

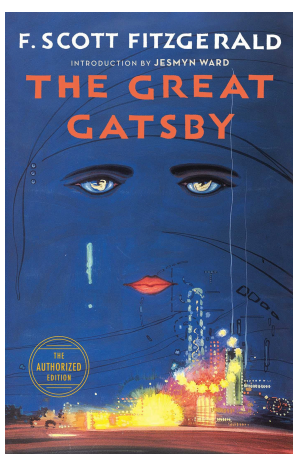
# 2024-25 Summer Reading

## AP English Language and Composition + American Lit

Welcome to *AP English Language*! I look forward to meeting you in the fall. I consider AP Lang one of the most important English classes (in my humble opinion 😊) as it focuses on logic, insight, and evidence for constructing and consuming strong arguments. The course will read canonical works from American literature and pair these works with contemporary nonfiction in preparation for the AP English Language and Composition exam in the spring. I have created a summer reading assignment that I hope you will enjoy but will also prove a useful introduction.

Please contact me at [krista.bowen@cobbk12.org](mailto:krista.bowen@cobbk12.org) if you have difficulties with the assignment or with procuring a book; I can help. The last thing I want is to make a stressful situation in your family any more stressful.

**ONE OTHER NOTE** – AP exams for APUSH, AP Seminar, and AP Lang are going digital next year. Each of these involves 2+ hours of writing. If you are not an efficient typist, it might be a good time to take an online typing class this summer. We will type all timed-writing practice essays to give you more practice.



### PART 1: *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald

This is on the short list for the “Great American Novel.” Don’t cheat yourself by not reading this book. This novel has some important ideas and concepts that we will focus on over the course of the semester. Annotate your novel, looking for key ideas about America - our values, opportunities and shortcomings. Mark particularly persuasive and well-written passages to help us evaluate the merits of Fitzgerald’s writing. I will **not** collect book annotations, so annotate for yourself, not for me, and start developing a system that works for you as it will prove essential as you move on to the daunting length of college reading assignments. You might use this [one-page reading focus guide](#) as a tool for noticing what is important - this will be a starting point for class discussion and a review aid for the test.

Be prepared for reading quizzes the first week of school and a test the second week.

### PART 2: Introduction to Rhetoric and Argument

Much of our work this year will focus on the construction of arguments – looking at how good writers pull together a clear and impactful line of reasoning and support it with convincing evidence. Before you read the three articles for part III, read two passages from chapter 1 of the book [Everything’s an Argument](#) and take notes on the concepts bulleted below – **feel free to copy and paste the bulleted prompts below into your own document and add your answers. This work must be typed and it will be submitted to turnitin.com for a plagiarism check**

**A NOTE ON PAGE NUMBERS:** pages 1-11 refers to the pages that appear in the browser’s page navigation, the page numbers that are printed on the text itself in the yellow circles are two pages later – **pages 3-13 on the book’s page design**, in the yellow circles at the top of the page →

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**PAGES 1-11 – DEFINE + DIFFERENTIATE THE AIMS AND GOALS FOR ARGUMENTS** – To understand the differences between these argument types, briefly summarize each type’s characteristics based on the reasons we argue.

- Arguments to convince –
  - Arguments to persuade –
  - Arguments to inform –
  - Arguments to explore –
  - Arguments to make decisions –
  - Arguments to meditate or pray –
- **REFLECT** – which of these argument types do you use in your real-world life, either as a reader or writer? Why do you find this type of argument important in your world? Give an example of a topic that benefits from this argument type.
  - **CONNECT + ANALYZE** – after you read the three articles in Part III, choose one of the articles and explain which of the goals of arguments above best explains the author’s purpose and construction of the argument? Support your classification with specific examples from the article.

**PAGES 16-20 – CATEGORIZE KINDS OF ARGUMENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR STATUS** – To understand the differences between these argument kinds, briefly summarize the characteristics based on the kinds of issues they address:

- Arguments of fact –
  - Arguments of definition –
  - Arguments of evaluation –
  - Arguments of proposal –
- **REFLECT** – Imagine a topic or issue that is important to you personally – it could be a social issue or a cultural value, then briefly imagine how an argument about that issue would change across two different argument kinds. In other words how might the issue be addressed differently in an argument of fact vs. an argument of proposal?
  - **CONNECT + ANALYZE** – after you read the three articles in Part III, choose one of the articles and explain which of the kinds of argument above best explains the author’s purpose and construction of the argument. Support your classification with specific examples from the article.

**A NOTE ON PAGE NUMBERS:** pages 16-20 refers to the pages that appear in the browser’s page navigation, the page numbers that are printed on the text itself are two pages later – **pages 18-22 on the book’s page design**, in the yellow circles at the top of the page →

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## **PART 3: Argumentative essays to supplement and extend *The Great Gatsby***

These articles will start our practice of making connection between literary and rhetorical sources; we will look to journalism and social commentary for ideas and evidence that will further our discussion of *The Great Gatsby*

### **“The 9.9 Percent is the New American Aristocracy” by Matthew Stewart**

Matthew Stewart’s thorough examination of the American Dream appeared in the magazine *The Atlantic* in 2018, and it combines several modes of argumentation starting with his own personal narrative before branching off to economic and sociological ways of looking at the state of American society. It references an economic indicator called the Gatsby Curve if that clues you in on the reason for reading it alongside the novel. It’s long but worth your time.

