

POSNACK

S C H O O L

Seminar AP 2020 - 2021 Summer Assignment

This assignment is due the first day of classes: remember, in AP, there is NO EXCUSE for late work.

Text: Gladwell, Malcolm. *Outliers*. Penguin, 2009

You will be reading the nonfiction text, *The Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell (Available digitally and in print at local booksellers (i.e. Barnes and Noble, Amazon), as well as the public libraries.)

****What is an outlier?:**

Outlier is a scientific term to describe things or phenomena that lie outside normal experience. In the summer, in Paris, we expect most days to be somewhere between warm and very hot. But imagine if you had a day in the middle of August where the temperature fell below freezing. That day would be outlier. And while we have a very good understanding of why summer days in Paris are warm or hot, we know a good deal less about why a summer day in Paris might be freezing cold. In this book I'm interested in people who are outliers--in men and women who, for one reason or another, are so accomplished and so extraordinary and so outside of ordinary experience that they are as puzzling to the rest of us as a cold day in August.

-Malcolm Gladwell

Assignment: Do a close reading of the text. A close reading means to keep a pencil or pen in your hand as you read and make notes in the margins, underline confusing and/or favorite passages, highlight interesting information, and comment on significant language. Thorough annotations are expected, and they will be checked the first day of class. Annotations can be written in the book, on Post-It Notes stuck on pages, or on separate paper labeled with page numbers that correspond to the book.

Part 1: Close Read. As you read, concentrate on Gladwell's unique definition of success. Notice how he uniquely defines and presents this abstract concept through his creative chapter titles, research, personal stories, and observations.

Part 2: Guided Reading Questions. Use the attached questions to guide you through the entire novel, and be prepared to discuss each question in a Socratic forum. You will need to come to the seminar on the first day of class with your answers typed out for the questions for discussion. Your responses must be original, meaning in your own words. They will be scanned into turnitin.com, a plagiarism checker.

Part 3: Argumentative Essay. Write an argumentative essay (roughly 2000 words, 12 pt, Times New Roman, one and half spaced). Your essay will be used to assess your writing and ability to synthesize reading material. This will be due the **FIRST** day of class.

GUIDED READING QUESTIONS

****Introduction "The Roseto Mystery":**

1. What is the Roseto Mystery? What overarching idea is Gladwell establishing in his introduction?

****Chapter One "The Matthew Effect":**

2. Explain the author's viewpoint regarding "The Story of Success." Are personal qualities the sole reason one becomes an outlier?

3. What is the consequence of "prematurely writing people off as failures"?

****Chapter Two "The 10,000-Hour Rule":**

4. Explain the 10,000-Hour Rule.

5. Consider the following: "Practice isn't the thing you do once you're good. It's the thing you do that makes you good." Explain how this philosophy was at work for Bill Joy, The Beatles, and Bill Gates.

****Chapter Three "The Trouble with Geniuses, Part 1":**

6. Describe the difference between 'divergence testing' and 'convergence testing'. Is one more significant than the other?
7. Gladwell states that communities and companies in American society "are convinced that those at the very top of the IQ scale have the greatest potential." After reading the chapter, explain why you either agree or disagree with this statement.

****Chapter Four "The Trouble with Geniuses, Part 2":**

8. Compare and contrast Langan and Oppenheimer.
9. What is the difference between "concerted cultivation" and "accomplishment of natural growth"?

****Chapter Five "The Three Lessons of Joe Flom":**

10. Explain Gladwell's statement as it relates to Joe Flom: "Buried in that setback was a golden opportunity."
11. Consider the following quote: "Hard work is a prison sentence only if it does not have meaning." Explain how this quote relates to the chapter.

****Chapter Six "Harlan, Kentucky":**

12. Describe the "culture of honor" that exists in the Appalachian Mountains.
13. What are the "cultural legacies" as described in this chapter? Why are they significant to understand when dealing with people?

****Chapter Seven "The Ethnic Theory of Plane Crashes":**

14. Describe the significance of the "willingness to change" as it relates to Korean Air.
15. What is Gladwell explaining about the importance of communication?

****Chapter Eight "Rice Paddies and Math Tests":**

16. After reading this section of the book, have your opinions changed about math classes and math ability? Explain why or why not. 16. Describe the connection between the "10,000-Hour Rule" and the wet-rice farmers in Asia.

