To new AP Seminar Students (and their parents):

Hello, and happy summer! What a strange journey the last few months have been. The AP Seminar instructors are so excited to get back to normalized teaching and learning, and we can’t wait to take the Seminar journey with each of you.

We think it is necessary to address how NTI will impact your summer assignment before you access the actual assignment. We have no inside information about when or how the beginning of the school year will unfold; however, we know we are still struggling with the consequences of the pandemic as well as the social unrest due to racial injustice. We realize that these uncertain times often lead to uncertain circumstances that are out of your control; consequently, NTI requires flexibility—on our part and yours. Yet, we also know the standards and deadlines established by the College Board are not necessarily flexible. We will need to proceed under the assumption that the College Board will expect the same things of you that they have of students in previous years of Seminar.

What we say in this letter is designed to help set the tone for our class for the upcoming year. Speak to former students to get an idea about the class; they will tell you that building a collaborative community of scholars is essential to our success. Your willingness and ability to understand and embrace the ideas in this letter will help ensure your individual success.

So before you actually read the summer reading, please take the time to process the ideas in this letter. It includes the different aspects of the course to consider as you prepare for the beginning of school next year as an AP Seminar student. These are not questions you need to answer and turn in; they are questions to consider concerning your preparedness for the course.

Your Goals as an AP Seminar Student:
- Why did you sign up to take this class?
- What do you want to get out of this class?
- How intrinsically motivated are you to be successful in a college level course?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses (as a researcher, writer, presenter, team member, and critical thinker)?

Class Expectations:
We will cover each of these in greater depth once school starts; however, you may notice that they overlap and are interconnected.
- Academic Integrity [do your own work & practice ethical research practices]
- Kindness [to yourself (includes your mental & physical health), to your peers, to us, to all others]
- Respect [for yourself (includes your mental & physical health), for your peers, for us, for academic standards and integrity]
- Responsibility [for your own actions, learning, success, growth]
- Reflection [assessing your strengths & weaknesses, setting goals, making a plan for improvement]
- Growth mindset [not a fixed mindset]
- The Seven P’s [Preparedness, Promptness, Positive Mental Attitude, Participation, Politeness, Perseverance, Production]

This Assignment is not about the Grade:
- This is about learning.
- This is about understanding the importance of reading closely and analytically.
- This is about making sure you have chosen a course that interests you and aligns with your academic ability and work ethic.
- This is about keeping your brain sharp, especially your problem-solving and critical thinking skills.
- This is about meeting long-term goals—a marathon not a sprint—to help you earn a passing AP score.
Communication is Key:

- We cannot help you unless you ask for help.
- We need to know BEFORE a deadline that you are struggling, how you are struggling, and why you are struggling.
- We will then need to work together to devise a plan to help you be successful.
- Email as soon as any problems, issues, or questions arise.
- Make your email messages concise and specific.
- If you think it will be too hard to express your problems, issues, or questions in writing, send us an email to request a face-to-face Google Meet.
- Check your school email regularly. You have to get in the habit of using a professional email address; currently, that is your JCPS email.
- Because it is summer, realize it may take us more than 24 hours to get back to you.
- **IMPORTANT:** Join our Google Classroom now with your JCPS email address because this simplifies things when we share resources. Set it up to receive notifications when we make a post.
- **Join Code:** z4sogrk

The Reasons You Really Need to Complete this Assignment before School Starts & Do Your Best Work:

- It’s time to get your brain thinking about the content of the course. This work will be totally different than your English/Language Arts work from middle school and freshman year.
- You need to complete this with your best effort in order to get ahead and to be prepared for the challenges of meeting standards, expectations, requirements, & deadlines, especially the final College Board deadline.
- We will refer to this work throughout the school year, but there won’t be time to complete this work once the year begins… because there will be other work.
- You need to read it with your best effort to help ensure that you will ultimately be successful with your AP Seminar work (i.e. earn the AP score you desire).

Know that we are here to support you and our main goal is to help you be successful and grow. This class is going to be a challenge; yet, if you are willing to put in the hard work, then we are willing to put in the hard work. Also, you will most likely be rewarded for your—perhaps Herculean—efforts.

The best evidence of this is the pass rate at Manual. We have consistently achieved above a 95% pass rate (3 or higher) for the past five years.

Good Luck,

The AP Seminar instructors

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SECOND REMINDER: Join our Google Classroom now with your JCPS email address because this simplifies things when we share resources. Set it up to receive notifications when we make a post.
- **Join Code:** z4sogrk
Summer Reading Assignment

1. In order to get your brain calibrated to the kind of work and reading that we will be undertaking in AP Seminar, we would like you to order and read Thomas Foster’s highly engaging text, How to Read Nonfiction Like a Professor. We love this text because it provides readers with insights into effective approaches for studying challenging articles, essays, and other non-fiction sources. The title is available through Amazon or other online and local book retailers.

https://www.amazon.com/How-Read-Nonfiction-Like-Professor/dp/0063008475

2. Once school begins, we will be studying certain chapters from Graff and Berkenstein’s They Say, I Say. In this text, the authors break down the approaches that successful academic writers take in their own writing. We will be posting a PDF copy of the text on our AP Seminar Summer Google Classroom space (3rd reminder: Join Code: z4sogrk). If you would like to, you may begin reading the text to get ahead; just know that we will be assigning portions of this text early in the school year. In addition to the PDF, we have a limited number of copies for students to use during the school year. If you would like a copy for yourself, be sure to purchase the 4th edition through Amazon or other online and local book retailers.

https://www.amazon.com/They-Say-Matter-Academic-Writing/dp/0393631672/ref=sr_1_1?crid=FTPJU1T958EF&dchild=1&keywords=they+say+i+say+4th+edition&qid=1591815621&s=books&sprefix=they+say+%2Cstripbooks%2C158&sr=1-1

To review:

Please read How to Read Nonfiction Like a Professor before school begins, and consider exploring They Say, I Say before assigned reading begins when we come together. This summer work will establish a solid foundation for the work we will pursue as we reach for qualifying AP Seminar scores.