

Maranatha Christian Academy  
Summer Reading 2026 (AP Language, entering grades 11-12)

Welcome to AP Language and Composition! Overall, this class analyzes the use of language to effectively persuade. AP Language is primarily designed to focus on nonfiction texts and rhetorical awareness. While your English class training in the past has revolved largely around the *literary* techniques within works of *fiction*, this course delves into real-life accounts of political, social, psychological, and economic occurrences to analyze the *rhetorical* techniques used. For the duration of next school year, you will be continually reading and writing until mid-May 2027 (at which time the AP Language and Composition exam will be taken). Because of this, this class requires that you read (and complete an assignment for) a book over the summer. If you have questions about the class or the summer reading assignment, the best way to reach me is through email: [julie.raines@mcamustangs.org](mailto:julie.raines@mcamustangs.org).

- I. This summer you will be reading *Outliers: The Story of Success* by Malcom Gladwell. This book has been a #1 national bestseller and has not left the top nonfiction books list since its publication in 2008.
  
- II. As you read, you will maintain reading logs to demonstrate critical analysis. This assignment is intended to get you in the practice of (1) understanding an author's specific audience(s) and purpose(s), (2) identifying and explaining HOW an author achieves (or falls short of achieving) their intended purpose(s), and (3) identifying the piece's potential or literal effects upon our society and/or a global community and culture. See below for specific guidelines for your reading logs.
  
- III. This assignment will be due at the beginning of class on the second day of class. (Be prepared for an in-class discussion on this day as well, during which you will likely be discussing Christian worldview.)

ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES:

For all responses, you MUST use complete sentences and MLA format (Times New Roman, 12pt. font, double spacing...). When citing in-text citations, MLA format suffices. Refresher: (Gladwell page#), ex. (Gladwell 34).

- **Part I:** Identify and explain Gladwell’s overarching argument (the purpose) in *Outliers: A Story of Success*. **(4 points)**
  - Postscript/ Side Note: For my lovely, maybe-too-smart-for-your-own-good, future students, who love to find loopholes in educational practices, please be more elaborate than “a story of success” or “how success works.” (A two or three sentence explanation will suffice.)
  
- **Part II:** For each chapter (including the introduction and epilogue- there are eleven in total), analyze a supporting argument that builds on Gladwell’s overarching argument. Each response for Part II (eleven in total) should be around 150 words. **(8 points each—88 points total)**
  - Explain WHAT the supporting argument entails.
  - Back your identification and explanation with a direct quote (textual support).
  - Elaborate on why the textual support you selected exemplifies the supporting argument.
  - Explain why you agree or disagree with the supporting argument and/or its pairing with the overarching argument in the text.
  
- **Part III:** Throughout the entire text, brainstorm two critical questions regarding the reasoning and display of information within *Outliers: A Story of Success*. Pretend that you are the teacher (like one of those super intense, impossibly intellectual teachers) and you are writing two extended response or discussion questions for your students regarding the text. What would those two questions be? **(4 points each—8 points total)**