

AP Language & Composition/Mr. Richter
Summer Reading: *Growing Up*

Welcome to AP Comp. Your work for this course begins with Russell Baker's *Growing Up*, the 1983 Pulitzer Prize winner for Biography/Autobiography. First, I hope you enjoy this book. As you read, think of other memoirs or autobiographies you've encountered, even if it's just Douglass' *Narrative* from last year's English class. Think how Russell's memoir differs from, or is similar to, Douglass' or others'. You should know why Douglass wrote his autobiography. Why do you think Baker wrote his? Does he have a specific or general audience in mind? If you were to put Baker's memoir into the junior year curriculum—in other words an American literature class—where would place this book in relation to the other texts and why? Consider how Baker structures his memoir, especially in terms of beginning and end. Consider any literary elements, especially theme or motifs such as the role of women in Baker's life. Why do you think it won a Pulitzer? For those who are interested in American history, think about what life was like for Baker and his family growing up during the Depression. Consider any way that you connect with Baker's story of growing up. Most of all, though, read it. And see what you take away from the experience. Good luck.