

Assignments for both AP Seminar-Language Combined & AP Language

1. Choose **one** of the following to read critically:

- ○ *The Girls of Atomic City* by Denise Kiernan – Kiernan seeks to expose an area of

Oak Ridge history that has not received much coverage in her book *The Girls of Atomic City*. Women from all over the country worked tirelessly at the Clinton Engineer Works in the 1940s, knowing only that they were helping the American war efforts – oblivious to the world-changing technology that they were working to uncover. Kiernan weaves a factual narrative based on her exhaustive interviews with several of those women, revealing all the once esoteric details of their existence in the Secret City.

- ○ *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien – O'Brien brilliantly blends fiction and nonfiction in *The Things They Carried* as he reflects on his experiences in the Vietnam War. O'Brien's poignant thoughts on war, death, and sacrifice resonate with his growing audience. The book, which is more of a collection of interconnected short stories than it is a novel, is quickly becoming viewed as a contemporary classic. (Excellent story; language and themes may be objectionable.)

2. *Participate in an enriching educational experience:* In AP Language, we will work hard to develop your skills in critically analyzing and writing evidence-based arguments. Much of the evidence that students use to support claims in their papers comes from all of their experiences in and out of the classroom. Think about this like collecting experience points in a video game – the more XP that you have, the better you are at the game. When you start writing in AP Lang, we want your library of experiences to be as diverse and expansive as possible, and this summer presents an opportunity to collect great evidence for future essays. Please complete at least **one** experience in **one** of the following categories:

- ○ Culture – Are you traveling this summer? Do you love art or history? Have you ever wanted to immerse yourself in a culture different from your own? Soak up all that you can during a unique cultural experience this summer and reflect on how it expands the ways you view the world and your community. Here are a few examples of possible experiences: visiting another part of the U.S.; traveling abroad; exploring a national park or historical site; touring a museum; learning about a different culture by engaging with its language, cuisine, or art.
- ○ Service – Want to help others and learn more about individuals with different backgrounds from your own? Volunteer for a service organization or for a cause that you care about and reflect on how the experience impacted you.
- ○ Media – What areas of academia most interest you? Do you love robotics? How about poetry or politics? Are you passionate about the environment or the future of education? Identify an area (or areas) of interest and seek out a media

experience in that field. Here are a few suggestions: subscribe to a TED Talk channel, listen to a series of podcasts, follow and read a columnist from a reputable news organization. And

remember that those who score your work on the AP exam next May will have a high standard; thus, the more scholarly, the more unbiased the source of information, the better. How does your media experience confirm/challenge your ideas?

Please email if you have another idea in one of the categories that does not seem to fit in the description. When you come back to school, we will complete an activity where you will reflect on your summer experience, so do whatever you need to make sure you remember all the important details. That could include taking notes; recording a voice memo; saving pictures, pamphlets, downloads of articles; etc. If you feel like you have successfully remembered all the important details without doing any of those things, that is fine too. We will not collect anything from you other than the assignment that you will complete early in the semester.

*Please contact Tim Vacek at tim.vacek@knoxschools.org or Autumn Suranofsky at autumn.suranofsky@knoxschools.org should you have any questions or concerns about either the books or the instructions for the educational experience.