

## Summer Reading Assignment 2020 – 11<sup>th</sup> AP Language/American Literature

**Due Date:** Monday, August 3, 2020 (first day of school)

You will need to obtain a physical copy of *Thank You for Arguing* (Jay Heinrichs) and *Just Mercy* (Bryan Stevenson) in order to complete this assignment.

### Your assignment:

- I. Read *Thank You for Arguing* first, paying particular attention to the tenets of argumentation. Students are only required to read chapters 1—13 over the summer.
- II. Read *Just Mercy* and **choose one** of the following prompts in which to respond:

**Prompt #1:** Bryan Stevenson contends, “Each of us is more than the worst thing we’ve ever done.” Read the following excerpt from Stevenson’s book *Just Mercy*.

“Proximity has taught me some basic and humbling truths, including this vital lesson: Each of us is more than the worst thing we’ve ever done. My work with the poor and the incarcerated has persuaded me that the opposite of poverty is not wealth; the opposite of poverty is justice. Finally, I’ve come to believe that the true measure of our commitment to justice, the character of our society, our commitment to the rule of law, fairness, and equality cannot be measured by how we treat the rich, the powerful, the privileged, and the respected among us. The true measure of our character is how we treat the poor, the disfavored, the accused, the incarcerated, and the condemned.”

Then in a well-written typed essay of no less than 1 ½ pages (MLA format), develop a position that supports, refutes, or qualifies Stevenson’s claim, “Each of us is more than the worst thing we’ve ever done.” Use appropriate evidence from your reading, experience, or observations to support your argument. Avoid merely summarizing the book.

**Prompt #2:** Bryan Stevenson contends, “We are all broken by something.” Read the following excerpt from Stevenson’s book *Just Mercy*.

“We are all broken by something. We have all hurt someone and have been hurt. We all share the condition of brokenness even if our brokenness is not equivalent. I desperately wanted mercy for Jimmy Dill and would have done anything to create justice for him, but I couldn’t pretend that his struggle was disconnected from my own. The ways in which I have been hurt—and have hurt others—are different from the ways Jimmy Dill suffered and caused suffering. But our shared brokenness connected us.”

Then in a well-written typed essay of no less than 1 ½ pages (MLA format), develop a position that supports, refutes, or qualifies Stevenson’s claim about the universal nature of brokenness. Use appropriate evidence from your reading, experience, or observations to support your argument. Avoid merely summarizing the book.

---

**Question:** What does it mean to support, refute or qualify?

Support suggest that you agree with the position. When you challenge a position, you essentially disagree with it and need to explain why the logic is wrong and why your position is correct. To qualify

a position is to attempt to truly understand all sides of the issue and see that both sides may have some valid points. However, you still need to take a definite stand, no matter what side you support.

**Question:** What does it mean to offer evidence from your observations, experience or reading? Use your knowledge of any specialized subject such as

- History
- Current events
- Science
- Technology
- Music
- Sports
- Human behavior

**Question:** Where should you put the counterargument? The counterargument can appear anywhere in the essay, but it most commonly appears

- as part of your introduction—before you propose your thesis—where the existence of a different view is the motive for your essay, the reason it needs writing;
- as a section or paragraph just after your introduction, in which you lay out the expected reaction or standard position before turning away to develop your own;
- as a quick move within the paragraph just before the conclusion of your essay, in which you imagine what someone might object to what you have argued.

### Things to consider

1.) Dissect and comprehend the prompt.

- Determine **your position**.
- Consider the **variety of evidence to support** your position.
  - When choosing a variety of kinds/types of evidence as support consider ways to articulate how the **different pieces fit together**. Keep in mind your audience—**connecting the variety of evidence back to what the prompt** is asking will help your audience understand your position and help your essay feel full and complete, rather than directionless and disjointed.

**Note:** paraphrasing the claim in various ways is not a means of supporting the claim.

2.) Explain **how** the evidence you choose illustrates **why your claim is valid**.

- What many lower-level essays do is **list examples and then assert that the example supports the claim**. “Enter into the conversation” by explaining how the example illustrates the truth of the claim.
- **Control the argument** in a sophisticated, insightful manner.
- Demonstrate **command and control of writing via your syntax and diction** choices.
- **Transition** from one piece of evidence to the next.

**You are expected to bring the two texts and typed assignment with the rubric to class on the first day of school.** \*Summer reading assignments must be completed individually and without the use of online sources or

study aides. Students who commit an infraction of the Honor Code will receive a grade of zero, an N in conduct for this semester in AP Language/American Literature, and an administrative referral.\*

### Scoring Criteria for Question 3: Argument

		0 points	1 point			
<b>THESIS</b>	For any of the following:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no defensible thesis.</li> <li>The intended thesis only restates the prompt.</li> <li>The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim.</li> <li>There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt</li> </ul>	Responds to the prompt with a <b>defensible thesis</b> that presents a defensible position.			
	<i>Responses that do not earn this point:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only restate the prompt.</li> <li>Do not take a position, or the position is vague and must be inferred.</li> <li>State an obvious fact rather than a making a claim that requires a defense.</li> </ul>	<i>Responses that earn this point:</i> Respond to the prompt rather than restate or rephrase the prompt, and the thesis clearly takes a position rather than just stating there are pros/cons.			
	Additional Notes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The thesis can be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity.</li> <li>The thesis may appear anywhere within the response.</li> <li>The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.</li> </ul>				
<b>EVIDENCE AND COMMENTARY</b>	<b>0 points</b>	<b>1 point</b>	<b>2 points</b>	<b>3 points</b>	<b>4 points</b>	
	Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	<b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides evidence that is mostly general. <b>AND</b> <b>COMMENTARY:</b> Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the argument.	<b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides some specific and relevant evidence. <b>AND</b> <b>COMMENTARY:</b> Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student's argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	<b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. <b>AND</b> <b>COMMENTARY:</b> Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.	<b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. <b>AND</b> <b>COMMENTARY:</b> Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are incoherent or do not address the prompt.</li> <li>May be just opinion with no evidence or evidence that is irrelevant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tend to focus on summary of evidence rather than specific details.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities.</li> <li>May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don't strengthen the argument.</li> <li>May make one point well, but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>Focus on the importance of specific details to build an argument.</li> <li>Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims.</li> <li>Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>Focus on the importance of specific details to build an argument.</li> <li>Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.</li> </ul>	
Additional Notes: Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.						
<b>SOPHISTICATION</b>	<b>0 points</b>	<b>1 point</b>				
	Does not meet the criteria for 1 point.	Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.				
	Responses that do not earn this point:	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attempt to contextualize their argument, but such attempts consist of predominantly sweeping generalizations ("In a world where..." OR "Since the beginning of time...")</li> <li>Only hint or suggest other arguments ("While some may argue that..." OR "Some people say...")</li> <li>Use complicated or complex sentences or language that are ineffective in that they do not enhance the argument</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Crafting a nuanced argument by consistently identifying and exploring complexities or tensions.</li> <li>2. Articulating the implications or limitations of an argument (either the student's argument or an argument related to the prompt) by situating it within a broader context.</li> <li>3. Making effective rhetorical choices that consistently strengthen the force and impact of the student's argument.</li> <li>4. Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive throughout the student's response.</li> </ol>				

