

AP English III Summer Assignment for Incoming Juniors

Objective

In the past, the concept of the American Dream was generally understood that if a diligent person worked hard he would reap great rewards of owning his own land and comfortably taking care of his family. Times have changed and now the definition of the American Dream in the 21st century has a different meaning or does it? How would today's citizen of the United States define the American Dream? Is it realistic to think that a person in our current society can obtain wealth ethically and with integrity? Or is the dream achieved in the lessons one learns from the journey? These questions deserve some thoughtful pondering. This summer, you will be reading *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald as well as a memoir of your choice. Your assignment will be due the first day of school, but we will continue to discuss the themes, characters, and literary devices seen in what you read for the summer assignment throughout the year.

Materials

As well as reading *The Great Gatsby*, you will need to choose a book to read from the following list of memoirs (account of personal experiences of an author). **Please note: some of these memoirs may contain mature material.** These titles not only appeal to the literary merit needed for the AP College Board exam, but they also were selected to appeal to your individual interest. Be selective and mature in your choice. You will need to purchase these from area bookstores or amazon.com. Having your own copies of these books will allow you to annotate (mark up with notes) as you read.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, Maya Angelou

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

Angela's Ashes, Frank McCourt

Black Like Me, John Howard Griffin

Eat, Pray, Love, Elizabeth Gilbert

It Stops With Me: Memoir of a Canuk Girl, Charleen Touchette

Kitchen Confidential, Anthony Bourdain

Lipstick Jihad: A memoir of Growing up Iranian in America & American in Iran, Azadeh Moaveni

On the Road, Jack Kerouac

On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft, Stephen King

The Motorcycle Diaries: Notes on a Latin American Journey, Ernesto Che Guervara

The Year of Magical Thinking, Joan Didion

Waiting for Snow in Havana: Confessions of a Cuban Boy, Carlos M. N. Eire

Warriors Don't Cry: A Searing Memoir of the Battle to Integrate Little Rock's Central High, Melba Pattillo Beals

Requirements and Procedures

1. Look at the memoir choices and decide on a few that peek your interest. Research the titles and authors to see which one appeals to you the most. Write a paragraph (about 100 words) defending your choice with reasonable and intellectual support. Translation: don't say, "I decided to read *Lipstick Jihad* because it seems, like, something I would enjoy. The girl on the front is pretty." This is an unacceptable

example. AP Language and Composition requires deeper thinking and intellectual thought. Go beneath the surface and add depth and creativity to your paragraph. Have you read other works by the same author? Does the subject interest you? Why? Be specific and show you have completed research on the memoir.

2. After finishing your paragraph, make sure you obtain a signature from your parents/guardians stating they agree with your choice. **Without this signature, your assignment will not be accepted the first day of school.**
3. After reading *The Great Gatsby* and your chosen memoir, reflect on whether the American Dream is worth pursuing in a clear and cohesive essay of at least 500 words. Make sure to include textual evidence from both books (in-text documentation through quotes or paraphrasing), personal anecdotes, and cultural relevancy in order to add logos, ethos, and pathos to your argument.

*For notes on ethos, pathos, and logos go to:

<http://schools.fsusd.k12.ca.us/schools/greenval/TeachWeb/KristinD/importantconcepts.htm>

4. For your essay, use MLA Format, double-spaced, with a 12 pt. standard font such as Times New Romans or Georgia.

Checklist:

- _____ Purchase *The Great Gatsby* and chosen memoir
- _____ Complete 100 word paragraph explaining why you chose the particular memoir with parent signature
- _____ Read both books
- _____ Write a 500 word essay reflecting on whether the American Dream is worth pursuing

Note to students and parents: This is an **individual** assignment. This is your chance to prove to me that you have what it takes to be enrolled in this class and pass the AP Language and Composition Exam. Not actually reading the books will serve no purpose. I have read the study guide notes, believe me, this is not a substitute for actually reading the books. You will gain terrific satisfaction and an education from reading. Copying is CHEATING ladies and gentleman. For goodness sake, do your own work. **You can** do this if you **do not wait until the last minute!!!!!!**

Remember that word, Plagiarism?

With that said, I truly look forward to working with you and if you have questions email me please. I have a busy summer planned, but I will check my email on a regular basis.

Sincerely,

Jaime Wentrcek

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