****Chapter Nine "Marita's Bargain":**

17. Describe the significance of summer vacation as it relates to different groups of students. Why is this significant?
18. Gladwell states "success follows a predictable course." How does this quote apply to Marita? How does this apply to you?

****Epilogue "A Jamaican Story":**

19. What does Gladwell mean when he states, "The outlier in the end is not an outlier at all."
20. Explain what Gladwell means when he states, "That is the story of my mother's path to success - and it isn't true."

Argumentative Essay

In his novel, *Outliers*, Gladwell's claims that "if you work hard enough and assert yourself, and use your mind and imagination, you can shape the world to your desires" (Gladwell 151).

Prompt: Compose a coherent, convincing and well-written argument on the achievement of success that either defends, challenges, or qualifies Gladwell's assertion.

- I. Present your ideas clearly and with organization following APA format. (See purdueowl.com for APA guidelines, you can also use your [Bedford Researcher](#)).
- II. Use facts, examples, personal experience, and connections from your reading to support your claim (do you or don't you agree with Gladwell's assertion?). I am challenging you to think deeply about your readings and apply them to a bigger and personal idea.
- III. Include evidence from other scholarly sources in your argument. Be sure to make specific connections to Gladwell and any other sources you may include in your argument. Cite all sources, including Gladwell, in APA format.

Argumentative Essay Rubric

Row	Proficiency	No points earned for...	Points earned for...	Points (Max)	
1	UNDERSTAND AND ANALYZE CONTEXT	The response does not incorporate any of the stimulus material, or, at most, it is mentioned in only one sentence. OR The response includes a discussion of at least one of the stimulus materials; however, it does not contribute to the argument.	The response demonstrates the relevance of at least one of the stimulus materials to the argument by integrating it as part of the response e.g., as providing relevant context for the research question, or as evidence to support relevant claims. 5 Pts	5	
2	UNDERSTAND AND ANALYZE CONTEXT	The response provides no context. OR The response makes simplistic references to or general statements about the context of the research question.	The response explains the significance or importance of the research question by situating it within a larger context. 5 Pts	5	
3	UNDERSTAND AND ANALYZE PERSPECTIVE	The response provides only a single perspective. OR The response identifies and offers opinions or unsubstantiated statements about different perspectives that may be overly simplified.	The response describes multiple perspectives and identifies some relevant similarities or differences between them. 6 Pts	The response evaluates multiple perspectives (and synthesizes them) by drawing relevant connections between them, considering objections, implications, and limitations. 9 Pts	9
4	ESTABLISH ARGUMENT	The response provides only unsubstantiated opinions or claims. OR The response summarizes information (no argument). The response employs inadequate reasoning due to minimal connections between claims and evidence.	The argument presents a claim with some flaws in reasoning. The response is logically organized, but the reasoning may be faulty or underdeveloped. OR The response may be well-reasoned but illogical in its organization. The conclusion may be only partially related to the research question or thesis. 8 Pts	The response is a clear and convincing argument. The response is logically organized and well-reasoned by connecting claims and evidence, leading to a plausible, well-aligned conclusion. 12 Pts	12
5	SELECT AND USE EVIDENCE	Any evidence presented in the response is predominantly irrelevant and/or lacks credibility.	The response includes mostly relevant and credible evidence. 6 Pts	The response includes relevant, credible and sufficient evidence to support its argument. 9 Pts	9
6	APPLY CONVENTIONS (CITATION)	The response is missing a bibliography/ works cited. OR The response is largely missing in-text citations/ footnotes.	The response attributes or cites sources used through the use of in-text citations or footnotes, but not always accurately. The bibliography or works cited references sources using a generally consistent style with some errors. 3 Pts	The response attributes, accurately cites and integrates the sources used through the use of in-text citations or footnotes. The bibliography or works cited accurately references sources using a consistent style. 5 Pts	5
7	APPLY CONVENTIONS (GRAMMAR AND STYLE)	The response has many grammatical flaws, is difficult to understand, or is written in a style inappropriate for an academic audience.	The response is mostly clear but may contain some flaws in grammar or a few instances of a style inappropriate for an academic audience. 2 Pts	The response creates variety, emphasis, and interest to the reader through the use of effective sentences and precision of word choice. The written style is consistently appropriate for an academic audience, although the response may have a few errors in grammar and style. 3 Pts	3