

AP LANGUAGE SUMMER ASSIGNMENT 2019

SUMMER “TO DO” LIST:

1. Create notecards for each of the terms listed on the pages of this packet in preparation for the 2019-20 school year.
 - a. There will be a test over all of them during the first week of school. You must pass this test in order to stay in the class.
 2. Choose one historical and one contemporary nonfiction books and create a total of 10 dialectical journal entries for each of the books.
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Advanced Placement Language and Composition

Mrs. Pittman’s Summer Reading Assignment

The term “Dialectic” means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with the texts we read during this course. The process is meant to help you develop a better understanding of the texts we read. Use your journal to incorporate your personal responses to the texts, your ideas about the themes we cover and our class discussions. You will find that it is a useful way to process what you’re reading, prepare yourself for group discussion, and gather textual evidence for your Literary Analysis assignments.

PROCEDURE:

As you read, choose passages that stand out to you and record them in the left-hand column of a T-chart (ALWAYS include page numbers)

In the right column, write your response to the text (ideas/insights, questions, reflections, and comments on each passage)

Label your responses using the following codes:

(Q) Question – ask about something in the passage that is unclear

(C) Connect – make a connection to your life, the world, or another text

(P) Predict – anticipate what will occur based on what’s in the passage

(CL) Clarify – answer earlier questions or confirm/disaffirm a prediction

(R) Reflect – think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense – not just to the characters in the story. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or just the way things work?

(E) Evaluate - make a judgment about the character(s), their actions, or what the author is trying to say.

PLEASE NOTE: EACH JOURNAL ENTRY MUST HAVE A MINIMUM OF 7 WELL DEVELOPED SENTENCES THAT USE ONE OF THE SEVEN PARAGRAPH STARTERS LISTED BELOW.

Sample from a Dialectical Journal – The Things They Carried by Tim O’Brien

Passage from Text	Comments and Questions
“-they carried like freight trains; they carried it on their backs and shoulders-and for all the ambiguities of Vietnam, all the mysteries and unknowns, there was at least the single abiding certainty that they would never be at a loss for things to carry” (2).	(R) O’Brien chooses to end the first section of the novel with this sentence. He provides excellent visual details of what each soldier in Vietnam would carry for day-to-day fighting. He makes you feel the physical weight of what soldiers have to carry for simple survival. When you combine the emotional weight of loved ones at home, the fear of death, and the responsibility for the men you fight with, with this physical weight, you start to understand what soldiers in Vietnam dealt with every day. This quote sums up the confusion that the men felt about the reasons they were fighting the war, and how they clung to the only certainty – things they had to carry – in a confusing world where normal rules were suspended.

CHOOSING PASSAGES FROM THE TEXT:

Look for quotes that seem significant, powerful, thought provoking or puzzling. For example, you might record: (The passages you choose should reflect a variety of different passages.)

Passages that remind you of your own life or something you’ve experienced before.

A passage that makes you realize something you hadn’t seen before.

Examples of patterns: recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols or motifs.

Passages with confusing language or unfamiliar vocabulary

Events you find surprising or confusing

Passages that illustrate a particular character or setting

RESPONDING TO THE TEXT:

You can respond to the text in a variety of ways. The most important thing to remember is that your observations should be specific and detailed. You can write as much as you want for each entry.

Responses Should:

oRaise questions about the beliefs and values implied in the text

- oGive your personal reactions to the passage
- oDiscuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- oTell what it reminds you of from your own experiences
- oWrite about what it makes you think or feel
- oAgree or disagree with a character or the author

Book Titles

Titles of Your Choice

Choose one title from the Historical and one from the Contemporary

Historical	Contemporary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>The Federalist Papers</i> by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay ● <i>The Rights of Man</i> by Thomas Paine ● <i>Democracy in America</i> by Alexis de Tocqueville ● <i>The Narrative Life of Frederick Douglas</i> by Frederick Douglas ● <i>The Prince</i> by Niccolo Machiavelli ● <i>Down and Out in Paris and London</i> by George Orwell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>A People's History of the United States</i> by Howard Zinn ● <i>A Short History of Nearly Everything</i> by Bill Bryson ● <i>Dirty Wars</i> by Jeremy Scahill ● <i>The Power of Myth</i> by Joseph Campbell ● <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> by Michael Pollen ● <i>When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women...</i> by Gail Collins ● <i>The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks</i> by Rebeca Skloot ● <i>The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer</i> by Siddhartha Mukherjee ● <i>How to Lie with Statistics</i> by Daniel Huff ● <i>You Are Not Not So Smart</i> by David McRaney ● <i>Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything</i> by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner

