

## AP English Language and Composition Summer Reading

For each book you must complete a dialectical journal and be prepared to discuss your entries. You need one entry for every 10 pages of reading.

Book 1: ***Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*** by [Steven D. Levitt](#) (Author), [Stephen J. Dubner](#) (Author)

Which is more dangerous, a gun or a swimming pool? What do schoolteachers and sumo wrestlers have in common? How much do parents really matter? These may not sound like typical questions for an economist to ask. But Steven D. Levitt is not a typical economist. He studies the riddles of everyday life—from cheating and crime to parenting and sports—and reaches conclusions that turn conventional wisdom on its head. *Freakonomics* is a groundbreaking collaboration between Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, an award-winning author and journalist. They set out to explore the inner workings of a crack gang, the truth about real estate agents, the secrets of the Ku Klux Klan, and much more. 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.

Book 2: ***Outliers: The Story of Success*** by **Malcolm Gladwell**

In this stunning new book, Malcolm Gladwell takes us on an intellectual journey through the world of "outliers"—the best and the brightest, the most famous and the most successful. He asks the question: what makes high-achievers different? His answer is that we pay too much attention to what successful people are like, and too little attention to where they are from: that is, their culture, their family, their generation, and the idiosyncratic experiences of their upbringing. Along the way he explains the secrets of software billionaires, what it takes to be a great soccer player, why Asians are good at math, and what made the Beatles the greatest rock band. Brilliant and entertaining, *Outliers* is a landmark work that will simultaneously delight and illuminate.

### **Task #2: Argument Analysis --- *The New York Times: Room for Debate***

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Students must have a context for answering impromptu questions on topical issues. The opinion essay clusters will also help generate possible ideas for forming a balanced argument, a component of the research/synthesis unit. Additionally, the article clusters provide close reading of contemporary essays.

Follow these steps for the assignment:

1. Go to <http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate>

2. The home page has topics, posed in the form of a question. Select a topic that interests you.
3. When you click on a topic title, a list of debaters and their essay titles will appear. Click on "Read the Discussion" to access the first article in the grouping.
4. Click on 2 of the essay titles to read the other essays in the grouping.
5. You must read **2** of the articles in the grouping. **Be sure to read the entire article, not just the excerpt!**
6. Complete the Article Analysis Sheet for each article.

### Article Analysis Sheet

#### Guidelines for Article Analysis Sheet

1. **Article Information:** Fill in before you begin reading this article.
2. **Analysis Information:** Examine the article as a whole. Try to determine something about the purpose, audience, and content of the paper **before** you start reading. Look for clues in the title and/or subtitle, the acknowledgements (if any), the first foot/end note, and the author's biographical note (sometimes with the article, sometimes compiled separately).
3. **Primary Details:** Start reading. If the article has a labeled introduction, you should find the author's statement of purpose, or thesis statement, before the end of that section. You should also be able to tell what evidence the author is going to use to support the position she or he has taken.
4. **Presentation and Argumentation:** Keep reading but watch what the author is doing. This step requires that you read the article to gain an understanding of how the author presents the evidence and makes it fit into the argument. At this stage of the exercise, you should also take the time to look up any unfamiliar words or concepts. Also, watch how the author switches from first explaining how the evidence supports the argument and then to the summary. The last few paragraphs of the article should tidy up the discussion, show how it all fits together neatly, where more research is needed, or how this article has advanced knowledge, that is, the implications of the article.
5. **Evaluation:** Now that you've finished reading, consider your personal reaction to it: not only "did I like it?", "it was hard to read," or "it was boring/interesting." This, along with the work in the other steps, is the basis for a *critical* evaluation of the article. Even if you don't know anything about the topic, you can make some judgments about the article and how well the author made her or his case.

<b>Article Information</b>	
Title	
Author(s)	
Source of Essay	
<b>Analysis Information</b>	
<p><b>Purpose</b>  Why do you think the author wrote this paper? Does it seem to be refuting someone else's interpretation of some event or phenomenon? Is it offering new information? You'll usually find clues to the answer to these questions in the first few paragraphs. That's where authors usually try to show why <b>their</b> paper is useful and worth reading.</p>	
<p><b>Audience</b>  Who is this paper written for? Experts? the general public?</p>	
<p><b>Subject</b>  What is the article about?</p>	
<p><b>Occasion</b>  What was happening in the world to prompt someone to write this article?</p>	
<b>Primary Details</b>	
<p><b>Thesis</b>  Write out the thesis statement as you find it in the article. It is sometimes only one sentence; sometimes two or three. Sometimes the sentences are separated from each other.</p>	
<p><b>Evidence</b>  What evidence does the author use to convince his/her audience? Find 3 examples and write them here.</p>	
<p><b>Tone</b>  What is the author's tone? How does he/she feel about this topic? Find 3 examples in the text that show tone.</p>	

<b>Presentation and Argumentation</b>	
<p><b>Diction</b> What words did you have to look up? Did the author use words in an unusual way?</p>	
<p><b>Use of Evidence</b> How well did the author rely on his/her evidence? Was everything mentioned at the outset referred to in the article? Was quoted material used to <b>illustrate</b> or <b>substantiate</b> points?</p>	
<p><b>Conclusion</b> You can either write out the author's conclusions (though they're often a paragraph or so long), or you can summarize where the author went with the paper.</p>	
<p><b>Implications</b> This is where you might note what the points the author has made might mean in a larger context. Who might find it useful? What difference has it made for you? Why did your teachers make you read this essay? (Don't say because they wanted to torture you.)</p>	
<b>Evaluation</b>	
<p><b>Personal Reaction</b> This is where you note your personal reaction to the paper. Your comments might be one or two words, or might be longer.</p>	
<p><b>Strength of Case</b> Did the author persuade you that the point/argument she/he was making was true, or at least convincing?</p>	