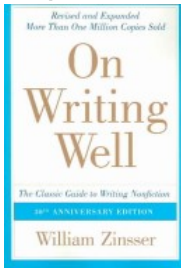


## AP Language and Composition Summer Assignment

The purpose of AP Language is to focus on expository, analytical, and argumentative writing, thus emphasizing the study of nonfiction works in a variety of modes. The HSHS English Department has chosen required pre-course assignments that will offer a learning stretch and educational enrichment for AP-level students. The AP teacher will conduct additional activities that may include seminars, book talks, class discussions, writing assignments, and additional related readings in conjunction with the assignments below. This assignment is due on August 28, 2009. If you have any questions concerning the assignment, please feel free to email us at [jdilts@wcpss.net](mailto:jdilts@wcpss.net) (Mrs. Dilts) or [ffletcher-herring@wcpss.net](mailto:ffletcher-herring@wcpss.net) (Ms. Fletcher).

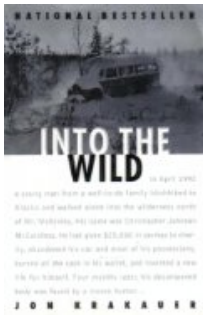
### Required Reading:



Zinsser, William. On Writing Well. HarperCollins Publishers, New York: 2006.

**Assignment:** 1) Read and annotate this book. When I say “annotate” I mean to the extent which is explained on the attached handout. We will be looking for a variety of skills in AP Language. Make notes on sticky notes and write enough so when you return to school to talk about the book, you can do so in a cohesive way. We will use annotating as a way to digest the book and remember its key points. 2) In addition, you will need to write a review of the book.

Some questions to consider are: *What are the concepts being taught by Zinsser? Do you agree with these concepts? Can you see yourself improving as write if you implement the theories of Zinsserr? How?*



Krakauer, Jon. Into the Wild. Random House, Inc., New York: 1996.

**Assignment:** 1) Read the book. You may annotate if you like but the annotations will not be part of your grade. 2) Keep a reading log of the novel. Consult the internet to learn how to create a reading log. Pull from many different resources. The key is to create a log or journal that shows me that you interacted with the text. There are 18 chapters in the novel. I expect to see no less that 15 entries in your reading log. 3) In addition, you will need to write a 3-paragraph response that addresses the rhetorical devices of diction, syntax, and structure of the novel. Use the questions provided to guide your analysis. Let these come from your brain,

not outside sources. It's okay to consult those sources, but you must let your brain do the work. If not, you will only be hurting yourself when it comes time to take your AP Exam.

Use the following questions to help you formulate your responses to "Analyzing Rhetoric." You will have one 3-paragraph entry when you are finished.

A. **Diction** is the analysis of word choice. Word choice conveys voice or the author's or character's personality through the choice of idiom.

- Is the language concrete or abstract? General or specific?
- Are the words monosyllabic or polysyllabic?
- Compare denotative (dictionary meaning) versus connotative (emotional meaning) words. Do the words have interesting connotations?
- Is the diction formal or informal? Colloquial? Slang? Jargon?
- What words are euphonious (pleasant sounding) or cacophonous (harsh sounding)?
- Is there any change in the level of diction in the novel?
- What can the reader infer about the speaker or speaker's attitude from the word choice?
- Are there interesting images or patterns of imagery in the passage?
- Does the author create analogies, like similes and metaphors or broader descriptive comparisons?

B. **Syntax** is the sentence structure of the passage, the arrangement of the words to form meaning. It includes whether the sentence structure relies on prepositional phrases, verbal phrases, clauses, or other structures.

- Are the length of most of the sentences telegraphic (fewer than 5 words), short (approximately 5 words), medium (approximately 18 words), or long and involved (30 words or more)?
- Are the sentences simple and direct or complex and convoluted?
- Does length vary?
- Why is sentence length effective? How is it effective in this situation?
- How does sentence structure fit the subject matter?
- Is there a wide variety of sentence patterns present?
- Does the author use repetition, parallel structure, or juxtaposition (unassociated ideas, words or phrases next to each other) for emphasis?
- Does the author write periodic or cumulative sentences?
- Are there rhetorical questions in the novel?
- Are there dramatic shifts in sentence patterns?
- What can the reader infer about the speaker or speaker's attitude from the syntax?

C. **Structure** is the way the entire work is organized.

- What organizational pattern(s) does the author use? (general to specific, specific to general, chronological, narrative, spatial, comparison and contrast, definition, question and answer, cause and effect)
- Are there repeated structural elements?
- How are the chapters related to each other?
- How are the chapters related to the work as a whole?
- What is the significance of the title's reflection on the novel as a whole?
- How does the organization of the novel help achieve the author's purpose?

## How to Annotate a Book

### Your Text:

While you read, use sticky notes to mark key material. Sticky notes can include check marks, question marks, stars, arrows, brackets, and written words and phrases. Create your own system for marking what is important, interesting, quotable, questionable, and so forth. On a separate sheet of paper, keep an orderly, legible list of "key information" with page references. Key information in a book might include concepts; passages that relate to the author's experiences; quotes; important passages and chapters; and maybe key definitions or vocabulary.

### Your Paper (to turn in):

As you read, section by section, chapter by chapter, **consider doing the following, if useful or necessary:**

- At the end of each chapter or section, **briefly** summarize the material.
- Title each chapter or section as soon as you finish it, especially if the text does not provide headings for chapters or sections.
- Make a list of vocabulary words. Possible ideas for lists include the author's special jargon and new, unknown, or otherwise interesting words.

Just how idiosyncratic and useful can annotating be? A good example is in William Gilbert's *De Magnete, Magneticisque Corporibus, et de Magno Magnete Tellure* (On the Magnet, Magnetic Bodies, and the Great Magnet the Earth), one of the seminal works of the Renaissance, published in the year 1600. Gilbert was the personal physician of Queen Elizabeth I and has been called the father of experimental science in England. Robert B. Downs, in *Famous Books Since 1492*, writes that in *De Magnete*, Gilbert annotated the text prior to publication by putting stars of varying sizes in the margins to indicate the relative importance of the discoveries described. Gilbert also included in the original edition a glossary of new scientific terms that he invented.

Okay, a self-annotated book on magnetism by a celebrity doctor from the time of Shakespeare, with variable-size stars in the margins and a list (in the back) of his own new vocabulary words that changed science as we know it—that's useful idiosyncrasy.

### Credit

*Nick Otten has taught for nearly 40 years—the last 20 at Clayton High School—specializing in American literature, creative writing, and student publication. He has also been adjunct professor at Webster University in St. Louis for 30 years, specializing in teacher training in the Master of Arts in Teaching graduate program. He has published widely on reading, written an editorial column in English Journal, and presented workshops for teachers in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and China.*