

AP Language and Composition Summer Assignment
Hampton Bays High School
Mrs. DiFrietus

Welcome to AP Language and Composition, a course designed to be the equivalent in rigor of a college course in rhetoric, literature studies, and composition. You will read and analyze texts for rhetorical elements and their effect in nonfiction texts.

In preparation for this demanding course, you will be responsible for completing 3 assignments prior to the start of the school year:

Assignment #1: Select and read ***ONE*** memoir from the list below. The school and public library have limited editions of the text, but you can purchase the book through www.amazon.com or www.thriftbooks.com. I highly suggest you acquire your chosen text by the end of June.

- *The Glass Castle* by Jennette Walls
- *Educated* by Tara Westover
- *Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance
- *Born A Crime* by Trevor Noah
- *Men We Reaped* by Jesmyn Ward

Part 1: You need to show an active reading strategy throughout the entire book and should **have no less than 40 annotations** (i.e. post-its, margin notes, etc...). Your annotations should focus on diction, tone, sentence structure, audience, context, speaker, purpose, appeals, and other points of interest for you.

Part 2: Complete a Nonfiction Data Sheet for the book (attached). Fill it out completely.

Assignment #2: Read and annotate “My First Life Line” by Maya Angelou (attached). Your annotations should focus on diction, tone, character descriptions, sensory appeal, and character development.

Assignment #3: Write a memoir describing **YOUR** first “Life Line.”

Use MLA formatting: 12 point font, Times New Roman, double-spaced. Your memoir should be 500 – 750 words and should mimic the styles and choices from Maya Angelou’s “My First Life Line” and/or the memoir you chose to read. Be prepared to share your memoir and explain the stylistic choices you made.

Most importantly, enjoy reading! Please do not hesitate to email me (ndifrietus@hbschools.us) or message me via remind (@aplghb) over the summer! I am looking forward to discussing your memoirs and hearing your thoughts during the seminar discussion in September!

Respectfully,

Mrs. DiFrietus

**AP Language and Composition
Nonfiction Data Sheet**

Title:

Author:

Appeals and Tone

Appeals

- How does the author appeal to the reader's sense of emotion?
- Which emotions? Is it effective?
- How does the author appeal to the reader's sense of logic?
- How does the author use their credibility to appeal to the reader?

Tone

- What is the overall tone (attitude) of the author about the subject? How do you know?
- Does the tone shift? If so, where?

SOAPS

(Subject, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Speaker)

Subject

- What is the writing about?
- Why is the subject worthy?

Occasion

- What is the historical context?
- Why did the author chose to write the memoir at that moment

Audience

- Who is the intended audience? What about the unintended audience? How do you know?

Purpose

- What is the author's primary purpose of writing this memoir? To inform? To persuade? To entertain?

Speaker <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the writer? • Why are they important? • How are they credible? 	
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Diction: Select at least five quotes from the book which provide provocative or emotionally charged diction (word choice).

- Identify the words in the sentence which stand out to you and explain their impact on the reader.
- What is the expected emotional response of using the words?
- Is the diction effective? Why/why not?

Quotation with Page Number	Impact and Explanation

Scene Significance	
Significance of the opening scene <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the opening scene establish who the author is, the subject, and the tone of the memoir? 	
Significance of the closing scene <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the closing scene connect to the opening scene, title of the memoir, memoir's subject, and tone? 	

“My First Lifeline” by Maya Angelou

Directions: Annotate for structure, narrative, descriptive language, figurative language, sensory details and dialogue. Paragraphs are numbered for annotation and seminar purposes.

(1) For nearly a year, I sopped around the house, the Store, the school and the church, like an old biscuit, dirty and inedible. Then I met, or rather got to know, the lady who threw me my first life line.

(2) Mrs. Bertha Flowers was the aristocrat of Black Stamps. She had the grace of control to appear warm in the coldest weather, and on the Arkansas summer days it seemed she had a private breeze which swirled around, cooling her. She was thin without the taut look of wiry people, and her printed voile dresses and flowered hats were as right for her as denim overalls for a farmer. She was our side's answer to the richest white woman in town.