Required Reading Permission Slips Due by May 31, 2019

By signing the below, parents are stating they have read and understand the requirements of summer reading. I understand if my child does not complete these dialectical journals, they will receive a zero for 15% of their first quarter grade.

I, _____ give permission for my child, _____,
to read the following selections:

Book #1 _____
(Please print)

Book #2 _____
(Please print)

Signed: _____
(Parent or guardian signature)

Date: _____

Terms – AP English Language and Composition

Advanced Placement Terms

rhetoric - From the Greek for “orator,” this term describes the principles governing the art of writing effectively, eloquently, and persuasively.

subject - Other than the general topic identify the central thesis of the work in one clear declarative thesis statement.

writer or speaker - Persona of the work; address historical and/or cultural contexts and their effect or influence.

occasion - Formal, informal, etc. and any details that would affect the purpose

audience - Direct and indirect or primary and secondary (analyze both because they are usually there!)

purpose or intention - To persuade, entertain, inform, etc. or usually a combination

Appeals

- **ethos** - Refers to a character, speaker, writer, or persona and their credibility (authority) on the topic or a common belief statement that cannot be refuted but accepted as true: “*Life is a precious gift*,” the use of pronouns such as “we,” “ours,” or “us” strengthens the ties between the persona and the audience/reader creating a connection between the speaker and the audience. The speaker is seen as “one of us.” Pronouns such as “they” or “he/she” distances the speaker/writer from the audience. Pronouns such as “I” focus on the credibility of the author/speaker.
- **logos** - Appeals to the reasoning or logic of the argument; concession to the opposing side of an argument typically followed by a counterargument. An effective argument always addresses the opposing side in an effort to persuade because it demonstrates thorough knowledge of the subject and increases the speaker/writer’s credibility with the audience.
- **pathos** - Appeals to the emotions of the reader and needed if the purpose of the speaker is to incite action. Remember, people are typically moved in the end by their emotions but only after a strong logical argument has laid the foundation for their change in attitude. A strictly emotional argument is a rant or a tirade and is not effective.

tone –Similar to mood, tone describes the author’s attitude toward his material, the audience, or both. Tone is easier to determine in spoken language than in written language. Considering how a work would sound if it were read aloud can help in identifying an author’s tone. Some words describing tone are *playful, serious, businesslike, sarcastic, humorous, formal, ornate, sardonic, somber*, etc.

- **pedantic** – An adjective that describes words, phrases, or general tone that is overly scholarly, academic, or bookish (language that might be described as “show-offy”; using big words for the sake of using big words).
- **homily** – This term literally means “sermon,” but more informally, it can include any serious talk, speech, or lecture involving moral or spiritual advice.
- **invective** – An emotionally violent, verbal denunciation or attack using strong, abusive language. (For example, in *Henry IV, Part I*, Prince Hal calls the large character of Falstaff “this sanguine coward, this bedpresser, this horseback breaker, this huge hill of flesh.”)
- **didactic** – From the Greek, *didactic* literally means “teaching.” Didactic words have the primary aim of teaching or instructing, especially the teaching of moral or ethical principles.

tone shift - Because tone radiates from the author, through a speaker(s) or narrator(s) and then to the reader, a tone shift indicates a shift in attitude about the subject. A tone shift may be the result of a change in speaker, subject, audience, or intention. The shift may indicate irony, a deeper and more complex understanding of the topic, a new way of addressing the topic, etc. Notice how and why the tone shift occurs and utilize two contrasting tone words to express the change and its effect. This will tie to the argument or point of view perhaps highlighting a change in position.

thesis – In expository writing, the thesis statement is the sentence or group of sentences that directly expresses the author’s opinion, purpose, meaning, or position. Expository writing is usually judged by analyzing how accurately, effectively, and thoroughly a writer has proven the thesis.

