Welcome to summer reading! This summer you will read two texts: Understanding Comics (Scott McCloud) and a choice graphic novel. The first goal of this assignment is to read engaging books of academic merit that are ripe for closer analysis. We hope you are intrigued by McCloud’s theory and moved by these noteworthy graphic novels. The second goal is to expand the way you read and think about texts, particularly the ways texts make meaning through images as well as through language. Reading your choice graphic novel through the lens of McCloud’s theories should expose the choices authors employ to make meaning visually and textually. This kind of close reading is an essential skill we will practice all year.

All the work you do this summer will help you prepare for the AP English Language and Composition course and exam (May 16, 2018). These analytical concepts (visual and textual) will be used throughout the course, so take this summer work seriously. One of our primary texts this school year will be a graphic text about rhetoric and composition. Time, effort, and thought put in over the summer will benefit you throughout the year.

Project Overview

1. Read and annotate Understanding Comics.
2. Read and annotate a choice text.
3. Complete a focused analysis (1,500-2,000 words, MLA format), applying concepts from Understanding Comics to analyze your choice graphic novel.

Deadlines (Choice novel analysis due Sunday, August 13 by 11:59:59 PM)

1. Complete your analysis and upload it to Google Drive (if you have written it elsewhere with another platform, please upload as a Google doc so we can give you feedback).
2. Using Google Drive, share your analysis with Ms. Swensen AND Mrs. Stathulis (swensenk@westerville.k12.oh.us and stathulc@westerville.k12.oh.us -- make sure that we have editing rights). You can use either your school or personal account.
3. Can’t figure it out! E-mail us; we are always happy to help.

Late Policy

10% deduction per day, up to 50%

Book Distribution

All books for summer reading will be provided by the school. Please listen to the announcements to learn when and where to pick up your books. Happy reading and writing😊

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AP Language and Composition -- Annotation Guide

Annotation is an important element of close reading, and critical readers use it to interact with texts effectively. In this course, annotation will be an essential skill used throughout the year. While annotating, you can comment on and note a variety of elements in your text: emerging patterns, compelling literary devices, particularly beautiful passages, puzzling questions, lines that are particularly important thematically, and ideas with which you agree or disagree. The point is for you to have a conversation with the text, and annotation helps this process. It is important that you go beyond simply summarizing what you read and get to this level of interaction. **Most importantly, you should use annotation to apply McCloud’s ideas about how authors make meaning in comics to gain a deeper understanding of your choice graphic novel. WE WILL USE ANNOTATIONS OF MCCLOUD AND YOUR CHOICE BOOK IN THE EARLY WEEKS OF CLASS!**

There are myriad methods for marking a text. Here are just a few:

**Post-Its:** Use post-its to mark key concepts and definitions (McCloud) and your applications of these (choice text). Color-coding can help here.

**Commenting:** Note thoughts you have about events in the book, questions you might have, connections you make, or anything you think is noteworthy. You can use the front and back covers for especially important notes, character lists, vocabulary, etc.

**Underlining and/or Highlighting and/or Symbols:** Underline or highlight major points, important statements, and/or passages that speak to you. This can be combined with commenting, so you know why you underlined the passage. Don’t overuse. Different color highlighters can note different elements or trace different themes or characters. **Sometimes this is distracting in a graphic text.** Create symbols! For example, use a “?” to note something you find confusing, or you could simply star a passage that you think is particularly important, etc. Be sure to note **WHY** in the margins.

**Circling, Boxing, Other Shapes:** Use shapes like underlining and highlighting. Each shape can be used to note similar points that connect, such as specific themes, motifs, characters, or literary devices (**or the concepts that McCloud outlines in Understanding Comics**).

**Journal:** Keeping notes about important ideas in a journal, notebook, or google doc is another way to hold key ideas to go back to later.

Students often complain that annotation slows their reading. **That is the point!** If you hate annotating your first time through, feel free to go back and annotate after you have read a chapter or section. Reading a second time is a good idea anyway. THIS IS A SKILL WE WILL HONE ALL YEAR LONG!!!
Step 1. Read and annotate *Understanding Comics* (McCloud)

First, read McCloud’s theory of comics. Although it is a theory of comics, McCloud makes it playful and engaging. This book provides examples of many of the key moves authors/illustrators use to make meaning. **Critical readers see symbols, archetypes, and patterns in texts.** We notice the way authors use language and structure to develop ideas. This year, we will read texts (images, advertisements, speeches, clothing, status updates, essays, films, songs, etc.) as arguments in this deeper, complex way. We will apply the skills we develop over the summer to a broader understanding of rhetoric and composition and to who we are as thinkers, readers, and writers. These concepts will help us develop a sophisticated understanding of a range of texts that we will discuss throughout the year. **You should take notes as you read, attentive to the key ideas in each chapter as well as to the sub-topics. You will APPLY these new ideas to your choice book.** Do not be intimidated by the list; McCloud explains these in *Understanding Comics*. You MUST include a discussion of closure, transitions, and the relationship between language and image.

Some key concepts to consider and apply include:

- juxtaposition,
- genre,
- inter-textuality (texts within the text),
- iconography,
- amplification/simplification,
- abstraction,
- closure,
- transitions (i.e., moment-to-moment, action-to-action, subject-to-subject, scene-to-scene, aspect-to-aspect, non-sequitur),
- time frame,
- panel (design, pattern, function),
- line and tone,
- word balloons,
- interplay between language and text (i.e., additive, parallel, montage, interdependent, text-dependent, image-dependent, etc.),
- idea/purpose,
- form,
- idiom,
- structure,
- craft,
- surface,
- color, etc.

