

**AP Language Ms. Driscoll and Mrs. Smyth (DeHart)**  
***A Walk in the Woods* Critical Reading Portfolio**

For this major reading assignment, you will prepare a Critical Reading Portfolio. It is important to read each work with pen and/or highlighter in hand to take notes in the text with sticky notes or in your notebook. You will use your notes to prepare this CRP. The final draft of the portfolio should be turned in the first day of school. The portfolio should have ten numbered and labeled sections that follow this format:

**\*Heading should be similar to MLA style (name, course, date, school in left upper corner)**

Ex: Sue Z. Cue  
AP English Language  
August 25, 2018  
Arlington Heights High School

**\*Sections: Please number, title, and underline each section heading.**

Section 1: Significance of Title

Briefly discuss the significance of the title. Is it an allusion to an event or another work? How is it thematically connected to the body of the work? Does it have multiple meanings? Consider connotation and denotation of words.

Section 2: Author

Briefly discuss the author and how the work reflects the concerns of its creator. What are his major issues? How does the work demonstrate concerns or ideas that are important to the author?

Section 3: Setting

Describe the time and place in which the action occurs. How is it related to the time period in which the work was written? What is significant about the setting? How is the setting connected to thematic concerns?

Section 4: Point of View

From what perspective is the story told? How does point of view affect your appreciation of the work? How does the choice of narrator impact themes?

Section 5: Characterization

Identify the characters in order of importance, and describe them and their role in the work. Are they static or dynamic? Round or flat? Discuss any characters that have a significant impact on the work? Be sure to include physical and psychological details in your descriptions. Remember, too, that sometimes antagonists and protagonists can be abstract. (For example, GUILT as the antagonist in *The Kite Runner*.)

Section 6: Theme

Identify and discuss any important themes the author communicates in the work, and track how they are developed. Remember that themes are important ideas or topics that are addressed through the novel, and as the novel progresses, a message or statement is developed about that topic. A theme can be developed in many ways – through language (figurative or literal), through tone, dialogue, plot events, etc.

### Section 7: Symbols, Literary Devices, and Rhetorical Devices

Identify and discuss any used in the work. How did these affect your understanding of the work? How are they important in their connection to theme and meaning of the work? You should consider such devices as symbolism, diction, metaphor, imagery, irony, humor, sarcasm, etc. as they have a meaningful impact on any part of the work.

### Section 8: Quotes

Select five quotes from the work that illustrate an important idea. Discuss the element of theme, setting, or device connected to each quote. Be sure to use quotation marks and include a page number.

### Section 9: Discussion Questions

- a. What did you think of the scene where they discovered on a map that they had only hiked two inches of the four feet of trail?
- b. Do you agree with the author's statement, "If we couldn't walk the whole trail, we also didn't have to?"
- c. Do you feel that their hike really counts as hiking the Appalachian Trail even though it was only 39% of the trail?
- d. What do you think of the relationship between Bryson and Katz?
- e. What about the other relationships? Did you find them humorous?
- f. What do you think of the author's sense of humor? His opinions? His writing style?
- g. Do you think that readers could find this book offensive or controversial? In what ways?
- h. What do you think of the informational tidbits/tangents on history (of the trail, of the National Park Service, etc.), geology (of Centralia and the mountainside in Lehigh Valley), ecology (the effects of global warming, zinc mining, dam building), and social customs (the interaction and views of different people) in the book? Did any ignite your interest? Which ones and why?
- i. Do you view these "asides" as positive or negative in the structure of the book?
- j. Did the ending of the book "feel right" to you? What do you think the author meant about it not feeling right about cutting grass after hiking the Appalachian Trail?

### Section 10: Response

Discuss your response to this work. Did you enjoy it? Why/Why not? What elements of the book did you enjoy/not enjoy? What is your appraisal of the book's worth? What connections are there between this work and the world that you live in?