

2019-2020 *AP Lang & Comp Summer Reading Selection*

**Booker T. Washington High School**  
***Killers of the Flower Moon* by David Grann**

**Welcome to AP Language and Composition!** You are taking this class because you want AP credit for your college Freshman Composition class or because you want a leg up on other students in Freshman Comp. College professors will assume that you have critical reading skills. In other words, critical readers strive to see how varying facts fit together, and, in turn, how those facts form meaningful relationships. Critical readers examine *how* the author builds a text to achieve a specific reaction. So, what really matters? It is not the information itself that is important as you read, it is *why* that information is important that matters; it is not about what happened on the pages of your reading, it is about the *implications* of what happened that matters; it is not to learn of the past through your reading, it is lean *how the past connects with the present* that matters.

**About Killers of the Flower Moon:** In the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Indian nation in Oklahoma. After oil was discovered beneath their land, they rode in chauffeured automobiles, built mansions, and sent their children to study in Europe.

Then, one by one, the Osage began to be killed off. The family of an Osage woman, Mollie Burkhart, became a prime target. Her relatives were shot and poisoned. And it was just the beginning, as more and more members of the tribe began to die under mysterious circumstances.

In this last remnant of the Wild West many of those who dared to investigate the killings were themselves murdered. As the death toll climbed to more than twenty-four, the FBI took up the case. It was one of the organization's first major homicide investigations and the bureau badly bungled the case. In desperation, the young director, J. Edgar Hoover, turned to Tom White to unravel the mystery. White put together an undercover team, including one of the only American Indian agents in the bureau. The agents infiltrated the region, and, with the Osage they began to expose one of the most chilling conspiracies in American history.

**Take Notes!** You need to read critically and consistently and at college level, so here are some questions to engage as you read David Grann's book.

1. What are Native American stereotypes that contributed to their exploitation by gold-digging whites?
2. How does Grann characterize William Hale to make him both appealing and scary?
3. How does Grann create drama and suspense?
4. As FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover left a complicated and none-too-positive legacy. What does Grann do to pre-figure the J. Edgar Hoover of the 1960s/70s?
5. Aside from solving murders, Agent White is responsible for bringing rural Oklahoma law enforcement practices in-line with more modern practices. How does Grann characterize the clash between modern case investigation and traditional investigations?
6. What details does Grann include that make the Osage victims both sympathetic and unlikable?
7. What literary and rhetorical techniques does Grann use to bring to life the atrocities?
8. What are recent examples of racism and injustice that parallel Osage racism and injustice? What have we not learned from the past?
9. What parts of the book come alive the most, and what makes them so vivid?
10. One topic that Grann explores in the book is trust--what theme arises from this topic? Think of other topics and the themes those topics become.

Make notes for each of these questions as you read. Soon after school starts, you will be asked to write a five-paragraph essay that includes a persuasive thesis and valid evidence to support the thesis. You will be able to use your notes when you write.

**We recommend that you:**

- **PURCHASE THE BOOK NOW!** Books can be in short supply and libraries will have long "hold" lists.
- Go in together with a friend and share the expense and the book.
- See if the title is available for purchase in used book stores.