Note: This list identifies key ideas to read for, define, and apply to your choice graphic novel, though it is not comprehensive.
Step 2: Read and analyze choice novel

After you have completed Understanding Comics, read and thoroughly annotate your choice graphic novel. Read online reviews, talk to a librarian, or ask your teachers to help you decide what will interest you. Do not choose a book you have previously read.

As you read, carefully annotate the text, focusing on key concepts from Understanding Comics. See attached annotation guide.

The Complete Persepolis, Marjane Satrapi
American Born Chinese, Gene Yang
Blankets, Craig Thompson*
Watchmen, Alan Moore*

The Complete MAUS, Art Spiegelman
Vietnamera, GB Tran
Are You My Mother, Alison Bechdel*
Kindred, Damian Duffy, John Jennings*
based on Octavia Butler’s 1979 novel

*CAUTION: Some of the options contain events, language, and themes intended for mature readers. You, in conjunction with your parents or guardians, are responsible for selecting works that are appropriate to your particular tastes, values, and sensibilities. This is a college-level course.

Written Assignment: Focused Analysis

After reading both texts, write a focused 1,500-2,000 word analysis on aspects of image, language, and composition in your choice graphic novel based on the concepts elucidated by McCloud in Understanding Comics. You MUST include a discussion of closure, transitions, and the interplay between language and image. Additionally, you should choose three other concepts that interest you from McCloud’s text. Here is a review of analysis, if you need it (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/725/02/).

You should include images of the panels you cite and analyze FROM YOUR CHOICE NOVEL. You do not need images from McCloud. Here is a link that explains how to do this in Google docs. You can scan the graphic novels OR use a phone to snap a shot. (https://support.google.com/docs/answer/97447?co=GENIE.Platform%3DDesktop&hl=en)

Analyses should contain textual evidence, including page numbers, from both your choice novel and Understanding Comics to support analysis. Be sure to include images of the panels from your choice novel. Essays can address the choice novel as a whole, a specific section, a few different sections, a character, a place, or even a specific panel sequence. However, you MUST pull evidence from several areas of the choice graphic novel. It should be clear that you have read the entire book. Endings are especially important in most literature, so you should address the ending as well. As you apply McCloud’s concepts to your choice novel, it is critical that you tie the author’s choices to the meaning and importance of the text. Here is a student sample: https://docs.google.com/a/westerville.k12.oh.us/document/d/15s0VOBVqzhkDGNS0r5fBKieOrxk1Kai53vttjUH0Bbw/edit?usp=sharing
Your response should be in MLA format (1,500-2,000 word, typed, double spaced, 12-point font, including pictures of the panels you write about) and should include a Works Cited page in MLA 8 (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/)

Submit your work by August 13th. Share your analysis with Ms. Swensen and Mrs. Stathulis (swensenk@westerville.k12.oh.us AND stathulc@westerville.k12.oh.us -- make sure that we have editing rights). You can use either your school or personal account.

Do not consult Sparknotes, Pink Monkey, or any other online or print literary analysis tool to assist in your annotation. This work is to be your original thinking. Use of any of these sites will be considered plagiarism and will result in a zero for the project.
AP Language and Composition  Name _____________________________
Choice Text Analysis Rubric  Novel _____________________________

______ A  Writing at this level demonstrates a complete and perceptive performance of the assignment. The response shows remarkable insight, understanding, and control while connecting the concepts from Understanding Comics to the choice graphic novel. The author addresses and fully develops an understanding of challenging and sophisticated concepts. The evidence from both texts is thoughtfully chosen and aptly supports ideas. A tight link between supporting evidence and the author’s intent is made. Ideas are communicated in a sophisticated, mature, and precise manner. The response avoids errors in mechanics, spelling, and usage.

______ B  Writing at this level demonstrates a complete performance of the assignment. The response shows some insight and understanding, while connecting the concepts from Understanding Comics to the choice graphic novel. The author addresses and develops an understanding of various concepts but lacks the depth of thinking of an A-level response. The evidence from both texts is used to support ideas, but the links between supporting evidence and the author’s intent may be imbalanced or underdeveloped at times. Ideas are communicated clearly. The response avoids errors in mechanics, spelling, and usage with minor exceptions.

______ C  Writing at this level demonstrates a cursory performance of the assignment. The response shows limited insight and understanding and only loosely connects the concepts from Understanding Comics to the choice graphic novel. The concepts addressed by the author may be misunderstood or underdeveloped. Limited evidence is used to support ideas, and the links between supporting evidence and the author’s intent may be unclear. Ideas are communicated unevenly and may be confusing at times. The response includes errors in mechanics, spelling, and usage.

______ D  Writing at this level demonstrates an incomplete performance of the assignment. The response shows very limited insight and understanding and does not connect the concepts from Understanding Comics to the choice graphic novel. The concepts addressed by the author are misunderstood. Little or no evidence is used to support ideas. Ideas are underdeveloped or inappropriate. Ideas are confusing at times, and responses are brief, not meeting the minimum requirements. The response includes frequent errors in mechanics, spelling, and usage.

______ F  Writing at this level demonstrates an incomplete and insincere performance of the assignment. The writer shows little effort to connect the concepts from Understanding Comics to the choice graphic novel. Minimum requirements of the assignment are not met, or the author plagiarized.