

## 2017 APUSH Summer Reading Assignments

1. Read *Founding Brothers* by Joseph Ellis. I realize this book is dense and very detailed but do not be discouraged! Take notes on the larger themes and major conflicts that comprise the backbone of the book. There will be a test on these larger ideas the first week of classes. Part of the experience in AP US history will be digesting large amounts of reading and finding the important themes.
2. As listed in an earlier posting on the website, you are to choose ONE book from the fiction/nonfiction selection of books. Many of these books are historical fiction and “fun” reads. If you absolutely hate the book you have chosen - do not be afraid to put it down and choose another! Life is too short to be miserable over the summer. There should be something to grab everyone’s attention. You must write a book review to be turned in by August 25, 2017.

### Guidelines for the Book Review

- Typed, double-spaced and no more than 2 pages. It should be clear, concise and free of errors.
- You will be assessed on the clarity of thought, completion of the criteria below and obvious attentive reading of the book.
- Three parts of your review

#### **A brief summary of the book**

Do not just list a sequence of events, rather, explain what you think the larger theme of the book is and describe the events that support this. You should have a thesis statement - this is a skill we will work on throughout the year as it relates to the AP exam.

#### **A critical analysis of the book**

Literature is often described as a mirror. It can help us see into the lives of others, especially those in the past. If you have chosen a *fiction book* respond to the truth of this statement for your book. You may have to do some outside research on the historical events in the book to judge how well the author used these events in building a story and how much the author may have altered events to shape the story. Give at least two examples.

If you have selected a *nonfiction book*, explain how the author uses the factual events and ties them to our larger understanding of the United States (or the world). In other words, how do the real events show a common human condition or theme. Give at least two examples.

#### **Your reaction to the book**

Think about the following questions as prompts. Elaborate beyond, “I hated it” or “I liked it.” How did this book “speak” to you? What did you find interesting in American history as a result of reading it? Did the book help you see others or the past in ways you might not have otherwise seen? Are there things you disagreed with in this book? To what extent are the characters in this book likely to stay with you for a while? Did this book teach any clear lessons? Did it teach any implicit lessons? Did you detect any author bias? Would you recommend the book to a peer? Why do you think this book was included on your summer reading list?