

Greetings future AP Language and Composition Students!

First, welcome to college! Congratulations on electing to take a college-level composition course! According to College Board, the organization that prepares and administers standardized tests that are used in college admission and placement, an AP Language and Composition course “requires students to become skilled readers of prose written in a variety of rhetorical contexts and skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes.” As such, the course is reading and writing intensive, which is why there is a **required** summer reading assignment. Summer reading is an important part of the AP English experience; current research indicates that summer reading programs “enhance and sustain student literacy behaviors over the break...” (www.NCTE.org). The required summer reading is intended to help keep your reading skills sharp and to further develop your reading practices.

For your summer reading assignment, you must obtain a hard copy of and then read *The Color of Water* by James McBride. In *The Color of Water*, McBride writes both his autobiography and a tribute to the life of his mother, Ruth McBride. This book offers an excellent introduction to nonfiction and style (the heart of an AP Language and Composition course). In fact, this was the book I read the summer before my freshman year at Butler University. It was required to be read by all entering freshman and because you are essentially entering college freshmen yourselves, you are also required to read and annotate this text over the summer!

What do I mean by annotate?

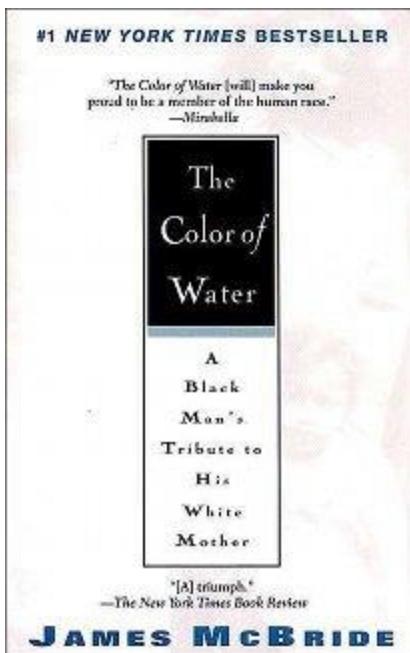
You are not merely reading the work. You are studying it. This is why you are required to take notes (actually in the book!) that will help you understand significant passages and ideas. In fact, I’ve chosen the significant passages you are required to annotate. There are five passages total and the starting and stopping points of those five passages are noted on the back side of this handout. The most important detail about annotation is that you must not summarize plot. College-level annotation requires you to determine and note the effect of significant style elements such as tone, diction, unusual sentence structure patterns (parallel structure, repetition, inverted sentences, etc), and notable figures of speech (juxtaposition, analogy, imagery, allusion, etc). You can also observe the author’s writing techniques that enhance or detract from the text. Please see the attached document for more information on how to annotate (this is a photocopy of a section from our class reader, *The Language of Composition*). There are also several other annotation resources on the summer reading webpage: <http://quakersread.weebly.com>. Do not underestimate the time it will take you to fully annotate five passages as each passage is multiple pages in length! Do not wait until the week before school starts to read the book and/or annotate the passages! Your annotated passages must be finished by the end of the first week of school.

Note: It is far easier to annotate if you have purchased your own copy of the book. It is \$9.00 (new) and \$3.00 (used) on amazon.com. If you obtain a copy from a library, please use post-it notes to annotate the pages.

In addition to the annotation assignment, you will also take a test over *The Color of Water*. This test will be a diagnostic test and will introduce you to the format of the AP Language and Composition exam (which you will take May 2019). This book will also lead to your first formal writing of the school year. While I am sure you will enjoy the book and the annotation process, please also remember to enjoy your summer! I look forward to making your first “college experience” a memorable one!

Meow,

Mrs. Knapp



The book to the left is the edition I used to determine the page numbers for each of the five passages listed below. Most students purchase this edition, which is why I used it to break down the page numbers. However, I have also noted the chapters and the beginning and ending phrases of the passages, so if you do not purchase this edition, you can still find the proper passages to annotate!

Passage #1: Chapter 2 (pages 5-9)

Begins: "When I was fourteen, my mother took up two new hobbies..."

Ends: "Matters involving race and identity she ignored."

Passage #2: Chapter 6 (pages 47-51)

Begins: "Rev. Owen's sermons started like a tiny choo-choo train..."

Ends: "Water doesn't have a color."

Passage #3: Chapter 10 (pages 90-94)

Begins: "Music arrived in my life around the time..."

Ends: "...zooming from room to room, my circuits blown."

Passage #4: Chapter 15 (pages 155-158)

Begins: "Well, the kids in my high school were excited and giggling..."

Ends: "...caught a Greyhound bus for New York the very next day."

Passage #5: Chapter 20 (pages 206-209)

Begins: "It was seven a.m. when I arrived in town..."

Ends: "His own wife was scared of him."