

2019-2020 AP Seminar Summer Reading Assignment

Welcome to the first class of the AP Capstone Program—AP Seminar. I hope you are excited to join me on this learning adventure. In the AP Seminar course, we will be researching, writing and speaking about important and relevant real-world issues.

In order to be successful in AP Seminar, you should do two things over the summer: develop your reading stamina and increase your familiarity with nonfiction writing.

- To boost your reading stamina, you should **read as widely and as much as you can**. Don't read just one book or just one type of book. Read a wide variety of texts from news stories to non-fiction to novels to plays to poetry. This is not required but will help you immensely when we get to work in August.
- To increase your familiarity with nonfiction, your summer reading assignment requires you to **read ONE recent work of nonfiction**. Choose a work from the list below or choose a work of nonfiction about a subject that interests you.

Your Assignment:

Do a close reading of your chosen nonfiction work. A close reading means that you annotate in your book (on the text if it is your personal copy or on sticky notes, if it is a borrowed book). These annotations should include writing notes in the margins, underlining confusing and/or favorite passages, highlighting interesting information, and commenting on significant language. These notes will be extremely helpful to you during the first few weeks of the fall semester.

Also during your reading, plan to stop periodically to complete a reflection about what you have just read. You should divide your book into five sections so as to write **FOUR reflections during your reading and a FINAL reflection after you finish your reading**. You can either write your reflections by hand or on a Google Doc. You may join the Google Classroom page for next year's class (go to [google.classroom.com](https://www.google.com/classroom) and enter code **ddgy8pz**) to submit your reflections digitally.

Each reflection should represent approximately 10 minutes of thinking about the last section you read. You may write your reflection in any way you want—paragraph(s), bulleted list, graphic organizer, etc.

Your reflections are due on the first day of school.

BOOK CHOICES

Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End by Atul Gawande

In *Being Mortal*, Atul Gawande tackles the hardest challenge of his profession: how medicine can not only improve life but also the process of its ending. Full of eye-opening research and riveting storytelling, this book asserts that medicine can comfort and enhance our experience even to the end, providing not only a good life but also a good end.

Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking by Malcolm Gladwell

Blink is a book about how we think without thinking, about choices that seem to be made in an instant-in the blink of an eye-that actually aren't as simple as they seem. Why are some people brilliant decision makers, while others are consistently inept? Why do some people follow their instincts and win, while others end up stumbling into error? And why are the best decisions often those that are impossible to explain to others?

Dead Man Walking by Helen Prejean

In 1982, Sister Helen Prejean became the spiritual advisor to Patrick Sonnier, the convicted killer of two teenagers who was sentenced to die in the electric chair of Louisiana's Angola State Prison. In the months before Sonnier's death, the Roman Catholic nun came to know a man who was as terrified as he had once been terrifying. She also came to know the families of the victims and the men whose job it was to execute—men who often harbored doubts about the rightness of what they were doing.

Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us by Daniel Pink

Most people believe that the best way to motivate is with rewards like money—the carrot-and-stick approach. That's a mistake, says Daniel H. Pink. In this provocative and persuasive book, he asserts that the secret to high performance and satisfaction—at work, at school, and at home—is the deeply human need to direct our own lives, to learn and create new things, and to do better by ourselves and our world.

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City by Matthew Desmond

In *Evicted*, Princeton sociologist Matthew Desmond follows eight families in Milwaukee as they struggle to keep a roof over their heads. The book transforms our understanding of poverty and economic exploitation while providing fresh ideas for solving one of 21st-century America's most devastating problems. Its unforgettable scenes of hope and loss remind us of the centrality of home, without which nothing else is possible.

Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal by Eric Schlosser

Eric Schlosser's exposé revealed how the fast food industry has altered the landscape of America, widened the gap between rich and poor, fueled an epidemic of obesity, and transformed food production throughout the world. The book changed the way millions of people think about what they eat and helped to launch today's food movement.

Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything by Stephen J. Dubner and Steven Levitt

Through forceful storytelling and wry insight, they show that economics is, at root, the study of incentives—how people get what they want or need, especially when other people want or need the same thing.

I Am Malala by Malala Yousafzai & Christina Lamb

I am Malala is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons.

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson

Just Mercy is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer's coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice.

The Men We Reaped by Jesmyn Ward

In five years, Jesmyn Ward lost five young men in her life—to drugs, accidents, suicide, and the bad luck that can follow people who live in poverty, particularly black men. Dealing with these losses, one after another, made Jesmyn ask the question: Why? And as she began to write about the experience of living through all the dying, she realized the truth—and it took her breath away. Her brother and her friends all died because of who they were and where they were from, because they lived with a history of racism and economic struggle that fostered drug addiction and the dissolution of family and relationships.

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

Nickel and Dimed reveals low-rent America in all its tenacity, anxiety, and surprising generosity -- a land of Big Boxes, fast food, and a thousand desperate stratagems for survival. Read it for the smoldering clarity of Ehrenreich's perspective and for a rare view of how "prosperity" looks from the bottom. You will never see anything -- from a motel bathroom to a restaurant meal -- in quite the same way again.

The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Faces by Wes Moore

Two kids named Wes Moore were born blocks apart within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar Baltimore neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods; both hung out on street corners with their crews; both ran into trouble with the police. How, then, did one grow up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader, while the other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence?

Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking by Susan Cain

In *Quiet*, Susan Cain argues that we dramatically undervalue introverts and shows how much we lose in doing so. She charts the rise of the Extrovert Ideal throughout the twentieth century and explores how deeply it has come to permeate our culture. Passionately argued, superbly researched, and filled with indelible stories of real people, *Quiet* has the power to permanently change how we see introverts and, equally important, how they see themselves.

Reefer Madness by Eric Schlosser

America's black market is much larger than we realize, and it affects us all deeply, whether or not we smoke pot, rent a risqué video, or pay our kids' nannies in cash. In *Reefer Madness* the best-selling author of *Fast Food Nation* turns his exacting eye on the underbelly of the American marketplace and its far-reaching influence on our society. Exposing three American mainstays — pot, porn, and illegal immigrants — Eric Schlosser shows how the black market has burgeoned over the past several decades.

Silent Spring by Rachel Carson

Silent Spring, Rachel Carson's alarm, touched off a national debate on the use of chemical pesticides, the responsibility of science, and the limits of technological progress. When Carson died barely eighteen months later in the spring of 1964, at the age of fifty-six, she had set in motion a course of events that would result in a ban on the domestic production of DDT and the creation of a grass-roots movement demanding protection of the environment through state and federal regulation.

The Sun Does Shine by Anthony Ray Hinton

In 1985, Anthony Ray Hinton was arrested and charged with two counts of capital murder in Alabama. Stunned, confused, and only twenty-nine years old, Hinton knew that it was a case of mistaken identity and believed that the truth would prove his innocence. But with no money and a different system of justice for a poor black man in the South, Hinton was sentenced to death by electrocution. For the next twenty-seven years he was a beacon—transforming not only his own spirit, but those of his fellow inmates, fifty-four of whom were executed mere feet from his cell. With the help of civil rights attorney and bestselling author of *Just Mercy*, Bryan Stevenson, Hinton won his release in 2015.