

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition

Coral Glades High

Summer Reading 2025

Ms. Cooper

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***Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell**

Malcolm Gladwell has been a writer at The New York Times and has authored numerous books including *Outliers: The Story of Success*. According to Gladwell, “the book grew out of a frustration I found myself having with the way we explain the careers of really successful people” (Gladwell.com). In *Outliers*, he explores the reasons behind the success of accomplished, extraordinary individuals. As you continue to embark on your journey as highly successful students, we will explore and discuss Gladwell’s views on success at the beginning of the school year.

As you read the book, keep the following questions in mind and answer them completely, in grammatically sound sentences. Please hand write your answers in blue or black ink.

1. What is Gladwell’s thesis. Is it explicit or implicit and how does he support his thesis?
2. How does he organize his book in support of his thesis. Connect the various parts.
3. Name 3-5 people in your life who influence you in some way on a daily basis. Why do you surround yourself with these people.
4. What is your definition of success? Do you aspire to your definition of success? How do you and how will you continue to go about achieving the success you aspire to?
5. What does Gladwell say is the stereotypical story of the rise to top? What examples does he cite to support this?
6. Read the footnote at the bottom of page 25. Define in your own words, the term “self-fulfilling prophecy.”
7. How does Gladwell apply his theory of success to education?
8. In showing the birthdates of Bill Gates, Paul Allen and Steve Jobs, Gladwell argues that these men were in the right place at the right time. Gladwell argues, “we pretend success is exclusively a matter of individual merit.” What does he say are the underlying factors that influence success (page 67)? Do you agree or disagree with him and why?
9. At the end of Chapter 3, Gladwell writes that Teman concluded, with more than a touch of disappointment that intellect and achievement are far from perfectly correlated,” (page 90). What do you think might matter more than intellect in determining a person’s success?
10. What is Gladwell’s point in Chapter 4 about individuals like Langan, Oppenheimer and the Termites?
11. What does Gladwell say about the length of the American school year (pages 259-260)? Do you agree? Why or why not?

We will be discussing *Outliers* at the beginning of the school year so please have your assignment ready the week of August 11th(1 week after we return).

Feel free to email me with any questions and I will check my email periodically.

Have a phenomenal summer and I look forward to working with you next year as you continue your academic journey.