean ribbed sand, and the track of the mussel was plain. A school of minnows swam by, each minnow with its small individual shadow, doubling the attendance, so clear and sharp in the sunlight. Some of the other campers were in swimming, along the shore one of them with a cake of soap, and the water felt thin and clear and unsubstantial. Over the years there had been this person with a cake of soap, this cultist, and here he was. There had been no years.

Up to the farmhouse to dinner through the teeming, dusty field, the road under our sneakers was on a two-track road. The middle track was missing, the one with the marks of the hooves and the splotches of dried, flaky manure. There had always been three tracks to choose from in choosing which track to walk in; now the choice was narrowed down to two. For a moment I missed terribly the middle alternative. But the way led past the tennis court, and something about the way it lay there in the sun reassured me; the tape had loosened along the backline, the alleys were green with plantains and other weeds, and the net (installed in June and removed in September) sagged in the dry noon, and the whole place steamed with midday heat and hunger and emptiness. There was a choice of pie for dessert, and one was blueberry and one was apple, and the waitresses were the same country girls, there having been no passage of time, only the illusion of it as in a dropped curtain—the waitresses were still fifteen; their hair had been washed, that was the only difference—they had been to the movies and seen the pretty girls with the clean hair.

Summertime, oh, summertime, pattern of life indelible, the fade-proof lake, the woods unshatterable, the pasture with the sweetfern and the juniper forever and ever, summer without end; this was the back-ground, and the life along the shore was the design, the cottagers with their innocent and tranquil design, their tiny docks with the flagpole and the American flag floating against the white clouds in the blue sky, the little paths over the roots of the trees leading from camp to camp and the paths leading back to the outhouses and the can of lime for sprinkling, and at the souvenir counters at the store the miniature birch-bark canoes and the postcards that showed things looking a little better than they looked. This was the American family at play, escaping the city heat, wondering whether the newcomers in the camp at the head of the cove were "common" or "nice," wondering whether it was true that the people who drove up for Sunday dinner at the farmhouse were turned away because there wasn't enough chicken.

It seemed to me, as I kept remembering all this, that those times and those summers had been infinitely precious and worth saving. There had been jollity and peace and goodness. The arriving (at the beginning of August) had been so big a business in itself, at eh railway station the farm wagon drawn up the first smell of the pine-laden air, the first glimpse of the smiling farmer, and the great importance of the trunks and your father's enormous authority in such matters, and the feel of the wagon under you for the long ten-mile haul, and at the top of the last long hill catching the first view of the lake after eleven months of not seeing this cherished body of water. The shouts and cries of the other campers when they saw you, and the trunks to be unpacked, to give up their rich burden. (Arriving was less exciting nowadays, when you sneaked up in your car and parked it under a tree near the camp and took out the bags and in five minutes it was all over, no fuss, no loud wonderful fuss about trunks.)

Peace and goodness and jollity. The only thing that was wrong now, really, was the sound of the place, an unfamiliar nervous sound of the outboard motors. This was the note that jarred, the one thing that would sometimes break the illusion and set the years moving. In those other summertimes all motors were inboard; and when they were at a little distance, the noise they made was a sedative, an ingredient of summer sleep. They were one-cylinder and two-cylinder engines, and some were make-and-break and some were jump-spark, but they all made a sleep sound across the lake. The one-lungers throbbed and fluttered, and the twin-cylinder ones purred and purred, and that was a quiet sound, too. But now the campers all had outboards. In the daytime; in the hot mornings, these motors made a petulant, irritable sound; at night, in the still evening when the afterglow lit the water, they whined about one's ears like mosquitoes. My boy loved our rented outboard, and his great desire was to achieve single-handed mastery over it, and authority, and he soon learned the trick of choking it a little (but not too much), and the adjustment of the needle valve. Watching him I would remember the things you could do with the old one-cylinder engine with the heavy flywheel, how you could have it eating out of your hand if you got really close to it spiritually. Motorboats in those days didn't have clutches, and you would make a landing by shutting off the motor at the proper time and coasting in with a dead rudder. But there was a way of reversing them, if you learned the trick, by cutting the switch and putting it on again exactly on the final dying revolution of the flywheel, so that it would kick back against compression and begin reversing. Approaching a dock in a strong following breeze, it was difficult to slow up sufficiently by the ordinary coasting method, and if a boy felt he had complete mastery over his motor, he was tempted to keep it running beyond its time and then reverse it a few feet from the dock. It took a cool nerve, because if you threw the switch a twentieth of a second too soon you would catch the flywheel when it still had speed

enough to go up past center, and the boat would leap ahead, charging bull-fashion at the dock.

