

**A.P. English Language  
Summer Work 2010  
Mr. Theobald**

This summer you are required to read four books and to keep two different journals to be submitted to class during the first week in the fall. One journal will be an **Observation Journal** and the other will be a **Reading Journal**, which will be based on each of the four books. Each journal should be separate, as their purposes are different. I strongly encourage you to read well beyond this list. The class, as well as the exam, requires great breadth in reading.

**The books that are required summer reading are:**

*Travels with Charley*- Steinbeck

*Homage to Catalonia*- Orwell

*Skeletons on the Zahara*- King

**Observation Journal:**

In an observation journal your goal is to stretch your power of observation as well as your ability to capture your thoughts in words. I will not read passages you want to keep secret!! Refer to the directions for keeping an observation journal.

**Keeping an Observation Journal:**

An observation journal is a place to record your thoughts, feelings, and observations about most anything you see. This is a chance for you to express your inner thoughts about your place in your life. Nature writers such as Aldo Leopold, John Muir, and Thoreau have given us wonderful examples of nature journals in which they record the beauty they observed in nature. They also included sketches showing the details of plants and landscapes and their close observations about life and their place in it. These writers used their journals as the basis for their books. You will use your Observation Journal as a place to record your thoughts, your observations, and a place to try out a new word or phrase or a sketch or two.

Choose a location that is quiet or best suited to writing. Write in your journal at least three times a week and DATE your entries. Spend at least 20 minutes writing non-stop. Your observations may be stream-of-consciousness or more organized. Feel free to draw what you see. Use this as an opportunity to find the word that best expresses your intended meaning.

Your journal should reflect your growing awareness of yourself and the things surrounding you. **Observe closely.** Clear your mind and record details of the weather, the sky, the temperature, the sounds, and the sights around you. Incorporate your own moods and feelings. **Use similes and metaphors** to describe what you see. **Personify nature.** Write as though you are writing a letter to a friend. Or consider writing in poetry instead of prose. Draw pictures to **illustrate your observations.** We will be reading excerpts from a variety of writers who are considered good because they have a close attention for the details in what they see. Look at your language carefully and stretch your powers of description.

Your complete Observation Journal will be due during the first week of class. An actual journal book can be purchased from the bookstore.

So how do you earn an 8? What makes a good journal?

- Details, details, details
- Observe what you see
- Allusions to literature, art, history, cinema, personal experience
- Own words
- Description: appealing to the five senses
- Pictures, photographs, sketches, graphs
- Quotations from something you are currently reading
- All entries completed

and neatness counts!

### **Reading Journal:**

You will access your reading journals in the fall when we write essays about the summer reading. We begin the year with discussions and writings about your summer reading, so keep this in mind as you maintain your notebook.

### **Keeping a Reading Journal**

Keeping a reading journal is similar to an observation journal. In both, one must be observant. In this journal you should place a great deal of value on the following:

1. Content: What is happening and why?
2. Literary devices: Such as conflict, metaphor, symbolism, tone, point of view, bias, and hyperbole to name a few.
3. Vocabulary: Keep a list of important vocabulary words with their definitions.
4. Theme: Is there a theme developing? What does it say?
5. Reactions: Keep an on-going list of reactions- feelings about what you read. What is “sparked along the way.
6. Date each entry and include chapters or page numbers.

### **Journal Rubric:**

- 8** Ready for publication!
- 7** All entries completed  
Sketches or photographs to support text are optional but add to the quality.  
Regular references to other authors and allusions to other works  
Regular use of literary devices such as simile, metaphor, personification  
Responses maintain a central focus and are well-developed  
Writing shows a command of syntax and language appropriate to the assignment  
A clear pattern of development is present from beginning to end
- 6** All entries completed  
Detailed observations  
Numerous sketches or photographs to support text  
Regular references to other authors and allusions to other works

Regular use of literary devices such as simile, metaphor, personification  
Responses maintain a generally central focus and are well-developed  
Writing shows a command of syntax and language appropriate to the assignment  
A general pattern of development is present from beginning to end

- 5** All entries completed  
Includes observations of nature  
Some sketches or photographs to support observations  
Some references to other authors and allusions to other works  
Some use of literary devices  
An organized response in clear language most of the time  
Generally appropriate vocabulary, avoiding oversimplifications, distortions, and repetitions  
Sentences generally correct grammatically, but errors may occur in complex structures  
Few errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling
- 4** Almost all entries completed  
Include observations of nature or a setting or situation  
Some sketches or photographs to support observations (optional)  
Some references to other authors and allusions to other works  
Some use of literary devices or technique  
An organized response in clear language most of the time  
Generally appropriate vocabulary, avoiding oversimplifications, distortions, and repetitions  
Sentences generally correct grammatically, but errors may occur in complex structures  
Few errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling
- 3** Some entries completed  
Cursory observations  
Few sketches or photographs to support observations  
Few references or allusions  
Few literary devices  
Sometimes incomplete or rudimentary development of ideas  
Oversimplified vocabulary  
A basic understanding of the structure of a sentence  
Reasonably accurate spelling
- 2** Some entries completed  
Cursory observations of the natural world  
Many repeated or underdeveloped ideas although occasionally some of the entry has some structure  
Occasional informal language  
Limited vocabulary  
Generally no signal words or phrases between paragraphs  
Weak, rudimentary syntax that lacks variety  
Some misspellings  
Lack of attention to observations of nature
- 1** Topics begin but lack development  
Few observations of the natural that are lacking in detail  
Many repetitions  
Informal language inappropriate to the assignment  
Misused words, limited vocabulary  
Tangled syntax  
Unclear expression

Frequent errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling

- Many missing entries  
Bad, bad, bad

(Adapted from Dr. Benson's CUNY rubric