In AP Language and Composition, your job is to analyze nonfiction texts and understand how they are crafted to achieve a certain purpose and reach a certain audience. By doing this, we can understand that every choice an author makes is deliberate and intended to achieve a certain effect. You will read Virginia Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own*, paying close attention to the argument she presents to her audience and whether or not she achieves her intended purpose.

**Directions:**
After reading Virginia Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own*, select one of the prompts below to respond to. Your response should be between 500-700 words and include at least 2 direct quotes from your reading. The following prompts are adaptations of AP Literature prompts; they have been adapted to fit the needs of our non-fiction analysis.

**Prompts:**

1. *(Adapted from 1973 prompt)* An effective literary work does not merely stop or cease; it concludes. In the view of some critics, a work that does not provide the pleasure of significant closure has terminated with an artistic fault. A satisfactory ending is not, however, always conclusive in every sense; significant closure may require the reader to abide with or adjust to ambiguity and uncertainty. In your essay, discuss the ending of *A Room of One’s Own*. Explain precisely how and why the ending appropriately or inappropriately concludes the work. Is Virginia Woolf successful in concluding her lecture? Does this conclusion help or hurt the argument she has examined throughout the text? Examine her overall argumentative structure and determine whether or not you think the conclusion is effective--for her argument, the type of audience she’s addressing, and for the type of text.

2. *(Adapted from 2011 prompt)* In *The Writing of Fiction* (1925), novelist Edith Wharton states the following: “At every stage in the progress of his tale the novelist must rely on what may be called the illuminating incident to reveal and emphasize the inner meaning of each situation. Illuminating incidents are the magic casements of fiction, its vistas on infinity.” Write a well-organized essay in which you describe an “illuminating” episode or moment in *A Room of One’s Own* and explain how it functions as a “casement,” or a window that opens onto the meaning of the work as a whole. Does Virginia Woolf highlight multiple moments of illumination? Which ones are most effective and why? How are they examined and/or repeated throughout the text?
3. (Adapted from 2005 prompt) In Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening* (1899), protagonist Edna Pontellier is said to possess “That outward existence which conforms, the inward life that questions.” Write an essay in which you analyze how this tension between outward conformity and inward questioning contributes to the meaning of the work. What does Virginia Woolf say about conformity? How does she challenge or accept society’s expectations of women? Of women writers? In what other ways does she examine conformity and defiance?

4. (Adapted from 2004 prompt) Critic Roland Barthes has said, “Literature is the question minus the answer.” Considering Barthes’ observation, write an essay in which you analyze a central question *A Room of One’s Own* raises and the extent to which it offers answers. Explain how the author’s treatment of this question affects your understanding of the work as a whole. Does Virginia Woolf manage to answer the questions she’s posed? Has she successfully answered the question she was hired to answer in her lecture? What other questions have arisen as she’s attempted to answer the questions of women and fiction?

5. (Adapted from 1995 prompt) Many texts use contrasting places (for example, two countries, two cities or towns, two houses, or the land and the sea) to represent opposed forces or ideas that are central to the meaning of the work. Examine the various contrasting places that Virginia Woolf examines in *A Room of One’s Own*. Write about how the places differ, what each place represents, and how their contrast contributes to the meaning of the work.