Literary Devices / Figurative Language

satire – A work that targets human vices and follies or social institutions and conventions for reform or ridicule. Regardless of whether or not the work aims to reform human behavior, satire is best seen as a style of writing rather than a purpose for writing. It can be recognized by the many devices used effectively by the satirist: irony, wit, parody, caricature, hyperbole, understatement, and sarcasm. The effects of satire are varied, depending on the writer's goal, but good satire, often humorous, is thought provoking and insightful about the human condition. Some modern satirists include Joseph Heller (*Catch 22*) and Kurt Vonnegut (*Cat's Cradle*, *Player Piano*).

parody – A work that closely imitates the style or content of another with the specific aim of comic effect and/or ridicule. It exploits peculiarities of an author's expression (propensity to use too many parentheses, certain favorite words, etc.) Well-written parody offers enlightenment about the original, but poorly written parody offers only ineffectual imitation. Usually an audience must grasp literary allusion and understand the work being parodied in order to fully appreciate the nuances of the newer work. Occasionally, however, parodies take on a life of their own and don't require knowledge of the original.

point of view – In literature, the perspective from which a story is told. There are two general divisions of point of view, and many subdivisions within those.

- *first person narrator* tells the story with the first person pronoun, "I," and is a character in the story. This narrator can be the protagonist, a secondary character, or an observing character.
- *third person narrator* relates the events with the third person pronouns, "he," "she," and "it." There are two main subdivisions to be aware of:
 - *third person omniscient*, in which the narrator, with godlike knowledge, presents the thoughts and actions of any or all characters
 - *third person limited omniscient*, in which the narrator presents the feelings and thoughts of only one character, presenting only the actions of all the remaining characters.

In addition, be aware that the term *point of view* carries an additional meaning. When you are asked to analyze the author's point of view, the appropriate point for you to address is the author's *attitude*.

allegory – The device of using character and/or story elements symbolically to represent an abstraction in addition to the literal meaning. In some allegories, for example, an author may intend the characters to personify an abstraction like hope or freedom. The allegorical meaning usually deals with moral truth or a generalization about human existence.

alliteration – The repetition of sounds, especially initial consonant sounds in two or more neighboring words (as in "she sells seashells"). Although the term is not frequently in the multiple choice section, you can look for alliteration in any essay passage. The repetition can reinforce meaning, unify ideas, supply a musical sound, and/or echo the sense of the passage.

allusion – An indirect reference to something which is presumably commonly known, such as an event, book, myth, place, or work of art. Allusions can be historical, literary, religious, topical, or mythical. There are many more possibilities, and a work may simultaneously use multiple layers of allusion.

personification – A figure of speech in which the author presents or describes concepts, animals, or inanimate objects by endowing them with human attributes or emotions. Personification is used to make these abstractions, animals, or objects appear more vivid to the reader.

apostrophe – A figure of speech that directly addresses an absent or imaginary person or a personified abstraction, such as liberty or love. It is an address to someone or something that cannot answer. The effect may add familiarity or emotional intensity. William Wordsworth addresses John Milton as he writes,

“Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour: / England hath need of thee.” Another example is Keats’ “Ode to a Grecian Urn,” in which Keats addresses the urn itself: “Thou still unravished bride of quietness.” Many apostrophes imply a personification of the object addressed.

aphorism – A terse statement of known authorship which expresses a general truth or a moral principle. (If the authorship is unknown, the statement is generally considered to be a folk proverb.) An aphorism can be a memorable summation of the author’s point.

atmosphere – The emotional nod created by the entirety of a literary work, established partly by the setting and partly by the author’s choice of objects that are described. Even such elements as a description of the weather can contribute to the atmosphere. Frequently atmosphere foreshadows events. Perhaps it can create a mood.

mood – The prevailing atmosphere or emotional aura of a work. Setting, tone, and events can affect the mood. Mood is similar to tone and atmosphere.

sarcasm – From the Greek meaning “to tear flesh,” sarcasm involves bitter, caustic language that is meant to hurt or ridicule someone or something. It may use irony as a device, but not all ironic statements are sarcastic (that is, intended to ridicule). When well done, sarcasm can be witty and insightful; when poorly done, it is simply cruel.

