

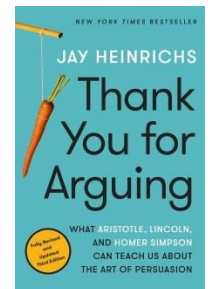
Greetings, Class of 2021!

Wow, it's hard to believe that next year you will be taking your first "real" AP English class. I applaud you for accepting the challenge of a more rigorous course. Next year will be like no other, not just because it's your first official year of AP English, but because it is a year full of nonfiction and argumentation. For much of the year, you will see a focus on the author's argument in fiction or even a departure from traditional fiction all together. The type of writing and thinking that I will challenge you to do is the type that will transcend any English class and better prepare you for college and beyond. My goal is to make you analytical readers who scrutinize, probe, and question texts; more polished writers who articulate with insight and flare; and, most importantly, global citizens who can critically think in almost any situation. Yes, next year should be a year of not only challenges but lifelong experiences.



In order to be prepared for the year, I am asking you to do a few things over the summer and throughout the year. First, read, read, read. Reading is a skill, and with any skill the only way to get better is to continually practice. Just like you practice an instrument or sport, I encourage you to "practice" reading and encourage you to read what you enjoy. Typically speaking, good readers are good writers. Secondly, read editorial writing. As we will focus on argumentation, editorials are a good source to see argumentation strategies at work. My suggestion is to choose an editorial writer, and read at least one editorial per week. Note: we will do an assignment at the beginning of the year with editorials, so this will help you get ahead. Finally, watch the news. Part of our class will require you to come up with examples to support your argument. The more you know about the world - past and present- and how one action affects another, the more insightful and intricate your discussion could be.

Now, the summer reading. Yes, summer reading does still exist; it did not die a horrible, fiery death. Although many may think that the goal is to make your summer miserable or to cause students to opt out or (my favorite) to lower first six weeks grades, the real goal of the summer reading assignment is to keep academic reading going and to jump start the school year. This year you are to read *Thank You for Arguing* by Jay Heinrichs (second or third edition). *TYFA* provides you with a variety of argumentative "tools" so that you can make the best rhetorical choices when you write (and recognize these choices when you read/hear others' works). This is a nonfiction, didactic text, so you should not be looking for examples of literary devices, character development, or an insightful plot. Rather as you read, annotate looking for concepts, elements, ideas that help you understand what a written argument is and how a person successfully argues. Although I do want you to annotate, please don't get bogged down in the annotations. Read to gain knowledge, and annotate to make this a resource. The first week of school you will be assigned a speech to write demonstrating your understanding of the skills this book discusses. This assignment will be due September 3/4.



A few last notes: 1) Some of the books we will read (or that you will select from) include Brave New World by Aldous Huxley and/or 1984 by George Orwell, The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck and/or The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot, The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne, and The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald. You will often have a choice in selections and will be given more instructions once school starts. *Parents, please note that some of the novels we study may have mature and/or controversial subjects or themes.* 2) We will continue to use the Knowsys vocabulary program. Remember that these cards can be obtained from Amazon; we will talk about other sources once school starts.

If you have questions about the summer assignment or the class, feel free to email me at ptracy@aisd.net. You may also sign up for Remind using the class code tracy132; I will use this system for periodic updates.

Have a fun summer! I'm looking forward to a great year with you guys!

Mrs. Tracy