



Dear Boston Prep Rising Advanced Placement 11th Grade Students and Families,

As you know, reading is a crucial skill to be successful in school, college, and beyond. At Boston Prep, we want all students to continually grow as readers. One way we do this is through our summer reading program. Reading during the summer preserves reading skills learned during the school year. Research shows that students who read over the summer retain more of what they learned during the school year<sup>1</sup> and that “Students who read widely and frequently are higher achievers than students who read rarely and narrowly.”<sup>2</sup> Summer reading is also a great way for students to discover new books and authors and to simply fall in love with a great book.

Enclosed is a summer reading assignment and the required book to read for their AP 11<sup>th</sup> grade history course, AP United States History II. **Students are expected to read one book over the summer for their history course in addition to the two books they read for English. Please review all the enclosed materials and work to complete all components before August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019.** Boston Prep will loan each student a copy of this book for the summer. Each student is expected to return this copy to the school at the beginning of the school year. Students who do not return a copy of the book in good condition will have to pay for the cost of the book.

The required book for rising 11<sup>th</sup> grade students is *Lies My Teacher Told Me* by James Loewen. The first unit will begin with literacy circles and then a Socratic Seminar answering the questions “why do we study history?” and “what are the impacts of bias and misrepresentation on the United States today?” Juniors in U.S. History II will begin with a graded seminar discussion during the first week of the school year. Students in 11<sup>th</sup> grade AP U.S. History I will read the entire book and complete the following assignment:

1. Students will complete a note tracker for every chapter assigned covering the following essential questions: questions “why do we study history?” and “what are the impacts of bias and misrepresentation on the United States today?” These questions will form the basis of the prompt for their in-class essay during the first week of school. **An outline for how student note trackers should look on their own college-ruled, lined paper follows this letter. A note tracker should be completed for each chapter. Students will be able to use these note trackers on the in-class essay during the first week of classes.** Below are chapter specific questions for students to consider in their notes trackers:
  - a. According to Loewen in Chapter 1, what is “heroification” and why is it a problem when we study history? Support your answer with at least **three** specific concrete details from the text. Provide commentary for each concrete detail that explains **how** this evidence proves your argument.
  - b. In Chapter 2, Loewen questions how Christopher Columbus has been portrayed by history. Why does he question this portrayal?
  - c. In Chapter 4, James Loewen opens with the assertion that “historically, American Indians have been the most lied-about subset of our population” (Loewen, 93). What evidence does Loewen give for this argument?
  - d. In Chapter 5, James Loewen writes, “In the fifteen years between 1955 and 1970, the civil rights movement destroyed segregation as a formal system in America. The movement did not succeed in transforming American race relations, but it did help African Americans win more power” (Loewen, 141) Do you **agree or disagree** with this statement and why?

<sup>1</sup> Smith, Lorna. “Slowing the Summer Slide.” [http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational\\_leadership/dec11/vol69/num04/Slowing-the-Summer-Slide.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/dec11/vol69/num04/Slowing-the-Summer-Slide.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> “Facts about Kids and Reading” Scholastic [http://balancedreading.com/Scholastic\\_reading\\_facts.pdf](http://balancedreading.com/Scholastic_reading_facts.pdf)

