

**AP Language and Composition      Summer Reading      2020**

**Texts:**

Diane Ackerman                      *The Zoo Keeper's Wife*

Joan Didion                              *Slouching Toward Bethlehem*

James Baldwin                      *The Fire Next Time*

George Orwell "Politics and the English Language" [essay]

<https://archive.org/details/PoliticsAndTheEnglishLanguage/page/n5>

**Assignment:**

- Read George Orwell's essay, "Politics and the English Language" (via the link). Record three points Orwell makes about our use (or abuse) of language. Explain each point. Then, find examples in the big world around you of the truth of Orwell's curmudgeonly complaints. Record and briefly but mindfully analyze these. (Try to treat this task as an adventure.)

- As you read the three texts, briefly BUT MINDFULLY record the central idea expressed in each essay. This means that you will choose your own words as carefully as we assume the authors, Didion and Baldwin, chose theirs. More thinking, less writing is the goal. Note page numbers and key phrases.

Then, indicate what you perceive to be the purpose or point of the collection as a whole. Is there an underlying theme or subject or experience that ties the essays together? Your answer to this question will be shaped by the observations you made about each essay individually.

- For the Ackerman text, *The Zookeeper's Wife*, keep track of the unfolding of events, as well as the presentation of character. When we return in September, you will demonstrate your understanding of this text through a creative assignment [not an analytical essay], so include in your musings statements that reflect your

own reactions to what you are reading [not as a literary text, but as events that did actually occur.]

• Also, watch the video accessible through the link below:

<https://search.tb.ask.com/search/video.jhtml?enc=0&n=7849ca30&p2=%5EBSB%5E x pt939%5ES29592%5Eus&pg=video&pn=1&ptb=7A0EF436-EAD8-4A84-BBE9-5BB55AB42508&qs=&searchfor=ryszard+zabinski&si=&ss=sub&st=sb&tpr=sbt>

If the link malfunctions, google Ryszard Zabinski and *Safe Haven* on Blue Heron Films. Ryszard is the son of Antonina and Jan Zabinski, the zookeepers at the heart of Ackerman's book.

Have fun. Go to the park or some beautiful place to read the Berry and Ackerman texts. Maybe go to the imposing, history-rich New York Public Library in Manhattan to read the Orwell. Greenwich Village is a great place to sit and read Joan Didion.

[caughey.j@stsaviour.org](mailto:caughey.j@stsaviour.org) if you need to be in touch.

Happy Reading!

Ms. J. Caughey