caricature – a verbal description, the purpose of which is to exaggerate or distort, for comic effect, a person’s distinctive physical features or other characteristics.

hyperbole – A figure of speech using deliberate exaggeration or overstatement. (The literal Greek meaning is “overshoot.”) Hyperboles often have a comic effect; however, a serious effect is also possible. Often, hyperbole produces irony. The opposite of hyperbole is *understatement*.

irony/ironic – The contrast between what is stated explicitly and what is really meant, or the difference between what appears to be and what is actually true. Irony is often used to create poignancy or humor. In general, there are three major types of irony used in language:

- *verbal irony* – when the words literally state the opposite of the writer’s (or speaker’s) meaning
- *situational irony* – when events turn out the opposite of what was expected; when what the characters and readers think ought to happen is not what does happen
- *dramatic irony* – when facts or events are unknown to a character in a play or piece of fiction but known to the reader, audience, or other characters in the work.

metaphor – A figure of speech using implied comparison of seemingly unlike things or the substitution of one for the other, suggesting some similarity. Metaphorical language makes writing more vivid, imaginative, thought provoking, and meaningful.

extended metaphor – A metaphor developed at great length, occurring frequently in or throughout a work.

analogy – A similarity or comparison between two different things or the relationship between them. An analogy can explain something unfamiliar by associating it with or pointing out its similarity to something more familiar. Analogies can also make writing more vivid, imaginative, or intellectually engaging.

synecdoche – A figure of speech in which a part of something is used to represent the whole or, occasionally, the whole is used to represent a part. Examples: To refer to a boat as a “sail”; to refer to a car as “wheels”; to refer to the violins, violas, etc. in an orchestra as “the strings.” **Different than *metonymy*, in which one thing is represented by another thing that is commonly physically associated with it (but is not necessarily a *part* of it), i.e., referring to a monarch as “the crown” or the President as “The White House.”

metonymy – (mētōn’ ĩmē) A term from the Greek meaning “changed label” or “substitute name,” metonymy is a figure of speech in which the name of one object is substituted for that of another closely associated with it. For example, a news release that claims “the White House declared” rather than “the President declared” is using metonymy; Shakespeare uses it to signify the male and female sexes in *As You Like It*: “doublet and hose ought to show itself courageous to petticoat.” The substituted term generally carries a more potent emotional impact.

imagery – The sensory details or figurative language used to describe, arouse emotion, or represent abstractions. On a physical level, imagery uses terms related to the five senses: visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory. On a broader and deeper level, however, one image can represent more than one thing. For example, a rose may present visual imagery while also representing the color in a woman’s cheeks and/or symbolizing some degree of perfection. An author may use complex imagery while simultaneously employing other figures of speech, especially metaphor and simile. In addition, this term can apply to the total of all the images in a work. On the AP language exam, pay attention to *how* an author creates imagery and to the effect of this imagery.

theme – The central idea or message of a work, the insight it offers into life. Usually theme is unstated in fictional works, but in nonfiction, the theme may be directly stated, especially in expository or argumentative writing.

Anastrophe the order of the noun and the adjective in the sentence is exchanged. In standard parlance and writing the adjective comes before the noun but when one is employing an anastrophe the noun is followed by the adjective. This reversed order creates a dramatic impact and lends weight to the description offered by the adjective.

Example: He spoke of times past and future, and dreamt of things to be.

Syntax

syntax – The way an author chooses to join words into phrases, clauses, and sentences. Syntax is similar to diction, but you can differentiate them by thinking of syntax as groups of words, while diction refers to the individual words. In the multiple choice section of the AP exam, expect to be asked some questions about how an author manipulates syntax. In the essay section, you will need to analyze how syntax produces effects.

clause – A grammatical unit that contains both a subject and a verb. An *independent*, or *main*, *clause* expresses a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence. A *dependent*, or *subordinate clause*, cannot stand alone as a sentence and must be accompanied by an independent clause. The point that you want to consider is the question of what or why the author subordinates one element should also become aware of making effective use of subordination in your own writing.

