

AP Language and Composition 2023-2024

Welcome to AP Language, the study of rhetoric and its powerful effects. Much of this course will focus on developing cultural awareness, analyzing arguments surrounding current events, investigating rhetorical situations in everything you read, see, or hear, and of course, having fun. You will also apply these skills to your own writing, and learn when and how to break the traditional rules of writing with audience and purpose in mind. I encourage you to read as much as you can this summer. Email me if you need some recommendations. Listen to podcasts and audiobooks. Watch TED talks. Become a Citizen Rhetorician! In other words, be “in the know” and develop your treasure chest of cultural knowledge.

Please read everything below *carefully*.

Summer Reading

***Stiff: The Curious Life of Human Cadavers*, by Mary Roach**

approximate time to complete: ~3 hours for reading; 1 hour +/- for question preparation

In the introduction to *Stiff*, Mary Roach says, “death makes us helplessly polite.” Roach’s own approach to the multiple uses of cadavers remains polite throughout the entire work, although she also possesses a dry humor that keeps her readers entertained and often scratching their heads.

- ★ Please read the introduction to *Stiff*, as well as at least three of the twelve chapters. (I guarantee that some of you will want to read the whole book!) Look through the Table of Contents and *choose chapters that appeal to you*. (You may be disappointed if you choose the shortest chapters rather than those that pique your interest.) After the introduction, each chapter can be read independently, so don’t worry about skipping around.
- ★ There is nothing to turn in before the start of school; **however**, you will have an in-class writing assignment on *Stiff* within the first two weeks of school, as well as be expected to participate in a Socratic discussion on the questions below as well as your own takeaways from the reading. The extent to which you prepare is up to you, but you will be scored based on repeated and thoughtful contributions, and based on a Socratic rubric that I will provide. I highly recommend you come into the school year with some passages from the reading flagged for discussion and some thoughts prepared based on the questions below.

As you read *Stiff: The Curious Life of Human Cadavers*, consider the following questions. Your responses will be based on your observations of her writing style rather than the content of the book, and your answers will likely vary greatly from those of your peers.

- Consider the primary **audience** for this book. Who do you think Roach is writing for?
- Consider Roach's **purpose(s)** for writing this book (to entertain? to persuade? to inform?).
- Consider the underlying **messages** you think Roach wants her readers to take from her book.
- In what way(s) does Roach attempt to **connect** with her readers?
- In what way(s) does Roach employ **logical** arguments to make her points?
- In what way(s) does Roach appeal to her reader's **emotions** to make points or make her work compelling? Which emotions does she specifically appeal to?
- What are some adjectives that you would use to describe Roach's **tone** (her **attitude toward her subject**)? Provide examples.
- Consider any other elements of Roach's **written voice** and **stylistic choices**. What makes these stand out? How do her choices impact you and your interest level in the topic?
- In what ways is this non-fiction book like or unlike other books you have read?

I am looking forward to meeting everyone and kicking off another year of this valuable class!

Mrs. Gonzalez