

AP Language & Composition  
Summer Assignment

**Read the book *Warriors Don't Cry*, a memoir of the battle to integrate Central High, a high school in Little Rock, Arkansas, by Melba Pattillo Beals.**

The book is available from a number of sources. You may find copies at Half Price Books, Barnes and Noble, or Amazon. There are more options, but the bottom line is you need to find a copy of the book as soon as possible.

**Reading Journal Assignment**

During her year at Central Rock, Melba Pattillo Beals kept a detailed diary of her experiences and feelings, and her mother kept a detailed record of news articles and events. As you read through her memoir, you will be keeping a reading journal. It will consist of specific entries based on sections of the reading. Each of your entries must contain specific references to details in the book and must focus on the assigned topics for that section. Your teacher must be able to tell that you have read and absorbed the material discussed in each section. Each journal should be 275-375 words (focus on QUALITY thinking and writing).

**Section 1: the Introduction**

Choose one of the following roles and explain what it might be like to return to Central High so many years later: white student, black student, former teacher or administrator.

**Section 2: pages 1-32**

Discuss major influences (people or experiences) in Melba's life **and** their impact on her.

**Section 3: pages 33-75**

Explain how Melba becomes a "Warrior". Focus on the theme of family and commitment.

**Section 4: pages 76-154**

Choose one of the following topics – obedience and conformity, courage and commitment, or resilience and fortitude. Discuss the book's position on it using specific examples from the chapter (cite page number for each example you include).

**Section 5: pages 155-end**

"Integrations is a bigger word than I thought."

What does this mean? Does the book offer any signs of change (is so what are they)?

What is the lasting impact of what went on in Little Rock on Melba?

What is the lasting impact on the Little Rock Nine?

What is the lasting impact on education in the United States?

Once you return for the school year, the class will discuss issues presented in the book so have the book with you on the first day of class. We will relate these experiences to the American dream as we delve into an analysis of what that dream truly looks like to each of you. **The journal entries will be turned in on the first day of class.**