

AP English Language and Composition Summer Reading

AP English Language and Composition students will read **both** *Into the Wild* and *The Great Gatsby* and complete the *assignment that corresponds to each.

***Into the Wild*- Jon Krakauer**

In April 1992 a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. His name was Christopher Johnson McCandless. He had given \$25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter. How McCandless came to die is the unforgettable story of *Into the Wild*.

***The Great Gatsby*- F. Scott Fitzgerald**

The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald's third book, stands as the supreme achievement of his career. This exemplary novel of the Jazz Age has been acclaimed by generations of readers. The story of the fabulously wealthy Jay Gatsby and his love for the beautiful Daisy Buchanan, of lavish parties on Long Island at a time when *The New York Times* noted "gin was the national drink and sex the national obsession," it is an exquisitely crafted tale of America in the 1920s.

***Assignments on the next page**

AP English Language and Composition Summer Reading Assignment

Carefully read each of the novels. Although I encourage you to annotate and mark them up as a means of remembering what you read (especially if you are reading over the summer and planning to take the course in the spring), I will not be grading annotations. Each book will have an accompanying assignment, detailed below, due on the first day of class. You will also be quizzed on the content of each book. In addition to this, we will spend the first three weeks of the semester using these two books as a springboard for conversations about reading and writing.

***The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald (1925)**

The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald's third book, stands as the supreme achievement of his career. This exemplary novel of the Jazz Age has been acclaimed by generations of readers. The story of the fabulously wealthy Jay Gatsby and his love for the beautiful Daisy Buchanan, of lavish parties on Long Island at a time when *The New York Times* noted "gin was the national drink and sex the national obsession," it is an exquisitely crafted tale of America in the 1920s.

Assignment: *The Great Gatsby* "Altered Book" Poem:

F. Scott Fitzgerald painstakingly revised earlier drafts of *The Great Gatsby* by making subtle changes to his choice of **diction** (words) and phrases. According to literary critic Kenneth Eble, these "small changes...remind us of how Fitzgerald's highly polished **style** was achieved."

Earlier draft	Revision
Shadow	Silhouette
Gone	Vanished
Soiled	Spotted
"fairy blue"	"the blue honey" of the Mediterranean
Said	Snapped
Excitedly	Cried ecstatically
Replied	Looked at me absently

What to do: Choose one page of the novel that you find to be particularly beautifully phrased. Photocopy this page. Then circle the words and/or phrases you find most striking. "Black out" or color in the rest of the page, so that you are left with a kind of visual poem using the remaining words. Bring this "altered book" poem with you to the first day of class. To get a clearer idea of this assignment and garner inspiration, visit <http://www.logolia.com/alteredbooks/> to see examples of what this might look like.

We will use these to begin a discussion of **diction** and **style**.

***Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer (1996)**

In April 1992 a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. His name was Christopher Johnson McCandless. He had given \$25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter. How McCandless came to die is the unforgettable story of *Into the Wild*.

Assignment: *Into the Wild* "One-Pager":

1. All work must be only on one side of a piece of paper.
2. Your first and last name must be clearly displayed
3. Start with a border that reflects one of the themes of the book. (This can include words, pictures, symbols, or even quotes)
4. Using text as a starting point, write your reactions or connections to Chris and his adventure. Be sure to include your analysis and AT LEAST ONE quote from the book. Remember, you must cite your quote with the page number, and explain its relevance.
5. Draw a visual image. This could be a character, or a moment from a scene. You may also choose to draw symbols that convey an idea expressed in the book.
6. Draw a word cluster around your image. Use these words you highlight the importance of your chosen image. The word cluster may also artistically symbolize the subject matter.
7. Write a poem about *Into the Wild*, a character, or a theme. If this is particularly challenging you may choose to compose an acrostic poem.
8. Personally connect to the book with an "I believe" statement. This could be anything you believe after you have finished reading *Into the Wild*.
9. Create and answer two questions about the book. Try to create and evaluate rather than remember and understand.
10. Be colorful and neat. Your entire page should be filled with these elements. If you have more room, you may choose to repeat any of the previous. No space should be left blank, and nothing should be left in pencil.

AP English Language & Composition:

Beginning of Semester Agenda

Please see the agenda to get an understanding of the importance of being knowledgeable about these books:

Week	Topic	Reading	Exercises
1	Intro to the Course / Expectations for Reading	Syllabus <i>The Great Gatsby</i> “Interrogating Texts: 6 Habits to Develop in Your First Year at Harvard” “Why Gatsby Matters” by Bob Batchelor	Write 6-word Memoirs Summer Reading Projects / Quizzes Read and discuss course goals / syllabus Read and discuss “Why Gatsby Matters” In-class writing: Describe the part of the novel most personally meaningful to you and why.
2	Class Discussion	“I Take Your Point”: Entering Class Discussions “Film Captures Young Man’s Journey Into the Wild” NPR audio “Socratic Seminar” Handout Excerpt from “Self-Reliance” by Ralph Waldo Emerson	Discuss the Goals and Qualities of a Good Discussion Listen to and Note Points of Discussion in NPR discussion of Into the Wild Watch and Discuss an excerpt of the film version of Into the Wild Read the excerpt from “Self-Reliance” and examine how it relates to Chris McCandless. Work in a Small Group to Create Discussion Questions for Into the Wild; then discuss them
3	Writing a Comparison/Contrast Essay	“Writing a Compare/Contrast Essay” <i>The Great Gatsby</i> <i>Into the Wild</i>	Compare and contrast Jay Gatsby from F. Scott Fitzgerald’s novel <i>The Great Gatsby</i> and Alexander Superchamp from Jon Krakauer’s book <i>Into the Wild</i> . In a well-written essay, take a position on which man most successfully reinvents himself and what can be learned from each approach to identity. Use appropriate textual evidence from both books, supported with commentary and elaboration to make your argument convincing.