(3) Her skin was a rich black that would have peeled like a plum if snagged, but then no one would have thought of getting close enough to Mrs. Flowers to ruffle her dress, let alone snag her skin. She didn't encourage familiarity. She wore gloves too.

(4) I don't think I ever saw Mrs. Flowers laugh, but she smiled often. A slow widening of her thin black lips to show even, small white teeth, then the slow effortless closing. When she chose to smile on me, I always wanted to thank her. The action was so graceful and inclusively benign. She was one of the few gentlewomen I have ever known, and has remained throughout my life the measure of what a human being can be.

(5) Momma had a strange relationship with her. Most often when she passed on the road in front of the Store, she spoke to Momma in that soft yet carrying voice, "Good day. Mrs. Henderson." Momma responded with "How you, Sister Flowers?"

(6) Mrs. Flowers didn't belong to our church, nor was she Momma's familiar. Why on earth did she insist on calling her Sister Flowers? Shame made me want to hide my face. Mrs. Flowers deserved better than to be called Sister. Then, Momma left out the verb. Why not ask, "How are you, Mrs. Flowers?" With the unbalanced passion of the young, I hated her for showing her ignorance to Mrs. Flowers. It didn't occur to me for many years that they were as alike as sisters, separated only by formal education.

(7) Although I was upset, neither of the women was in the least shaken by what I thought an unceremonious greeting. Mrs. Flowers would continue her easy gait up the hill to her little bungalow, and Momma kept on shelling peas or doing whatever had brought her to the front porch.

(8) Occasionally, though, Mrs. Flowers would drift off the road and down to the Store and Momma would say to me, "Sister, you go on and play." As I left, I would hear the beginning of an intimate conversation. Momma persistently using the wrong verb, or none at all.

(9) "Brother and Sister Wilcox is sho'ly the meanest--" "Is," Momma? "Is?" Oh please, not "is" Momma, for two or more. But they talked, and from the side of the building where I waited for the ground to open up and swallow me, I heard the soft-voiced Mrs. Flowers and the textured voice of my grandmother merging and melting. They were interrupted from time to time by giggles that must have come from Mrs. Flowers (Momma never giggled in her life). Then she was gone.

(10) One summer afternoon, sweet-milk fresh in my memory, she stopped at the Store to buy provisions. Another Negro woman of her health and age would have expected to carry the paper sacks home in one hand, but Momma said, "Sister Flowers, I'll send Bailey up to your house with these things."

(11) She smiled that slow dragging smile, "Thank you, Mrs. Henderson. I'd prefer Marguerite, though." My name was beautiful when she said it. "I've been meaning to talk to her anyway." They gave each other age-group looks.

(12) Momma said, "Well, that's all right then, Sister, go and change your dress. You going to Sister Flower's."

(13) The chifforobe was a maze. What on earth did one put on to go to Mrs. Flowers' house? I knew I shouldn't put on a Sunday dress. It might be sacrilegious. Certainly not a house dress, since I was already wearing a fresh one. I chose a school dress, naturally. It was formal without suggesting that going to Mrs. Flowers' house was equivalent to attending church.

(14) I trusted myself back to the Store.

(15) "Now don't you look nice." I had chosen the right thing for once.

(16) "Mrs. Henderson, you make most of the children's clothes, don't you?"

(17) "Yes, ma'am. Sure do. Store bought clothes ain't hardly worth the thread it take to stitch them."

(18) "I'll say you do a lovely job, though, so neat. That dress looks professional."

(19) Momma was enjoying the seldom-received compliments. Since everyone we knew (except Mrs. flowers, of course) could sew competently, praise was rarely handed out for the commonly practiced craft.

(20) "I try, with the help of the Lord, Sister Flowers, to finish the inside just like I does the outside. Come here, Sister."

(21) I had buttoned up the collar and tied the belt, apron-like, in back. Momma told me to turn around. With one hand she pulled the strings and the belt fell free at both sides of my waist. Then her large hands were at my neck, opening the button loops. I was terrified. What was happening?