We had a good week at the camp. The bass were biting well and the sun shone endlessly, day after day. We would be tired at night and lie down in the accumulated heat of the little bedrooms after the long hot day and the accumulated heat of the little bedrooms after the long hot day and the breeze would stir almost imperceptibly outside and the smell of the swamp drift in through the rusty screens. Sleep would come easily and in the morning the red squirrel would be on the roof, tapping out his gay routine. I kept remembering everything, lying in bed in the mornings—the small steamboat that had a long rounded stern like the lip of a Ubangi, and how quietly she ran on the moonlight sails, when the older boys played their mandolins and the girls sang and we ate doughnuts dipped in sugar, and how sweet the music was on the water in the shining night, and what it had felt like to think about girls then. After breakfast we would go up to the store and the things were in the same place—the minnows in a bottle, the plugs and spinners disarranged and pawed over by the youngsters from the boys' camp, the Fig Newtons and the Beeman's gum. Outside, the road was tarred and cars stood in front of the store. Inside, all was just as it had always been, except there was more Coca-Cola and not so much Moxie and root beer and birch beer and sarsaparilla. We would walk out with the bottle of pop apiece and sometimes the pop would back fire up our noses and hurt. We explored the streams, quietly, where the turtles slid off the sunny logs and dug their way into the soft bottom; and we lay on the town wharf and fed worms to the tame bass. Everywhere we went I had trouble making out which was I, the one walking at my side, the one walking in my pants.

One afternoon while we were there at that lake a thunderstorm came up. It was like the revival of an old melodrama that I had seen long ago with childish awe. The second-act climax of the drama of the electrical disturbance over a lake in America had not changed in any important respect. This was the big scene, still the big scene. The whole thing was so familiar, the first feeling of oppression and heat and a general air around camp of not wanting to go very far away. In mid-afternoon (it was all the same) a curious darkening of the sky, and a lull in everything that had made life tick; and then the way the boats suddenly swung the other way at their moorings with the coming of a breeze out of the new quarter, and the premonitory rumble. Then the kettle drum, then the snare, then the bass drum and cymbals, then crackling light against the dark, and the gods grinning and licking their chops in the dark hills. Afterward the calm, the rain steadily rustling in the calm lake, the return of light and hope and spirits, and the campers running out in joy and relief to go swimming in the rain, their bright cries perpetuating the deathless joke about how they were getting simply drenched, and the children screaming with delight at the new sensation of bathing in the rain, and the joke about getting drenched linking the generation in a strong indestructible chain. And the comedian who waded in carrying an umbrella.

When the others went swimming, my son said he was going in, too. He pulled his dripping trunks from the line where they had hung all through the shower and wrung them out. Languidly, and with no thought of going in, I watched him, his hard little body, skinny and bare, saw him wince slightly as he pulled up around his vitals the small, soggy, icy garment. As he buckled the swollen belt, suddenly my groin felt the chill of death.

## Reading #4

### WHISTLING SWAN

Terry Tempest Williams

Lake level: 4208.35'

The snow continues to fall. Red apples cling to bare branches.

I just returned from Tamra Crocker Pulfer's funeral. It was a reunion of childhood friends and family. Our neighborhood sat on wooden benches row after row in the chapel. I sat next to Mother and wondered how much time we had left together.

Walking the wrackline of Great Salt Lake after a storm is quite different from walking along the seashore after high tide. There are no shells, no popping kelp or crabs. What remains is a bleached narrative of feathers, bones, occasional birds encrusted in salt and deep piles of brine among the scattered driftwood. There is little human debris among the remote beaches of Great Salt Lake, except for the shotgun shells that wash up after the duck-hunting season.

Yesterday, I walked along the north shore of Stansbury Island. Great Salt Lake mirrored the plumage of immature gulls as they skimmed its surface. It was cold and windy. Small waves hissed each time they broke on shore. Up ahead, I noticed a large, white mound a few feet from where the lake was breaking.

It was a dead swan. Its body lay contorted on the beach like an abandoned lover. I looked at the bird for a long time. There was no blood on its feathers, no sight of gunshot. Most likely, a late migrant from the north slapped silly by a ravenous Great Salt Lake. The swan may have drowned.

I knelt beside the bird, took off my deerskin gloves, and began smoothing feathers. Its body was still limp—the swan had not been dead long. I lifted both wings out from under its belly and spread them on the sand. Untangling the long neck which was wrapped around itself was more difficult, but finally I was able to straighten it, resting the swan's chin flat against the shore.

The small dark eyes had sunk behind the yellow lores. It was a whistling swan. I looked for two black stones, found them, and placed them over the eyes like coins. They held. And, using my own saliva as my mother and

grandmother had done to wash my face, I washed the swan's black bill and feet until they shone like patent leather.