chiasmus - Grammatical structure when the first clause or phrase is reversed in the second, sometimes repeating the same words. Reversing the syntactical order emphasizes the reversal in meaning and thus reinforces the contrast. Such a device is useful in writing to emphasize differences or contrast in meaning: “*And so, my fellow Americans, ask now what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.*”

antithesis – The placing of opposing or contrasting ideas and/or words within the same sentence or very close together to emphasize their disparity: “*It was the best of times; it was the worst of times.*” the opposition or contrast of ideas; the direct opposite.

juxtaposition: the placing of contrasting settings, characters, or other literary elements in opposition between paragraphs or between sections of text to highlight an intended disparity. Example: *In Cold Blood* is written not with typical chapter formation but as an intended juxtaposition of the events in the Clutter home in juxtaposition to the activities of the two misfits. The effect is to highlight the disparity in an effort to heighten the sense of terror, panic, and an ominous foreboding in the reader.

parallelism – Also referred to as parallel construction or parallel structure, this term comes from Greek roots meaning “beside one another.” It refers to the grammatical or rhetorical framing of words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs to give structural similarity. This can involve, but is not limited to, repetition of a grammatical element such as a preposition or verbal phrase. (Again, the opening of Dickens’ *Tale of Two Cities* is an example: “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity....”) The effects of parallelism are numerous, but frequently they act as an organizing force to attract the reader’s attention, add emphasis and organization, or simply provide a musical rhythm.

repetition – The duplication, either exact or approximate, of any element of language, such as a sound, word, phrase, clause, sentence, or grammatical pattern.

anaphora – A sub-type of *parallelism*, when the exact repetition of words or phrases at the beginning of successive lines or sentences. MLK used anaphora in his famous “I Have a Dream” speech (1963).

epistrophe - Forms the counterpart to anaphora, because the repetition of the same word or words comes at the end of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences:

“Where affections bear rule, there reason is subdued, honesty is subdued, good will is subdued, and all things else that withstand evil, forever are subdued.” --Wilson

anadiplosis – Repeats the last word of one phrase, clause, or sentence at or very near the beginning of the next. it can be generated in series for the sake of beauty or to give a sense of logical progression:

“Pleasure might cause her to read, reading might make her know. Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain . . .” --Philip Sidney

paradox – A statement that appears to be self-contradictory or opposed to common sense but upon closer inspection contains some degree of truth or validity. (Think of the beginning of Dickens’ *Tale of Two Cities*: “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times....”)

asyndeton - Conjunctions are omitted, producing fast-paced and rapid prose to speed up the reader so as to have the reader experience the events along with the persona in a rapid succession: “*I woke up, got out of bed, pulled on my clothes, rushed out the door.*”

polysyndeton - The use of many conjunctions has the opposite effect of asyndeton; it slows the pace of the reader but the effect is to possibly overwhelm the reader with details thus connecting the reader and the persona to the same experience – may also be called cataloging: “*My mother cooked roast turkey and cornbread stuffing and sweet potatoes and peas and apple pie.*”

understatement – the ironic minimalizing of fact, understatement presents something as less significant than it is. The effect can frequently be humorous and emphatic. Understatement is the opposite of *hyperbole*. Example: Jonathan Swift’s *A Tale of a Tub*: “Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse.”

litotes - (pronounced almost like “little tee”) – a form of understatement that involves making an affirmative point by denying its opposite. *Litote* is the opposite of *hyperbole*. Examples: “Not a bad idea,” “Not many,” “It isn’t very serious. I have this tiny little tumor on the brain” (Salinger, *Catcher in the Rye*).

Conduplicatio - repetition in which the key word or words in one phrase, clause, or sentence is/are repeated at or very near the beginning of successive sentences, clauses, or phrases; repetition of a key word over successive phrases or clauses

- "I could list the problems which cause people to feel cynical, problems which include lack of integrity in government, the feeling that the individual no longer counts...."
- "There is no question but that this nation cannot stand still, because we are in a deadly competition, a competition not only with the men in the Kremlin, but the men in Peking. We're ahead in this competition, as Senator Kennedy, I think, has implied. But when you're in a race, the only way to stay ahead is to move ahead."

