A Preface: **Read everything** in the book, **starting with the note below.**

Dear Student,

The constituents of this summer reading were chosen by your teachers with great care. We considered the need for a variety of subject matters, rhetorical styles, voices, reading levels, and lengths. More than anything, we want to expose you to unique personal narratives in order to help you write your college application essays. We also feel, however, the need to prepare you for AP English Language and Composition, a class in which you will be asked to analyze a variety of texts. With the aforementioned objectives in mind, after the introduction that includes this letter and a text with sample annotations, the first half of this compilation asks you to read and analyze personal narratives, while the second half asks you to read and analyze essays that primarily focus on things other than the self.¹

Further, it is our intention for you to consume, digest, and appreciate these chosen works of contemporary, Creative/Literary Nonfiction. To help prepare you for each work, we provide smaller texts that may share an author or theme with the subsequent, larger texts, respectively. Do not ignore these small, correlative pieces. (Incidentally, they, too, will be on your summer reading exam.)

Also, preceding the smaller pieces and their correlative, larger works are notes and guiding questions. The purpose of the notes and guiding questions is to focus your reading, in part, on things your teachers find important, the reasons your teachers chose the pieces in the first place. You will be graded on your responses to said questions, but, more importantly, they will help you understand and retain the texts to which they apply.

In addition to your responses to the guiding questions, you will also be graded on your annotations. You will notice that your teachers have annotated the excerpt from Fareed Zakaria’s *In Defense of a Liberal Education.* This is your model. Please do your best to emulate.

Finally, a note regarding the efficacy and completion of this summer reading assignment: do it, and do it thoughtfully and thoroughly. The consumption and appreciation of this compilation is integral on several levels. You will be better prepared for AP English Language and Composition in that you will be accustomed to the Lexile level your teachers expect you to be able to comprehend, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate no sooner than the first day of class. You will also be more comfortable with one of our major modes of thinking, that is, thinking rhetorically about non-fiction—a mode with which you may not yet be totally comfortable. And, as mentioned at the beginning of this letter, you are in the college application season of your life; many readings in this compilation are not unlike responses you may be asked to generate based on prompts from ApplyTexas, the Common Application, the Coalition Application, etc. In other words, this summer reading assignment is important.

N. B. **You will be held accountable for this reading in several ways, including an exam, an annotation check, a guide check, and class discussions. You are on your honor while working individually on this reading. Feel free to discuss your reading with friends, but do not go so far as to confer about specific study guide answers or to crib another’s annotations. It is vital that you begin this course with a substantive foundation. Your teachers have, herein, tried to provide such a foundation.**

Oh, one more thing: “Consider the Lobster” and “Slouching Towards Bethlehem” are sizable reads. Don’t plan on reading them the night before the exam.

Good luck, and happy reading.

-Y.T

¹ In a way, this is actually a similar setup in structure and theme as in the AP Lang course, itself.