

# AP Language & Composition Summer Reading 2025

In preparation for the genres, topics and expectations of AP Language & Composition, students enrolled in this course are required to complete a summer reading assignment. Please read this page closely to understand your responsibilities. The notes are to be written by hand, neatly, in the format presented below.

➤ Any questions? Feel free to email me: [jmawn@manasquan.k12.nj.us](mailto:jmawn@manasquan.k12.nj.us)

## • **Required reading:** *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls

Enjoy this award-winning memoir that tells the story of a family's ups and downs and one girl's journey overcoming obstacles on the road to success. Yes, there are some bad words and difficult moments in Jeannette's story, but as she explained in 2014: "Sometimes you have to walk through the muck to get to the message." And the message is undoubtedly a positive one to begin the school year.

## • **Required writing:** *Reading Notes, 5 pages, handwritten, as described below.*

- Read all directions before you start! Follow directions carefully and complete thoroughly. **5 sets total / 5 pages.**
- **Bring your handwritten notes to class on the first day in September.**

### *The Glass Castle* / Summer Reading Notes

**Task:** Write your own notes while reading Jeannette Walls' bestselling memoir *The Glass Castle*. Read first and foremost for pleasure; it's an amazing book filled with jaw-dropping experiences that are sometimes humorous, sometimes horrifying, and sometimes heartbreaking. Simply enjoy! But also pause to write notes, preferably soon after completing each part of the reading.

**Purpose:** To become a better reader by developing good reading habits. The notes are not meant to be very difficult or time consuming, but simple and effective. Upon finishing a section take 5-10 minutes to jot down notes (#1-3 front of page), and another 10-15 minutes to write the letter (#4 back of page). It's not a long time, but will help you to process the reading, and to create your own record of the reading.

**Directions:** Follow the requirements below. Read carefully, to ensure you meet all requirements. Examples are provided for your understanding. Skip one or two lines between each requirement so the page is neat and you can add future class discussion ideas as well. **Each set of notes must be handwritten, and on a separate page (front/back).**

- SET ONE: PAGE 3-66 (Part I: A Woman on the Street & Part II: The Desert – 1<sup>st</sup> half)
- SET TWO: PAGE 67-125 (Part II: The Desert-2<sup>nd</sup> half)
- SET THREE: PAGE 129-198 (Part III: Welch – 1st half)
- SET FOUR: PAGE 199-241 (Part III: Welch – 2<sup>nd</sup> half)
- SET FIVE: PAGE 245-288 (Part IV: New York City & Part V: Thanksgiving)

**Grade:** You will earn a project grade for your notes, the first grade of the semester. As you can see above, **you will turn in 5 sets of notes, written front and back, so 5 pages total.** You will use these notes to study for the first test of the year (in September).

**\*\*Take the time** to do a GREAT job!

## **Reading Notes Requirement (all notes must be handwritten; read directions carefully)**

1. **Record date, page numbers and create an original title (Example:** 7/30: page 3-66 "Hot Dogs, Hospitals and Homelessness"). Show some cleverness in the title you create. Use alliteration, a memorable image, a metaphor, a rhetorical question... or whatever other means you think is catchy. The title must somehow capture the action of that section of reading, though.

2. **Brainstorm and list 25-30 words, images, phrases, short quotes, names etc.** that spark your memory and thinking about the reading (**Example:** Park Ave, “Just tell the truth”, hot dogs, scabs, skedaddle, Grandma Smith, Blue Goose, Battle Mountain, Mary Charlene etc.) There’s no right or wrong: each one you list is a detail that should jog your memory of a scene from the reading, or convey your knowledge of key characters and places. List straight down the page and number each one ( or make 2 columns straight down and number). You should definitely include names of new characters when they are introduced as well as names of places the action shifts to.
3. **List unfamiliar vocabulary** — there are not too many challenging vocabulary words in *The Glass Castle*, but jot down words you don’t know when you encounter them. No need to look them up, unless you need to in order to understand the reading. Simply listing them will help to build your vocab, and force you to decipher the word in context.
4. **Flip page over — write a letter to Jeannette** expressing your emotions based on that section of reading (anger? sympathy? confusion? admiration? humor?). Hint: close your eyes after reading and visualize scenes — ask yourself what do I see? What do I feel? Write about it. No worries. Just be honest.

**\*\*\*The letter must be a full side of a page.** Write in your own voice; refer specifically to what other characters have done to her or with her, good or bad, in that section of reading. . . . in other words, what did you read that caused you to feel those emotions? If you feel sorry for Jeannette, tell her and explain why. If you are puzzled by another character’s treatment of Jeannette, express your confusion. If you feel angry, vent your anger! Regardless of the emotion, support with specific references to scenes and various characters’ actions, decisions, words, thoughts, or anything else that spur your emotion. **Most importantly, be specific; you must refer directly to Rex or RoseMary (her parents) or to her siblings and to random others she meets throughout her childhood and adolescence.**

**\*\*\*Incorporate one direct quote** from the section of reading into the letter you write. Be sure to cite it too (page number). Consider introducing the quote like this: Jeannette, when you said “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( ) or Jeannette, as you thought about “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( ). The quote you choose should relate to the reason for the emotion which has prompted the letter.

**\*\*\*SUGGESTION: If you find it difficult to write a full page, consider:** warning Jeannette, offering advice to Jeannette, criticizing others to Jeannette, praising or complimenting Jeannette, describing a shared experience to Jeannette. . . the challenge (and requirement) is to write a full side of page. Writing is thinking! Push yourself!

**(See sample front / back (notes / letter in the box below)**

**Ultimately, each set of notes should be formatted as in the model below:**

(Sample Notes: Front of page)	(Sample Notes: back of page)
<p>1. 7/30 page 3-66 “ Hot Dogs, Hospitals and Homelessness”</p> <p>2. <b>Names, Words, Terms, Images:</b> Park Ave, “Just tell the truth”, Picasso, hot dogs, scabs, skedaddle, Grandma Smith, Blue Goose, Battle Mountain, Mexican Girls, Mary Charlene (remember you need 25-30)</p> <p>3. <b>Vocab:</b> diminutive, flophouse, blasphemy, geodes</p>	<p>4. Dear Jeannette,</p> <p>I can’t believe how you have endured so much difficulty throughout your childhood. You are only 6 years old and already you have set yourself on fire, watched your cat be thrown out the window of a moving car, and lived in random small towns throughout California, Nevada and Arizona. I’ve only lived in New Jersey! Jeannette, I think your parents are kind of crazy, even though they love you. At least I think they love you. They seem fun and they do some cool things with you like picking out stars, dancing in thunderstorms and searching for gold in the desert. But be careful Jeannette. Despite their fun side, they also don’t watch you too closely. Like you said about the thunderstorm: “Some parents worried that their kids might get hit by lightning, but Mom and Dad never did...” (22). You are so young and innocent, and you need your parents to guide you, but they seem kind of selfish and don’t always give that guidance. So you’ll have to watch out for yourself... (continue and write full page)</p> <p>Sincerely, _____(your name)</p>