Anastrophe - the order of the noun and the adjective in the sentence is exchanged

- He spoke of times past and future, and dreamt of things to be.
- No sooner had he written it than he realised it was anastrophe.

Apophasis - the raising of an issue by claiming not to mention it

- "We don't make excuses, but three of our four starting defensive linemen were watching the game today."
- "I'm not saying I'm responsible for this country's longest run of uninterrupted peace in 35 years! I'm not saying that from the ashes of captivity, never has a phoenix metaphor been more personified! I'm not saying Uncle Sam can kick back on a lawn chair, sipping on an iced tea, because I haven't come across anyone man enough to go toe to toe with me on my best day! It's not about me."

Paregmenon - the juxtaposition of words that have a common derivation

- a manly man
- the texture of textile.
- sense and sensibility

Diction

diction – Related to style, diction refers to the writer’s word choices, especially with regard to their correctness, clearness, or effectiveness. For the AP exam, you should be able to describe an author’s diction (for example, formal or informal, ornate or plain) and understand the ways in which diction can complement the author’s purpose. Diction, combined with syntax, figurative language, literary devices, etc., creates an author’s style.

connotation – The non-literal, associative meaning of a word; the implied, suggested meaning. Connotations may involve ideas, emotions, or attitudes.

denotation – The strict, literal, dictionary definition of a word, devoid of any emotion, attitude, or color. (Example: the *denotation* of a knife would be a utensil used to cut; the *connotation* of a knife might be fear, violence, anger, foreboding, etc.)

semantics – The branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of words, their historical and psychological development, their connotations, and their relation to one another.

antecedent – The word, phrase, or clause referred to by a pronoun. The AP language exam occasionally asks for the antecedent of a given pronoun in a long, complex sentence or in a group of sentences. A question from the 2001 AP test as an example follows:

“But it is the grandeur of all truth which *can* occupy a very high place in human interests that it is never absolutely novel to the meanest of minds; it exists eternally, by way of germ of latent principle, in the lowest as in the highest, needing to be developed but never to be planted.” The antecedent of “it” (bolded) is...? [answer: “all truth”]

colloquial/colloquialism – The use of slang or informalities in speech or writing. Colloquialisms give a work a conversational, familiar tone.

euphemism – From the Greek for “good speech,” euphemisms are a more agreeable or less offensive substitute for a generally unpleasant word or concept. The euphemism may be used to adhere to standards of social or political correctness or to add humor or ironic understatement. Saying “earthly remains” rather than “corpse” is an example of euphemism.

oxymoron – A figure of speech wherein the author groups apparently contradictory terms to suggest a paradox. Simple examples include “jumbo shrimp” and “cruel kindness.” This term does not usually appear in the multiple-choice questions, but there is a chance that you might find it in an essay. Take note of the effect that the author achieves with the use of oxymoron.

Argument

argument - A process of reasoning and advancing proof about issues on which conflicting views may be held; also, a statement or statements providing *support* for a claim

claim - The conclusion of an argument; what the arguer is trying to prove

evidence - *Facts* or opinions that support an issue or *claim*; may consist of *statistics*, reports of personal experience, or views of experts

credibility - The audience's belief in the arguer's trustworthiness; see also *ethos*

qualifier - A restriction placed on the *claim* to state that it may not always be true as stated

refutation - An attack on an opposing view in order to weaken it, invalidate it, or make it less credible

support - Any material that serves to prove an issue or *claim*; in addition to *evidence*, it includes appeals to the *needs* and *values* of the *audience*

induction - reasoning by which a general statement is reached on the basis of particular examples

deduction - reasoning by which we establish that a conclusion must be true because the statements on which it is based are true; see also *syllogism*

syllogism – From the Greek for “reckoning together,” a syllogism (or syllogistic reasoning or syllogistic logic) is a deductive system of formal logic that presents two premises (the first one called “major” and the second called “minor”) that inevitably lead to a sound conclusion. A frequently cited example proceeds as follows:

major premise: All men are mortal.

minor premise: Socrates is a man.

conclusion: Therefore, Socrates is a mortal.

A syllogism's conclusion is valid only if each of the two premises is valid. Syllogisms may also present the specific idea first (“Socrates”) and the general second (“all men”).

