

**George Washington High School
AP Language & Composition
Summer Reading Assignments 2018**

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Due Date: → The assignments are due the 2nd day of school. You must bring a hard copy to class. Be prepared to explain the connection of the memoir/autobiography/biography that you selected to the required summer reading assignment.

Summer Reading —

If you ask ten students at GWHS what is the definition of success, you will receive ten slightly different answers. This summer we will explore the issues of high school academic success and success in life by reading two books: 1) *The Overachievers* by Alexandra Robbins, and 2) a paired reading: a memoir, biography or autobiography of a person selected by the student.

For an overview of the required reading, *The Overachievers*, below is a review:

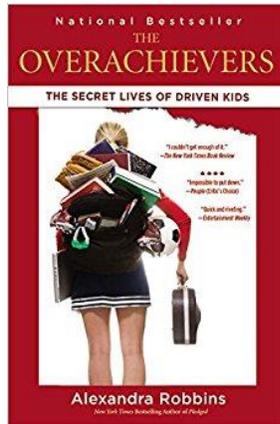
from Amazon.com -

"In *The Overachievers*, journalist Alexandra Robbins delivers a poignant, funny, riveting narrative that explores how our high-stakes educational culture has spiraled out of control. During the year of her ten-year reunion, Robbins returns to her high school, where she follows students, including CJ and others:

- Julie, a track and academic star who is terrified she's making the wrong choices;
- "AP" Frank, who grapples with horrifying parental pressure to succeed;
- Taylor, a soccer and lacrosse captain whose ambition threatens her popular girl status;
- Sam, who worries his years of overachieving will be wasted if he doesn't attend a name-brand college;
- Audrey, who struggles with perfectionism; and
- The Stealth Overachiever, a mystery junior who flies under the radar.

Robbins tackles hard-hitting issues such as the student and teacher cheating epidemic, over-testing, sports rage, the black market for study drugs, and a college admissions process so cutthroat that some students are driven to depression and suicide because of a B. Even the earliest years of schooling have become insanely competitive, as Robbins learned when she gained unprecedented access into the inner workings of a prestigious Manhattan kindergarten admissions office. A compelling mix of fast-paced storytelling and

engrossing investigative journalism, *The Overachievers* aims both to calm the admissions frenzy and to expose its escalating dangers.”



The Overachievers: The Secret Lives of Driven Kids
by Alexandra Robbins



A
memoir/autobiography/biography
of your choice

Assignment Details —

Step 1: Read *The Overachievers: The Secret Lives of Driven Kids* by Alexandra Robbins.

Step 2: As you read, complete 50 text annotations on **Connections Chart, Part 1**. You should annotate for a variety of the purposes:

Purpose: Identify the author’s main argument

Detail: Identify supporting details (such as facts, statistics, studies, expert testimonies)

Inference: Make inferences (draw conclusions based on background knowledge and clues in the text)

Question: Ask questions regarding the text (to clarify a difficult point or consider the author’s purpose in making a specific choice)

Connection: Identify global connections (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world)

For each annotation, explain the significance of the text selection.

At the end of **each** chapter, write one open-ended question (cannot be answered with a yes/no) that relates to the author’s **purpose** in that chapter. After finishing the entire book, complete the SCR (Short Critical Response) to analyze the author’s overall argument.

Step 3: Additionally, it will be your job this summer to identify and read an appropriate memoir that you feel corresponds with *The Overachievers*. The memoir could support Robbins’ argument, refute it, or simply supplement it in some way. Regardless, it will be up to *you* to justify your pairing. As you read, complete **at least 50** text annotations on your **Connections Chart, Part 2**. You should annotate for a variety of purposes:

Purpose: Identify the author’s main argument

Detail: Identify supporting details (such as facts, statistics, studies, expert testimonies)

Inference: Make inferences (draw conclusions based on background knowledge and clues in the text)

Question: Ask questions regarding the text (to clarify a difficult point or consider the author's purpose in making a specific choice)

Connection: Identify global connections (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world)

***You should make text-to-text connections frequently. Think about how the memoir you selected relates to Robbins' work.*

For each annotation, explain the significance of the text selection.

At the end of **each** chapter, write one open-ended question (cannot be answered with a yes/no) that relates to the author's **purpose** in that chapter. After finishing your selected memoir, complete the SCR (Short Critical Response) to identify and analyze the author's purpose. (Obviously, there will be a level of inferring here.)

Step 4: On the first day of class, bring a quote to class that exemplifies the definition of success. For example, here is a quote from Winston Churchill: "Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts." Find an original quote. Do not use this one.

After we hand out the syllabus and have brief introductions, you will prepare a 20 minute free write assignment, in which you write about what you have learned about success after reading Robbins' book and doing the AP Lang summer assignment. What is Robbins' definition of success? How does this definition of success support the author's purpose and argument? What is your personal definition of success? Why did you select the second reading assignment (the memoir/ autobiography/biography of the person that you did? How does/does not Robbins' book or the life of the person selected by you reflect your personal definition of success? **Do NOT prepare the free write assignment before class.**

Note: These assignments, with the exception of the free write assignment, should be completed as a typewritten assignment on a word processor. Providing formatted and "clean" work is just as important digitally as it is with handwritten notes.

Connections Chart, Part 1 - The Overachievers: The Secret Lives of Driven Kids

Entry #	Quote or Paraphrased section	Pg. #	Type of annotation	Explain the significance of the passage to the text as a whole
Example	<i>"Overachiever culture affects not only overachievers and the college application process, but also the U.S. education system as a whole, non-overachieving students, the booming college counseling and test-prep industries, the tendency to cheat and use cutthroat tactics to get ahead, the way parents raise children and campus drug culture."</i>	15	Purpose	Robbins is extending her argument that the "overachiever culture" addressed in her book extends far beyond just designating a single person as someone who goes beyond simply achieving. Robbins states that the culture (yet to be determined if we created it or if it evolved) affects not just students, but the entire society in which those students find themselves in.

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Chapter Questions

Example - Chapter 1: Why does the author list the things they carried with them throughout the war? How does this structure help to achieve his purpose?

Chapter 1
Chapter 2

SCR (Short Critical Response): Analyze the author's overall argument, citing textual evidence, and explaining your analysis.

Connections Chart, Part 2 - Selected Memoir/Autobiography/Biography: _____ (Type Book Title Here)

Entry #	Quote or Paraphrased section	Pg. #	Type of annotation	Explain the significance of the passage to the text as a whole
Example				The narrator is listing the things they carried to help the reader understand the physical and mental weight of the war on these soldiers. Each item holds some significance for the individual that carries it and helps to characterize the men.
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Chapter
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