

Advanced Placement Government (AP Political Science)

Summer Reading 2016

Welcome to AP Government! This summer assignment will familiarize you with elements of the judicial branch, specifically the Supreme Court. We will be reading Jeffrey Toobin's *The Oath* (ISBN: 978-0-307-39071-4) this summer.

First, you will be responsible for annotating your copy of *The Oath*. Rather than having you type up your analysis, we are looking forward to reading your conversation with the text; you will be handing in your book. We are expecting to see annotations on pretty much every page; this is your chance to think deeply and to make your thinking visible to us. Specifically, we are asking you to annotate the following:

- Concrete, factual understanding
 - Key vocabulary
 - Facts about the cases (important background, legal questions, holding, and rationale)
- Your analysis
 - Actively annotate your impressions of and reactions to the text. What is unclear? What is surprising? What is interesting? What would you like to know more about? Please explain your thoughts in your annotations--we are looking for significantly more than "wow!"
- Thematic questions
 - How democratic is the United States and how democratic should it be? Note places where democracy is potentially being compromised.
 - Look out for judicial philosophy: original intent v. "living" constitution. In what ways do different justices embody different philosophies? Why does this matter?
 - In what ways does politics influence the Supreme Court?
 - Note the tension between elected officials and the Court. How does this shape our political dialogue?

Next, identify and cite (page #), three key quotes that are essential to understanding the book. Briefly, but specifically, explain the significance of each quote. Why did you choose each quote? (This should be typed and will be handed in.)

Finally, please prepare eight thoughtful, highly developed discussion questions for the literature circle we will be having at the beginning of the school year. (These should be typed and will be handed in.)

- The questions must be open-ended and likely to spark discussion/debate. Two of the eight must specifically connect content from the book to a current issues or conflict in American politics.

If you use any outside resources, please use internal citations and attach a works cited in MLA format.

As you are all coming from different junior year courses, there is a wide variety of familiarity with the US Constitution. We strongly suggest becoming familiar with this essential document by reading it over the summer. If you feel your understanding of the context is a bit shaky, you should read chapter 2 of our textbook (Government in America: People, Politics and Policy 16/e, AP edition, ISBN: 978-0-205-86575-8), as we will not be explicitly covering this in class but you will be responsible for knowing and understanding the ideas from this chapter.

Please bring your typed work to class on the first day of school, along with your copy of “The Oath” and be prepared to share your findings with the class. Late assignments will not be accepted, except under extraordinary circumstances. You should complete this assignment even if you’re on a waiting list for another course and may drop AP Government.