Several Short Sentences about Writing by Verlyn Klinkenborg:

AP Language and Composition Summer Work Assignments (105 pts.)

DIRECTIONS: The five assignments should be completed while reading the Klinkenborg book. All work will be due on the first day of school. These assignments will be more germane while reading the book. Thus, I strongly advise against rushing through the book and then completing the assignments afterward, unless you read the entire book a second time and tackle the assignments at that time. This book requires you to be reflective. Slow down. Think. Ponder. Read. Write. If you have any questions about any assignments, email Mr. Strohschein at mstrohschein@ohsd.net. I will be checking my email periodically during the summer. Have a great summer! Note: If you added the class late in the summer and/or transferred in from another school, you will have until the end of September to complete the summer work.

Assignment #1: Ten-Page Handwritten Journal (50 pts.) (Note: The front and back counts as two pages, not one.) As you read through the book, stop and jot down answers to some of the following questions that make you think about your own writing, the process of writing, or how Klinkenborg challenges your own ideas about writing. Below are quotes I pulled and questions I generated from the text. However, you choose which quotes and questions to reflect on. Note: You DO NOT have to answer all 15 items below.

1. Write down “all the noise in your head” as you go about writing (pp. 6-7). Reflect on that “noise.”
2. What models (pp. 8-9) have teachers used to teach you about writing?
3. What is the connection between writing and reading (17-20)?
4. How important is choice to you when it comes to reading and writing (30-32)?
5. What does Klinkenborg mean when he suggests, “If you notice something, it’s because it’s important” (37)? What things do you notice when you write? Reflect on Klinkenborg’s ideas about “noticing.” (37-40)
6. Reflect on how you get started as a writer. What suggestions does Klinkenborg give about how one should start getting down ideas (pp. 47-49)?
7. Reflect on reading aloud. Do you ever read aloud? What does Klinkenborg say about the value of reading aloud (49-52)?
8. Which of the “two readers” are you more often—the literal or the literate (66-67)? Explain based on your experiences revising your own work and/or editing other friends’/classmates’ pieces. (Also refer to pp. 138-140.)
9. Do you agree with Klinkenborg’s idea about “flow” (67-75)? Explain.
10. Create a list like Klinkenborg on p. 79 in which you envision the ideal situations and tools you need to write your best work.
11. How would you describe your writing “style?” Use Klinkenborg’s ideas on pp. 84 to guide your writing.
13. On p. 94, Klinkenborg suggests that outlining “derogates the making of sentences” and “ignores the suddenness of thought.” Do you agree or disagree with his suggestions about prewriting (94-96)?
14. Write about your own feelings about “authority” (131). Do you feel you have a sense of authority in your own writing? Explain. Write down any negative feelings you have about your sense of authority.
15. Write about completion. (146-149). Expand on Klinkenborg’s idea of completeness and share your own ideas about it.
Assignment #2: Aphorisms and Mini-Poster (10 pts.)
As you read *Several Short Sentences about Writing*, write down five particularly interesting aphorisms about writing. These are short, pithy statements that really make you think about writing or reading. They should be significant—a saying that could be used for a poster, a bumper sticker, or something that you would like to hang on the wall in your room. After writing down those five aphorisms, explain why you chose them and why they are meaningful to you. Lastly, choose one of the aphorisms and create a mini-poster and artwork that accompanies the aphorism.

Assignment #3: Craft a Writing Piece (25 pts.)
As you are reading *Several Short Sentences About Writing*, I would like you to concurrently create a 1-4 page typed, writing piece that can be fiction, non-fiction, poetry, news article/feature, opinion piece, etc.—really any genre will do—using Klinkenborg’s suggestions on pp. 96, 104 (“making sentences in your head”), 110 (“deciding what works”) and other ideas throughout the book. Double-space if typing prose; single-space poetry. The piece should interest you, truly matter to you and make you proud upon completion and subsequent revision.

Assignment #4: Close Reading Exercises (10 pts.)
Choose any two passages from pp. 151-161 and answer all the questions on pp. 162 as they relate to each passage. Next, answer the questions the author poses about each of the specific passages. Those start on the bottom of page 162 and continue on through page 169.

Assignment #5: Some Practical Problems [169-204] (10 pts.)
Choose any five of the examples Klinkenborg cites in this section that were of particular interest to you. Explain the problem Klinkenborg discovered with each entry and how he corrected it. In addition, explain if you’ve had similar issues with your own writing.

Below is the grading sheet I will use to assess your summer work:

*Several Short Sentences about Writing*
AP Language and Composition Summer Work Assignments (105 pts.)

Grading Sheet

Assignment #1: Ten-Page Handwritten Journal  _____ / 50 pts.
Assignment #2: Aphorisms and Mini-Poster  _____ / 10 pts.
Assignment #3: Writing Piece  _____ / 25 pts.
Assignment #4: Close Reading Exercises (2 passages)  _____ / 10 pts.
Assignment #5: Some Practical Problems (5 examples)  _____ / 10 pts.

TOTAL POINTS _____ / 105 pts.
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Grading Sheet

Assignment #1: Ten-Page Handwritten Journal ___ / 50 pts.
Assignment #2: Aphorisms and Mini-Poster ___ / 10 pts.
Assignment #3: Writing Piece ___ / 25 pts.
Assignment #4: Close Reading Exercises (2 passages) ___ / 10 pts.
Assignment #5: Some Practical Problems (5 examples) ___ / 10 pts.

TOTAL POINTS ____ / 105 pts.