

**Sophomores becoming Juniors (2018-2019)**  
**Any English II student (regular or Pre-AP) going into English III AP or AP/DC**

English III AP is all about rhetoric (the art and science of language) and argument (logically proving a point).

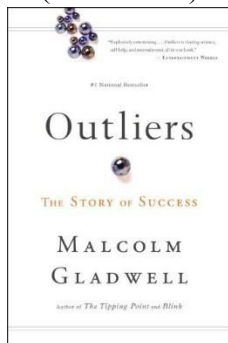
We read mostly nonfiction (speeches, opinion articles, researched essays, letters, historical documents, etc.):

- (a) to analyze the purposes and effects of the choices authors make in their language
- (b) to master the skepticism, appeals, logic, and structure of rational arguments

Think with the skeptical, analytical, innovative, and calculating mind of a debater and researcher.

**The following assignment is required for all AP and AP/DC students. Without completing it, you won't be able to have the AP-level discussions that this class will involve, and you will fail your first test grade!**

*Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell  
(Nonfiction)



In this New York Times Bestseller, Gladwell uses real-life examples (the Beatles, Bill Gates, etc.) to analyze how the most successful people in the world got to be so successful. In his examinations, he finds that while intelligence and hard work are useful, so much of what really matters to these outliers – these people who redefine success – is culture and environment and language and timing. Read / reflect on how our society is designed, how your life fits into that structure, and what consequences arise from such a system.

As of April 2018, on Amazon: Kindle or Paperback for about \$12-\$14, new.

Always check your local Half-Price Books for cheaper used copies.

**Summer Assignment:**

1. Please read ALL of *Outliers*.

- a. **As you read *Outliers*, collect the 11 specific thesis statements / major claims of the book (one from the intro, one from each chapter, and one from the epilogue). Type these thesis statements out in a neat log – exactly as they appear in the book – using quotation marks and page numbers. In addition, for each quote, spend a few sentences explaining how that individual chapter's thesis statement helps to develop Gladwell's greater argument and overall purpose for the book.**

Make sure you read and follow the above three sentences carefully; be ready to hand your teacher a hard copy of the log on the first day of class. Clarifications and FAQ are on the back of this paper.

- b. **By reading *Outliers*, your views on “success” and “the American Dream” might have significantly changed. Without simply summarizing the points Gladwell makes in *Outliers*, argue whether you think the traditional American Dream is “dead” or “alive” today. Use at least three quotes from the book to support your point (but remember, this isn't a book report, it's an argument; what is *your* opinion?). Type out your essay (minimum 3 full pages) and submit it through TurnItIn.com (your first major grade of the year).**

**Questions? Details, definitions, MLA info, and FAQs are on the back of this page.**

For AP and DC: [sean.brower@nisd.net](mailto:sean.brower@nisd.net)

For AP: [emily.hernandez@nisd.net](mailto:emily.hernandez@nisd.net), [royce.cook@nisd.net](mailto:royce.cook@nisd.net)

### **Frequently Asked Questions for 1a – thesis log:**

- Purpose: to learn how to accurately identify and fairly represent an author’s specific claims.
- What is a “thesis”? What someone believes and why; it’s what the author sets out to argue for and prove.
- Theses can be more than a single sentence long, but tend toward brevity (short/sweet/concise) and efficiency.
- This log will be worth a quiz grade; you will also use this log as a “cheat sheet” for your participation in the seminar-style, formal class discussions we will have in the first few weeks of school.

### **Frequently Asked Questions for 1b – essay:**

- Not sure how to format an MLA paper?
  - Go to <http://bit.ly/sbrower>. Click on “Class Resources”. Download “SampleMLAformatting.doc”. Read and follow this document carefully.
- Confused about the topic of the paper? Typically, the “American Dream” involves these beliefs:
  - Anyone and everyone can be successful because America is the land of wealth and opportunity.
  - If you try really hard and get a good education, then you’ll be successful.
  - “Pull yourself up by your bootstraps!” (i.e., “Do it yourself. If you fall down, it’s up to you to get back up. Success is an individual thing, and you can’t rely on others to get you to the top.”)
  - Those who aren’t successful are lazy; if you’re stuck in a minimum wage job, then you personally failed in a system that gave you every opportunity to advance up the chain.
- Questions about the task for the paper?
  - Do not assume you are right; instead, explain to people who disagree with you why/how you’re right.
  - Do not summarize the topic; instead, argue that your interpretation about the topic is correct.
  - Do not focus on examples; instead, let reasoning drive your paragraphs.
  - Be mature; show an informed global perspective.
- Some simple editing fixes:
  - Use last names – “Gladwell” not “Malcolm.”
  - Use underlining/italics for long things (like *Outliers*, a complete book).
  - Use quotation marks for short things (like the chapter “The Matthew Effect”).
  - “Novel” has a very specific definition: a long fiction story; therefore, *Outliers* is not a novel.
- How do I turn in this essay?
  1. Go to <http://www.turnitin.com>.
  2. Click “create account”. Use your school email, and make a password you will remember.
  3. The “class ID” and “class enrollment password” are as follows:
    - ID:
    - Password:
  4. Sign in, click on the assignment that is posted, and find the option to submit your assignment. Upload a .doc or .pdf version of your work, and go through until you obtain a receipt.

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For AP: [emily.hernandez@nisd.net](mailto:emily.hernandez@nisd.net), [royce.cook@nisd.net](mailto:royce.cook@nisd.net)