

The Wardlaw-Hartridge School
AP Language and Composition
2020 Summer Assignment
Ms. Durham
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Welcome to AP Language and Composition! Here's what you should know before September:

AP English Language and Composition is a writing course focused on the study and practice of “rhetorical analysis of nonfiction texts and the development and revision of well-reasoned, evidence-centered analytic and argumentative writing” (College Board, AP English Course Description, pg. 8). In other words, if you've ever wanted someone to understand you, believe you, agree with you, or take action, then you've practiced rhetorical skills. In its simplest definition, rhetoric is the study of the effective use of language and its potential to clearly express ideas with an audience in mind.

Read and annotate the following text (see below for specific annotation strategies):

The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien

ISBN-13: 978-0544309760

O'Brien has explained that although *The Things They Carried* is a work of fiction, it is “truer” than nonfiction accounts of the Vietnam Wars. O'Brien explains that the “emotional truth” one can achieve in fiction writing can often be more accurate than the “actual truth.” Important Reminder: DO NOT RELY on Sparknotes or other study aids. The purpose of this assignment cannot be gleaned from reading any summaries and/or prepared analysis.

As you read, please think about these questions (in addition to asking questions of the text yourself):

Why do we categorize books into nonfiction and fiction? Who decides what is “truer”? Who is Tim O'Brien's audience?

Annotating Guidelines (thank you to Mr. Fulco for sharing these with me):

1. Throw away the highlighters. Instead, use a pen or pencil to underline words or phrases that seem **important or interesting**, and then comment on the text, in your margins immediately.

2. Annotations are the words you write about the text, not the text you underline or highlight. If you underline words/phrases, your need to write about WHY in your margin, this should guide you to be selective in your annotations. This will also deepen your analysis of the text.

3. Annotation is a conversation. When we don't remember what we just read, it's often because we were reading passively. When we actively read a text, we engage in a mental conversation with its ideas and this is what annotating should reflect.

4. There are many ways to interact with a text. Everybody has a tendency when it comes to the type of annotations they tend to write – I ask a lot of questions, define words I don't know, make personal connections and comment on language that I find beautiful, challenging or confusing. It varies depending on the type of text I'm reading and my purpose for reading it.

5. How many annotations do I have to do? Quality over quantity is good to remember; however, the more you interact with the text, the more you will get out of it, but there is so much more to effective annotation than simply having a lot of it.