I have no idea of the amount of time that passed in the preparation of the swan. What I remember most is lying next to its body and imagining the great white bird in flight.

I imagined the great heart that propelled the bird forward day after day, night after night. Imagined the deep breaths taken as it lifted from the arctic tundra, the camaraderie within the flock. I imagined the stars seen and recognized on clear autumn nights as they navigated south. Imagined their silhouettes passing in front of the full face of the harvest moon. And I imagined the shimmering Great Salt Lake calling the swans down like a mother, the suddenness of the storm, the anguish of its separation.

And I tried to listen to the stillness of its body.

At dusk, I left the swan like a crucifix on the sand. I did not look back.



## AP ESSAY TIPS – Writing a Rhetorical Analysis:

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1. **Opening paragraph** should show that you ‘get’ what the writer’s intent is – that is, did you ‘read between the lines’ and grasp what he or she is *really* saying? Show that you understand the writer’s *purpose*. Show that you identify the writer’s *claim*.
2. In your **opening paragraph**, you may want to mention the technical elements that make the piece a strong and convincing piece of writing, but save the explanation of these elements for the body of your essay.
3. **Annotate, underline, THINK** while you are reading the passage.
  - a. Note where the writer’s claim is.
  - b. What is the writer’s tone?
  - c. What is the warrant or assumption underlying the argument?
  - d. Do you see where the writer includes specific evidence as grounds for support?
  - e. Do you see the classical argument structure in the piece?
  - f. Where does the writer become convincing through the use of the classical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos)?
  - g. To whom is the writer speaking (audience) and what does he want the audience to think or do after reading this passage?
4. **DO NOT** use these words (claim, warrant, assumption, ethos, pathos, logos) awkwardly in your essay. Instead of saying “Sanders appeals to logos by ...”, you might say “By citing the damages caused to the native peoples of Central America and North America by the Spanish conquerors and the colonists, Sanders logically supports his idea that ...”
5. All selections on the test will be **arguments on some level** – the argument may be subtle. Therefore, always read critically and keep asking yourself, “What is the writer trying to persuade his audience to believe?”
6. **TONE tone TONE ...** Dig deeply for hints about the writer’s attitude toward his subject. This attitude is at the heart of the writer’s message. Make it clear in your essay that *you get* how the writer feels about his subject.

## Scoring Rubric for Rhetorical Analysis Questions in AP Language and Composition

- 9 Essays earning a score of 9 meet all the criteria of 8 papers and in addition are especially thorough in their analysis or demonstrate a particularly impressive control of style.
  - 8 Essays earning a score of 8 effectively assess the purpose of the author and the effective use of rhetorical tools to accomplish that purpose. Such essays present a carefully reasoned argument in support of their position and enlist appropriate evidence from the text that supports it. Their prose demonstrates an impressive control of the elements of effective writing, matching the style of the text under examination—though the student essay is not flawless.
  - 7 Essays earning a score of 7 fit the description of 6 essays but feature either more purposeful arguments or a greater command of prose style.
  - 6 Essays scoring 6 accurately assess the purpose of the author and the effective use of language tools to support that purpose. Their arguments, while generally sound in nature and adequately supported, are nevertheless not as persuasive as papers earning scores of 7 or better due to their being less developed or less cogent. Though these papers may feature lapses in diction or syntax they are generally clear and effective.
  - 5 Essays scoring 5 generally understand the task but are either limited in scope or insufficiently developed. Though they may be marked by errors in syntax or diction, they nevertheless reflect a certain level of competence.
  - 4 Essays scoring 4 respond inadequately to the question’s task, often misunderstanding, misrepresenting, or oversimplifying the author’s attitude, or providing insufficient evidence as to the rhetorical techniques he or she uses to convey the perspective. Though the prose is often adequate enough to convey the writer’s claims, it generally suggests a limited control over organization, diction, or syntax.
  - 3 Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for a score of 4, but are either less persuasive in illustrating how the author used rhetorical techniques, or display a more limited control over the elements of effective composition.
  - 2 Essays scoring 2 achieve little success in illustrating how the author uses rhetorical techniques. They may on occasion misread the passage, fail to develop their argument to any substantive level, summarize rather than analyze the passage, or display significant weaknesses in organization, clarity, fluency, or mechanics.
  - 1 Essays earning a score of 1 meet the criteria for a score of 2 but are either overly simplistic or marred by severe deficiencies in the elements of composition.
  - 0 Essays scoring 0 offer an off-topic response that receives no credit or a mere repetition of the prompt.
- Indicates a blank or completely off-topic response.