[Click here to download the article.](#)

### **“The Crooked Ladder” by Malcolm Gladwell**

In a 2014 *New Yorker* essay, Gladwell examines the relationship between the social mobility at the heart of the American Dream and organized crime. He draws on many historical narratives of mafiosa, and combines these examples with sociological theories and concepts to examine the paradoxical ways that organized crime operated in fairly lawful ways. Consider how these examples help you think about Gatsby and his goals, and by extension the American Dream. [Click here to download the article.](#)

An OPTIONAL aside - if you are interested, Malcolm Gladwell returns to this argument in a recent episode of his podcast *Revisionist History*. [Click here to listen if you’re interested.](#)

### **“The American Dream: A Biography” by Jon Meacham**

Even though Meacham examined the lifeblood of the American dream in 2012, the parallels between the lingering effects of the recession spurred by the housing crisis of 2008 seem pretty apt with the uncertainty of how and when the American economy and life will return to “normal” after the pandemic this year.

[Click here to download the article.](#)

An OPTIONAL aside - here is a [PDF of the magazine’s original layout](#) and photography if you’re interested)

- **ANNOTATE THE ARTICLES** – As you read the articles, make margin notes (**not just highlights and underlines**) to summarize the author’s claims (main ideas) and subclaims (supporting ideas). Also make notes on effective and

convincing pieces of evidence. You might also note how the ideas in the articles connect to characters, situations, conflicts and themes in *The Great Gatsby*. If you need more guidance on annotating in effective ways, check out [this guide from UNC Chapel Hill](#). You will turn in annotated articles for a grade – you can either print the articles or you can use the comment tool in Acrobat to annotate digitally.

- **WRITE SOCRATIC SEMINAR QUESTIONS** – For each article, write FOUR open-ended discussion questions – TWO questions related to your view of the argument and TWO questions that connect passages of the argument to characters, incidents or ideas in the *Great Gatsby*. We will use these annotated articles and questions for a socratic seminar on *Gatsby* and the American Dream in the first week of school. Here’s an EXAMPLE of each question type -
  - ON THE ARTICLE’S ARGUMENT - What does Stewart’s metaphor about the rubberband and the ladder on page 3 tell us about the ways that the economic class into which one is born leads to the ability to either rise or fall in social mobility?
  - ON THE ARTICLE’S CONNECTION TO *GATSBY* - On page 2, Gladwell notes that only four members of the fourth-generation sprawling Lupollo-Salemi-Alcamo-Tucci family were involved in organized crime. All the other members had managed to make it into the socially-acceptable middle class. In what ways does Jay Gatsby similarly hide his illegal activities in order to appear acceptable to the elites of East Egg?

### HERE’S A BRIEFER VERSION OF THE TASKS ABOVE AS A CHECKLIST FOR YOUR ASSIGNMENTS:

- Read *The Great Gatsby* carefully and critically. Use the [one-page reading focus guide](#) to note the subtleties and complexities
- Be ready for reading quizzes, discussion, and a test on *Gatsby*
- Complete work from the two sections of *Everything’s an Argument* (pages 1-11 and 16-20). Take detailed but succinct notes, and complete reflections + connections. Type this work and be ready to submit for a plagiarism check
- Annotate three articles. Use the definitions, aims and kinds of arguments in *Everything’s an Argument* to help you note the main claims, subclaims and effective evidence. Also look for connections to *Gatsby*.
- Write four socratic seminar questions for each article. These should be typed in the same document as your work for *Everything’s an Argument*

### AND HERE’S A RUBRIC:

#### EVERYTHING’S AN ARGUMENT

Complete and thorough work that goes beyond simplistic and perfunctory answers – these show a genuine effort to learn from the types of arguments and their purposes, and to apply these definitions to the supplementary articles..

+ A - + B - + C -

#### ARTICLES

Fully annotated with insightful margin comments (not just highlighting) that considers the argument established by main claims, supporting claims, and evidence. Shows critical thinking about the ideas expressed by the article and their relevance to the *Great Gatsby*

+ A - + B - + C -

#### SOCRATIC QUESTIONS, SEMINAR PARTICIPATION + REFLECTION

Questions for the Socratic Seminar are specific, well-conceived and particular to the arguments in the articles and to the connection to *Gatsby*; they go beyond basic or overly simplistic questions that are easily answered and do not promote discussion and debate. The reflection delves deeply into an aspect of the seminar and considers meaningful ideas about your view of America’s promise of social mobility.

+ A - + B - + C -