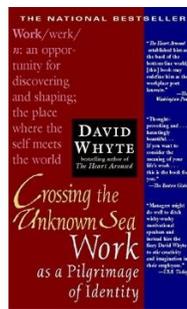


Important Note

Please do not approach this book as entertainment. If you expect to find the type of frolicsome adventure you found in *Harry Potter*, you will likely be disappointed and possibly conclude, “This book stinks and it’s boring and I hate it.”

However, if you approach this book as a potential source of life-changing power, as a fountain of life-giving ideas, well, then you may just find your mind deepened, your hope strengthened, your life widened. David Whyte will teach you how to think about and relate to work—something you will likely do for decades and decades. And those are great things to learn.

AP English Language and Composition



Summer Reading

Dear Prospective AP Students and Parents:

Welcome to AP! How wonderful it is that you have chosen to embark on this adventure! All AP English students are required to read selections during the summer that comprise a portion of the study base for the year. Since the curriculum for Advanced Placement English Language and Composition revolves around the analysis of rhetoric in nonfiction, the reading for the junior level is from that genre: *Crossing the Unknown Sea: Work as a Pilgrimage of Identity* by David Whyte. This book explores the importance of knowing what it means to have, as the poet William Blake puts it, a “firm persuasion” in our work. Whyte argues that “as human beings, we are the one part of creation that can refuse to be itself. Our bodies can be present in our work, but our hearts, minds, and imaginations can be placed firmly in neutral and engaged elsewhere.”

Please be prepared to discuss, write about, and test over the content, themes, styles, and ideas of this work when the course begins in August. Reading Spark Notes or some other summary in lieu of the primary text will be insufficient. As an AP student, your intellectual (and ethical) development should be paramount, and you should not seek ways to circumvent the assignment. Please just read, and complete the other assigned work. The book is a piece of nonfiction, and this genre comprises much of this course’s curriculum—a curriculum established by the College Board. Although you may not normally select from this genre when given the choice, it is an important genre, nonetheless.

This class is intended to help students grow in the following ways, as set forth in the College Board’s description of the curriculum: “[It] is designed to help students become skilled readers and writers

through engagement with...reading nonfiction...selected to give students opportunities to identify and explain an author's use of rhetorical strategies and techniques." This is precisely what David Whyte's book and the complementary work will begin to equip you to do! So, your goal as you read is to glean all the meaning you can from the text and search for ways to apply that meaning to your life. Further, as you read, please complete the rhetorical analysis assignment.

Reading changes us; it will change YOU. This mantra influences everything AP is about. Yes, writing is tremendously important, and it is inextricably bound to reading. In other words, reading and writing go together. You become a better writer by seeing other writers expertly wield language.

If you need help with the assignment over the summer, please contact me at kellie.allen@dvusd.org.

Thank you for your hard work! I look forward to getting to know you next year. 😊