

COURSE TITLE: Advanced Placement English Language & Composition (**Grade 11**)

OPTIONAL TEXT: *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*

AUTHOR: Barack Obama

GENRE: Nonfiction (Memoir)

SUMMARY (from the inside cover):

In this lyrical, unsentimental, and compelling memoir, the son of a black African father and a white American mother searches for a workable meaning to his life as a black American. It begins in New York, where Barack Obama learns that his father—a figure he knows more as a myth than as a man—has been killed in a car accident. This sudden death inspires an emotional odyssey—first to a small town in Kansas, from which he retraces the migration of his mother's family to Hawaii, and then to Kenya, where he meets the African side of his family, confronts the bitter truth of his father's life, and at last reconciles his divided inheritance (Amazon.com).

REQUIRED STUDENT ASSIGNMENT:

Students will be asked to complete an in-class timed write on this memoir during the first two weeks of class for a major assessment grade. Thus, you may want to consider annotating the memoir.

In your annotations, consider your selected memoir as a "coming of age" story like *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, or *Catcher in the Rye*. Draw comparisons to Huck or other young protagonists as part of your annotation. Consider the universality of the memoirist's experiences, the obstacles he overcomes, and the life lessons he both learns and imparts to readers.