(22) "Take it off, Sister." She had her hands on the hem of the dress.

(23) "I don't need to see the inside, Mrs. Henderson. I can tell..." But the dress was over my head and my arms were stuck in the sleeves. Momma said, "That'll do. See here, Sister Flowers, I French-seams around the armholes." Through the cloth film, I saw the shadow approach. "That makes it last longer. Children these days would bust out of sheet-metal clothes. They so rough."

(24) "That is a very good job, Mrs. Henderson. You should be proud. You can put your dress back on, Marguerite."

(38) "I made tea cookies this morning. You see, I had planned to invite you for cookies and lemonade so we could have this little chat. The lemonade is in the ice-box."

(39) It followed that Mrs. Flowers would have ice on an ordinary day, when most families in our town bought ice late on Saturdays only a few times during the summer to be used in the wooden ice cream freezers.

(40) She took the bags from me and disappeared through the kitchen door. I looked around the room that I had never in my wildest fantasies imagined I would see. Brownd photographs leered or threatened from the walls and the white, freshly done curtains pushed against themselves and

against the wind. I wanted to gobble up the room entire and take it to Bailey, who would help me analyze and enjoy it.

(41) "Have a seat, Marguerite. Over there by the table." She carried a platter covered with a tea towel. Although she warned that she hadn't tried her hand at baking sweets for some time, I was certain that like everything else about her the cookies would be perfect.

(42) They were flat round wafers, slightly browned on the edges and butter-yellow in the center. With the cold lemonade they were sufficient for childhood's lifelong diet. Remembering my manners, I took nice little lady-like bites off the edges. She said she had made them expressly for me and that she had a few in the kitchen that I could take home to my brother. So I jammed one whole cake in my mouth and the rough crumbs scratched the insides of my jaws, and if I hadn't had to swallow, it would have been a dream come true.

(43) As I ate she began the first of what we later called "my lessons in living." She said that I must always be intolerant of ignorance but understanding of illiteracy. That some people, unable to go to school, were more educated and even more intelligent than college professors. She encouraged me to listen carefully to what country people called mother wit. That in those homely sayings was couched the collective wisdom of generations.

(44) When I finished the cookies she brushed off the table and brought a thick, small book from the bookcase. I had read *A Tale of Two Cities* and found it up to my standards as a romantic novel. She opened the first page and I heard poetry for the first time in my life.

(45) "It was the best of times and the worst of times..." Her voice slid in and curved down through and over the words. She was nearly singing. I wanted to look at the pages. Were they the same that I had read? Or were there notes, music, lined on the pages, as in a hymn book? Her sounds began cascading gently. I knew from listening to a thousand preachers that she was nearing the end of her reading and I hadn't really heard, heard to understand, a single word. "How do you like that?"

(46) It occurred to me that she expected a response. The sweet vanilla flavor was still on my tongue and her reading was a wonder to my ears. I had to speak.

(47) I said, "Yes ma'am." It was the least I could do, but it was the most also.

(48) "There's one more thing. Take this book of poems and memorize one for me. Next time you pay me a visit, I want you to recite.

(49) I have tried often to search behind the sophistication of years for the enchantment I so easily found in those gifts. The essence escapes but its aura remains. To be allowed, no, invited into the private lives of strangers, and to share their joys and fears, was a chance to exchange the Southern bitter wormwood for a cup of mead with Beowulf or a hot cup of tea and milk with Oliver Twist. When I said aloud, "It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done..." tears of love filled my eyes at my selflessness.

(50) On that first day, I ran down the hill and into the road (few cars ever came along it) and had the good sense to stop running before I reached the Store.

(51) I was liked, and what a difference it made. I was respected not as Mrs. Henderson's grandchild or Bailey's sister but for just being Marguerite Johnson.

(52) Childhood's logic never asks to be proved (all conclusions are absolute). I didn't question why Mrs. Flowers had singled me out for attention, nor did it occur to me that Momma might have

asked her to give me a little talking to. All I cared about was that she had made tea cookies for me and read to me from her favorite book. It was enough to prove that she liked me.