TORAH ACADEMY OF BERGEN COUNTY
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Dear 11H AP English Language and Composition Students of 2019-2020,

Once again AP English Language and Composition, a course sponsored and accredited by the College Board and one that follows the scope of a college freshman composition course, will be taught to the honors eleventh grade English class in 2019-2020.

It is with great belief in your skills and diligence that Torah Academy of Bergen County offers this course to you, one that is based on the premise that college-level material can be taught successfully to able and well-prepared high school students. Towards the end of the year, you may choose to take the AP exam in English Language and Composition and potentially be exempt from or even receive credit for Freshman Composition in college. *Another and perhaps more important goal is for you to become a perceptive and sophisticated reader and writer.*

In this course, you will read texts closely in order to discern what modes writers use to achieve a variety of purposes and you will use this knowledge to write rich and purposeful prose. Many of the texts read in AP English will dovetail texts read in AP US History and taking the two courses simultaneously will enrich your understanding of both of them. In both courses, you will read and analyze mostly American texts—works of fiction and non-fiction, longer and shorter works from a variety of periods and written in various rhetorical contexts—and you will find that the ability to read closely will turn into the ability to write well.

To begin this process, you must read the **first thirteen chapters** of Jay Heinrichs' *Thank You for Arguing,* "a master class in the art of persuasion, taught by professors ranging from Bart Simpson to Winston Churchill" (amazon.com), **and one of the following non-fiction books.**

The Point of Vanishing: A Memoir of Two Years in Solitude, by Howard Axelrod
When Breath Becomes Air, by Paul Kalanithi
Steve Jobs, by Walter Isaacson
The Google Story, by David J. Vise
Blink: The Tipping Point, by Malcolm Gladwell
Freakonomics, by Steven J. Dubner and Steven D. Levitt
Buyology: Truth and Lies About Why We Buy, by Martin Lindstrom
The Big Short, by Michael Lewis
The Bullies of Wall Street, by Sheila Bair
The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, by Rebecca Skloot
Why We Make Mistakes, by Joseph T. Hallinan
The Glass Castle, by Jeannette Walls
Devil and the White City, by Erik Larson
In Cold Blood, by Truman Capote
Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance, by Angela Duckworth
The Road to Character, by David Brooks

Now here comes your "Summer Assignment":

1. While reading the first thirteen chapters of *Thank You For Arguing,* quickly mark pages with post-its that give you surprising or "aha!" moments--a strategy you have observed in your reading

elsewhere or one that you would like to try out yourself. Then, after you finish your reading, write a **paragraph each** describing four different strategies that you learned about and/or understood better after having read the book **(four paragraphs in all)**.

2. Next, think about how two of the above strategies are used by the author of the non-fiction book that you read. **Choose two** and, allotting one paragraph per strategy, discuss how these two strategies help the author achieve his/her purpose **(two paragraphs in all)**. Try to use the text as specifically as possible when discussing these strategies (quote), but remember, you are looking for "the how," and then connecting this to the author's purpose.

3. Keep this in mind: When you return to school, you will write the dialogue, as best you can remember, from an argument you "lost" with a friend, sibling, parent, or teacher and then rewrite the dialogue so that you "win."

If we can all understand why you won in your new argument and explain what technique you used, our reading will not have been in vain.

Enjoy the summer and enjoy your reading. The two should go hand in hand.

<div align="center">Sincerely,</div>

Dr. Carol Master   Arthur J. Poleyeff
Chair, English Department   Principal