

AP Language & Composition

Summer Assignment

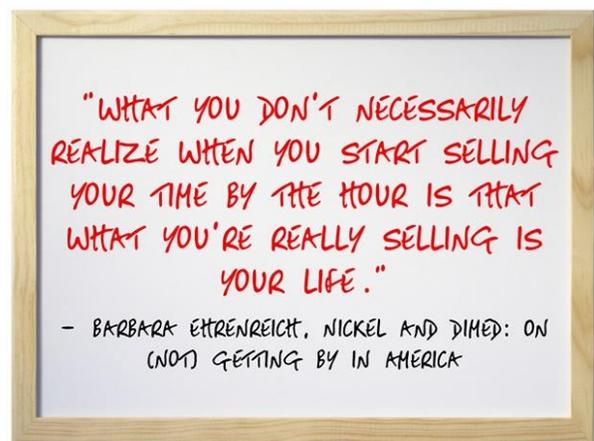
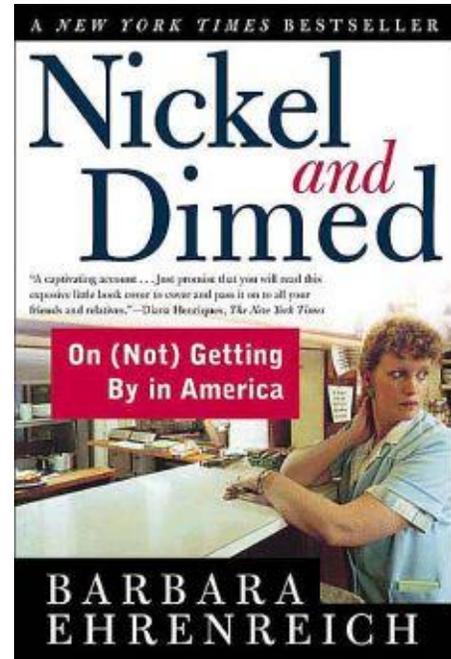
Read the book *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* by Barbara Ehrenreich. Written from her perspective as an undercover journalist, it sets out to investigate the impact of the 1996 welfare reform act on the working poor in the United States.

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

A *typed* version of your Summer Writing Assignment is due on the first day of class. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated; do not use any source other than yourself. Once you return for the school year, the class will discuss issues presented in the book, so you should have the book with you on the first day of class. We will relate the content of this book to Unit One instruction. Summer reading is not just one assignment; it drives what we do to start the class and is essential to your success in the course's first quarter.

You may submit your assignment electronically as an email attachment to your teacher. You may also choose to print and turn it in physically.

Questions? You can email your teacher at james.jacobson@dmschools.org or michael.masteller@dmschools.org



Writing Assignment

Respond to the five prompts below. Your responses must contain specific references to details in the book. All five sections/chapters of the book must be represented at some point in your responses. Your teacher must be able to tell that you have read and absorbed the material discussed in each section/chapter of the book. *Each response* should be 275-375 words, with a focus on quality thinking & writing.

1. Were your perceptions of blue-collar Americans transformed or reinforced by this book? Has your notion of poverty and prosperity changed since reading the book? What about your own treatment of waiters, maids and salespeople?
2. What was the context and situation of Ehrenreich's time that motivated her to write this book in the first place? Who was her intended audience? What was her purpose in writing this book?
3. This question is in regard to the style of Ehrenreich's writing. You will soon learn that with argument, an author's style of writing is not accidental. It is a carefully constructed technique drawing upon a multitude of tools. Some of these tools include: diction, syntax, imagery and figurative language. Find examples from the book of these and explain how they contribute to the effectiveness of her argument.
4. Legendary American novelist John Steinbeck said that "If you're in trouble, or hurt or need - go to the poor people. They're the only ones that'll help - the only ones." Explain the extent to which you agree with this by supplying evidence from both the book and your own personal observations or experiences.
5. Explain why Ehrenreich believes that personality surveys and drug tests are both categorically unfair to low-wage workers. Look back over the full range of her low-wage experiences when responding.