- e. In Chapter 6, James Loewen writes, “We in America, whose anti-racist idealists are admired around the globe, seem to have lost (anti-racist) men and women as heroes.” Do you **agree or disagree** with this statement and why?
  - f. In Chapter 9, Loewen writes that his college students come to him with little knowledge of the Vietnam War. Why is it important to learn the history of the Vietnam War? Support your answer with at least **three** specific concrete details from the text. Provide commentary for each concrete detail that explains **how** this evidence proves your argument.
  - g. Chapter 12 is titled, “Why is History Taught Like This?” Answer this question.
  - h. Based on evidence from Chapter 13, why does history mean nothing to many history students in America?
2. **Written Response:** Based on your reading of *Lies My Teacher Told Me* you will write a 4-5 page essay. Your essay should complete the following
- A. **Explain** James Loewen’s overarching thesis in this book. What is he arguing to you as the reader about American textbooks.
  - B. **Explain:** According to Loewen in Chapter 5, how do American textbooks and the American education system present racism? Provide at least three examples paraphrased from the text.
  - C. **Answer the following prompt:** Evaluate the impact of bias and misrepresentations in U.S. history textbooks on the United States today. Throughout the book Loewen gives specific examples of how textbooks are biased and misrepresent American history (the “discovery” of North America, American Indian history, history of race, history of war, etc.). Your job is to think about what you see in the news and other media today. How have these biases and misrepresentations impacted how these media portray the world today and how American understand the world.
    - a. You should have a clear thesis that provides a roadmap for the remainder of your essay. You should have multiple body paragraphs that provides evidence and in-text citations from credible news sources such as:
      - i. *The New York Times*
      - ii. *The Atlantic*
      - iii. *The Washington Post*
      - iv. *The Wall Street Journal*
      - v. *The Economist*
    - b. You should have a works cited page.
    - c. This portion of the assignment will take you some time. To do this, I encourage you to read and/or watch the news every day over the summer. Read one article or watch 30 minutes of CNN every day. Think about how journalist and commentators are presenting current and historical events. Where do you see the impact of bias and misrepresentations in U.S. history textbooks and the U.S. education system? Where do people have incorrect knowledge or assumptions? Where do journalists misrepresent history or perpetuate biases or misrepresentations from textbooks? Where do you see heroification? Where do you see misrepresentation or invisibility of racism perpetuated?

Your answer should be completed in well-constructed paragraphs with clear topic sentences (aligning to your argument) and specific, detailed evidence **paraphrased** from the text. Your responses should be typed using 12-point, double-spaced, Times New Roman font with one-inch margins. You should have a header at the top of the page reading: “Summer Break Assignment.” In the top left-hand corner of your first page, should be the following information:

- i. Your Name
- ii. Mr. Springer
- iii. AP U.S. History II
- iv. Date

Any text taken directly from the book **MUST** be quoted and a citation must be given in text using MLA format. For example: (Loewen, 136).

**Note on grammar/mechanics:** These responses should be written in formal, academic language. No first person. No contractions. Be specific. Be thorough. Do not explain what you “believe.” Explain what you know based on facts.

All summer reading information is also available on the school’s website, [www.bostonprep.org](http://www.bostonprep.org). We thank you for your continued support; if you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact us.

Happy Reading!



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## Questions from [www.lexile.com](http://www.lexile.com) to help spark a conversation about books:

### Before reading the book, ask:

- Why did you select this book?
- What makes you think this book is going to be interesting?
- What do you think the book is going to be about?
- Does this book remind you of anything you've already read or seen?
- What kind of characters do you think will be in the book?
- What do you think is going to happen?

### While reading the book, ask:

- Will you catch me up on the story? What's happened so far?
- What do you think will happen next?
- If you were that character, what would you have done differently in that situation?
- If the main character in that story lived next door, would you guys be friends?
- What does the place look like in your head as you read? Would you want to visit there?
- Did you learn any new words or facts so far?

### After finishing the book, ask:

- What was your favorite part of the book? Why?
- Who was your favorite character? Why?
- Why do you think the author wrote this book?
- Would you have ended the book differently? Did it end the way you thought it would?
- Did the problem of the book's plot get solved?
- If you could change one thing in the book, what would you change? Why?

## Summer Reading Note Tracker Example

**Book Title:** *Born a Crime*

**Essential Questions:** How do our individual stories fit with historical context? How does our experience impact the way we interpret the world? How do people resist and react to institution oppression? What are the effects of apartheid?

**Themes to look for:** Identity, Belonging, and Community; Racism, Apartheid, and the Cycle of Poverty; Love and Personal Growth; Resilience and Humor as a Coping Mechanism

### Chapter: 1

Direct Quotes with page numbers.	Analysis in relation to themes and / or essential questions.
<p><b>MODEL:</b> “Sometimes in big Hollywood movies they’ll have these crazy chase scenes where somebody jumps or gets thrown from a moving car. The person hits the ground and rolls for a bit. Then they come to a stop and pop up and dust themselves off, like it was no big deal. Whenever I see that I think, <i>That’s rubbish. Getting thrown out of a moving car hurts way worse than that.</i> I was nine when my mother threw me out of a moving car. ...” (Noah 5).</p>	<p>MODEL: Trevor is writing about a moment when his mother had to throw him from a car to avoid she and her son from being kidnapped by a Zulu driver. While this is a story from Trevor’s individual life, it connects to the violence that occurred when colonialism had separated groups and taught them to hate each other.</p>
