

## ***Summer Reading Activity***

### *Advanced Placement U.S. History, Grade 11*

**Goal:** The summer assignment in AP U.S. History is designed to help you to review some of the key events that transformed our nation, as well as to reflect on how we have perceived and narrated the story of our nation from the vantage of hindsight. It should assist you in developing engaging and accessible background knowledge for your college-level AP course, and help you meet your goals for success on the AP exam.

While it might be tempting to wait and do the reading assignments during the first few days before the due date, working throughout the summer allows you the ability to review some of the important concepts from the earlier part of US History – and preview upcoming issues in US history – at your own pace, without feeling rushed or under an imminent deadline. Spread it out to improve your own understanding, time-management, and keep the stress levels low. The books listed have all been top-sellers, and can be purchased at your local bookstore or online, or found in public library systems. **Note that some books feature adult themes; parents have the final word on which books their student should read.**

**Reading Assignment:** Select **at least** one fiction or non-fiction book from the list provided with these instructions. Books marked with (\*\*\*\*) are significantly longer volumes, and you will receive extra credit for choosing one of them to read. All the books deal with issues and periods of history *after* the US Civil War.

**No two students should select the same book to read.** The selection list includes 33 non-fiction titles, 18 fiction titles, and 9 autobiography/memoirs, so there is plenty of variety to pick from. If you have NOT taken Honors US History 1, it is strongly recommended that you pick a *non-fiction* book to read for your summer assignment.

**Note:** You are responsible for procuring copies of the books you have chosen. If you cannot buy one, it is usually available for check out from the public library. Some of these books were published before the 1930s and are now in the public domain, and thus available free-of-charge on sites such as Gutenberg.org. You may also want to take advantage of used books available through on-line sources at very reasonable prices. Regardless of the method you choose, **don't wait until the last minute.** Please contact the instructor ASAP if access is an issue.

It is recommended that you buy a copy of your book, as annotating (even electronically) is a helpful reading tool. Small post-it notes could be used for books you do not own.

### **Specific Instructions for written assignments:**

- Use MLA formatting
- Use formal and academic voice.
- Use 12-pt conventional font, and **single-space** (do not double-space)
- Submit/share all your work in electronic format, as a single document.  
You are welcome to use Word, PDF, and/or Google Docs.

## Writing Assignment: Analysis Essay

Please read one book of fiction or non-fiction selected from the reading list. Your assignment is to write an analysis paper that focuses on key portions of the book(s), as chosen by you. Your paper **must not exceed 2000 words**. You do not need to write a 2000-word essay, but should include enough detail to make a good paper that clearly explains your analysis. You *should* make references to the text to support and illustrate your points. You should *not* be overly wordy or use numerous direct quotations.

- (1) Write one to two paragraphs summarizing the key focus and themes of the book(s).  
*This should not exceed 1/4 of your essay; if it does, you are writing a book report and should revise your essay immediately.* What is the historical intent of the author(s)? What major theme(s) are the author(s) interested in exploring in their book(s)? Please be sure to clearly explain your reasoning and conclusions.
- (2) Select four (4) key historical events or concepts that are explored in the book(s).
- (3) For **each** of your selected 4 events, *briefly* summarize and explain why it was so significant in American history (suggested 2-3 paragraphs). In fiction, you should be explaining how the event/concept is a reflection of US history at the time. **ALSO** look out for and explain key connections to past events and themes from US history, specifically to US history before the 1870s (the content covered in Honors US History 1). Be sure to read the entire book as often th historical context for an event is discussed in later chapters.

**Assessment:** As in all individual assignments for Rutherford High School, you must do your own work, and you should do your best quality work. Do not just quote sections of the book. Use your own skills and understanding to do the assignment. Be sure to save copies of your work in addition to your hard drive to prevent computer issues.

**A range** – Written reflection and analysis of the significance of the events indicate critical and close reading, thoughtful engagement and analysis. Strongly grounded in historical context. Very few if any grammatical or formatting errors are present. Academic voice. All directions followed.

**B range** – Written reflection and written analysis of the significance of the events indicate predominantly critical and close reading, and mostly thoughtful engagement and analysis, with some historical context. Some few grammatical or formatting errors may be present. Academic voice. All directions followed.

**C range** – Written reflection and analysis of the significance of the events indicate some critical and close reading and analysis, although understanding of the text and historical context may be superficial. Very few if any grammatical or formatting errors are present. Academic voice. All directions are followed.

**D or F** – Not acceptable for AP-level work, and does not engage with or analyze the material in any meaningful way. It is unclear whether book was read, or understood. Multiple errors in grammar, voice and formatting may be present.

**Due Dates:**

- Completed and turned in by August 2nd: earn 5% extra credit.
- Completed and turned in by August 16th: due with no penalty
- Completed and turned in by August 30th: late – 10% penalty applied
- Completed and turned in by September 6th: last date for acceptance – 25% penalty applied.

**This assignment will be the equivalent of a major unit test for point value.**

**Questions?** (Please put “summer reading” in the subject line of your email)

It is not anticipated that this will be an assignment you will need help on, but if you are having trouble understanding any portion of the assignment or reading, you may contact Mr Lacy at his school e-mail address. E-mail will be checked periodically over the summer, and a response will be written as quickly as possible.

It is hoped that you enjoy your reading. You should see this as an opportunity to learn and review important information that will help you in APUSH class next year.

Sincerely,

Mr Lacy

[klacy@rutherfordschools.org](mailto:klacy@rutherfordschools.org) (School)