I. REQUIRED READING FOR ALL AP LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION STUDENTS

_The Immortal Life of Henrietta Laks_ by Rebecca Skloot

Rebecca Skloot begins the book with the following quote from Elie Wiesel: “We must not see any person as an abstraction. Instead, we must see in every person a universe with its own secrets, with its own treasures, with its own sources of anguish, and with some measure of triumph.” **Analyze the book in light of this quote.** Explain the various ways in which both the scientific community and the media are guilty of having viewed Henrietta and her family as abstractions. Explain the consequences of this perspective and how this different perspective is evident in the way Skloot conducted her research and wrote her book.

**Requirements:**
- MLA format
- 750 word minimum
- Thesis Statement should be underlined.
- Include 3 direct references from the book as your textual evidence and cite the page number.
- Type in a Google Document and share with debbie.allen@deerfieldwindsor.com

II. BOOK OF CHOICE FOR AP LANG AND COMP STUDENTS

READ ONE of the following non-fiction books:

- _Devil in the White City_ by Erik Larson
- _Brain on Fire_ by Susannah Cahalan

Assignment for _Devil in the White City:_

Answer the following discussion questions with a minimum 350 words per answer.

1. In the note "Evils Imminent," Erik Larson writes "Beneath the gore and smoke and loam, this book is about the evanescence of life, and why some men choose to fill their brief allotment of time engaging the impossible, others in the manufacture of sorrow" [xi]. Discuss Larson’s perspective on the conflict
between good and evil. Include in your discussion the essential difference between men like Daniel Burnham and Henry H. Holmes.

2. After the Fair ended, Ray Stannard Baker noted "What a human downfall after the magnificence and prodigality of the World's Fair which has so recently closed its doors! Heights of splendor, pride, exaltation in one month: depths of wretchedness, suffering, hunger, cold, in the next" [p. 334]. Discuss the relationship between the opulence and grandeur of the Fair and the poverty and degradation that surrounded it. Explain how the Fair brings into focus the extreme contrasts of the Gilded Age.

3. In his speech before his wheel took on its first passengers, George Ferris "happily assured the audience that the man condemned for having 'wheels in his head' had gotten them out of his head and into the heart of the Midway Plaisance" [p. 279]. Explore the idea that the entire Fair is an example of the power of human ingenuity and of the ability to realize the dreams of imagination.

4. After reading the book, discuss the total picture of late nineteenth-century America that emerges from The Devil in the White City. How is that time both like and unlike contemporary America? What are the most significant differences? In what ways does that time mirror the present?

Assignment for Brain on Fire

Answer the following discussion questions with a minimum 350 words per answer.

1. A quote from the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche appears at both the beginning and end of Cahalan’s memoir: “The existence of forgetting has never been proved: we only know that some things do not come to our mind when we want them to.” Why do you think Cahalan chooses to recall this quotation at both the story’s start and end? How does it correspond to Cahalan’s tale and its major themes? In addition to the content of the quotation, why is it particularly poignant that the author would choose a quote by Nietzsche to bookend her work?

2. In the author’s note, Cahalan says that her book is “a journalist’s inquiry into that deepest part of self—personality, memory, identity.” What does her story reveal about these three subjects? How does her account challenge our preconceptions of these three subjects? Alternatively, how does her account confirm or bolster what we already know and believe about these three subjects?

3. The characters in Brain on Fire—friends, family, medical personnel, and even Cahalan herself—frequently consider if she may be suffering from some form of mental illness. What does the book reveal, then, about our way of thinking about mental illness? For instance, what does Cahalan’s story suggest about the relationship between psychology and neurology? What preconceptions does it reveal about our understanding of mental illness as a society? How does this story help to highlight the necessity of compassionate responses to those who are ill?

4. Consider the role of faith in the story—not only religious faith, but also faith defined more broadly to include support for others, faith in one’s self (think not only of Cahalan’s story but of Dr. Najjar’s story), hope and resilience. What role does faith seem to play in success and recovery both for Cahalan and those around her?
III. EDITORIALS AND OPINION ARTICLES

Collect 10 editorials/opinion pieces from national (not local) newspapers and/or magazines (i.e., Washington Post, Atlanta Journal and Constitution, Time) over a course of 10 weeks. One editorial per week. Be sure there is a date on the editorial/print out. If digital, print out the editorial/opinion piece; if from a newspaper, cut out the editorial.

Organize the editorials by placing a print copy of the editorial in front of your written evaluation.

These pieces should not be hard news stories, but a columnist or writer’s OPINION regarding topics, such as presidential candidates, the state of the economy, or global politics and what that means to the world.

After you read each editorial, record (PLEASE TYPE) the following and place immediately following the editorial studied. All answers should be in complete sentences. Please provide insight and depth, not surface level knowledge.

• Author, title, and date of each article
• What is the issue being discussed?
• What is the purpose of the article?
• What is the author’s PRIMARY argument?
• What evidence does the author use to make his argument or prove his point? Include a textual reference that proves his argument/point.
• Do you agree or disagree with his argument? Explain.

Arrangement: Number the editorials and place the typed responses with each one. Then, put the editorial/response in CHRONOLOGICAL order (by date) in a folder and bring with you on the first full day of class.

IV. GREAT AMERICAN SPEECHES

Print a copy of the following speeches from this website: http://www.americanrhetoric.com/top100speechesall.html

• Ronald Reagan Shuttle Challenger Disaster Address
• John F. Kennedy, Jr. Inaugural Address
• Lyndon Baines Johnson “We Shall Overcome”

1. Read the speeches; research the background and the speaker; then, answer (TYPE) the following questions for EACH speech. You will have 3 sets of questions/answers.
   o What the speaker’s background? Who is he?
   o Describe the occasion in which the speaker delivers this speech.
   o Who is the speaker’s intended audience?
   o What is the primary purpose of the speech?
   o How does the speaker influence his audience?
   o What IMAGES does the speaker create with his words?
   o What solid logical evidence does he provide to achieve his purpose?
   o What is his TONE (attitude, mood, perspective)?
2. After you finish answering the questions for the three speeches, choose **ONE of the THREE SPEECHES** and **write ONE essay** that addresses the following prompt (assignment):

In a well-written essay, explain the importance of “this speech” in its historical context and to a modern world. You must use at least four references to the speech in your essay to prove your argument.

Arrange the speeches with a copy of the speech first, your questions and answers next, and then the essay behind the speech you based it on.
Share the google document with me on **debbie.allen@deerfieldwindsor.com**

PLACE ALL COMPLETED ASSIGNMENTS IN YOUR SUMMER READING NOTEBOOK AND TURN IN ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.

LABEL YOUR NOTEBOOK ON THE OUTSIDE FRONT COVER WITH YOUR NAME, THE CLASS, AND THE DATE.

WE WILL UPLOAD ALL GOOGLE DOCUMENTS TO TURNITIN.COM THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL.