

AP English Language & Composition

2024-25

Course Description

“An AP course in English Language and Composition engages students in becoming skilled readers of prose written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts, and in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Both their writing and their reading should make students aware of the interactions among a writer’s purposes, audience expectations, and subjects as well as the way generic conventions and the resources of language contribute to effectiveness in writing.”

– The College Board Course Description, 2006

Unlike previous literature courses focused on literary appreciation and the metaphors, symbolism, and features of genre writing (drama, poetry, novels, short stories, etc.), AP English Language and Composition courses are intended to cultivate a different, more encompassing type of reading – asking students to assume the inquiring stance of critical thinkers by reading both rhetorically and reflectively. This class asks students to read with the following questions in mind:

- What is the text doing?
- Who is speaking or writing?
- What’s the message?
- For whom is this message intended?
- What circumstances brought about this message?
- What is supposed to happen as a result of communicating this message?
- How might different recipients receive this message?
- How do I respond to this message?
- Why do I respond this way?

– College Board 2014 Free-Response Questions Student Performance Q & A

Course Goals

As a student in AP English, you will be expected to:

1. carefully read and critically analyze modes of writing and synthesize this knowledge into logical, cogent responses
2. understand why writers use specific rhetoric to accomplish their objectives
3. consider a work’s structure, style, language, and tone
4. study representative works from various modes/genres and time periods (seventeenth to the twenty-first century)
5. understand the complexity of a work and analyze how it is representative of its genre/mode
6. consider the social and historical values reflected in a selection
7. write essays modeling each of the genres/modes studied in the course
8. become aware through reading, listening, speaking, and writing the details and elements of the genres/modes studied in the course
9. develop a more advanced vocabulary and grammar

Course Text and Materials

You should consider obtaining personal copies of books or novels used in this course. Digital versions, however, are not recommended because they cannot be annotated. If available, you may check out books from the English Department or borrow them from local libraries. **Recommended:** Modern Language Association. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* – Ninth Edition (2021)

Please have the following supplies by the end of the first week of school: three ring binder (2-2 ½ inch), section dividers (4-6 sections should be enough), blue or black pens, at least three different colors of highlighters

There is no textbook for the course, so I will provide you with copies of various materials. It is your responsibility to keep these documents and bring them to class every day. If you lose them, I will not provide extras.

The list of texts/works changes from year to year and I do not follow the exact sequence nor do I teach the same material each year. I will likely add and subtract texts as the year progresses and reserve the right to do so as needed.

Modes of Discourse

Students will read multiple texts and essays in each of the following modes and each will be accompanied by specific assignments, essays, and quizzes, etc. Most work will require you to analyze the author's writing and others will have you write in that specific style/mode. For all assignments you will be expected to draw evidence from the text(s) to support your arguments, opinions, and statements. Styles of essays that will be covered:

comparison and contrast
cause and effect
process analysis

exemplification
definition
description

narration
classification and division

Each unit of study will begin with readings related to that mode of discourse. Some authors *may* include:

Niccolo Machiavelli	E.B. White	Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.
Susan B. Anthony	Shirley Jackson	Langston Hughes
Maya Angelou	David Sedaris	Chief Seattle
George Orwell	Dagoberto Gilb	William Faulkner
Bill Bryson	Ernest Hemingway	Gertrude Stein
Horace Miner	Stephen King	Alice Walker
Mortimer Adler	Elie Wiesel	Clare Boothe Luce
Lin-Manuel Miranda	Ronald Reagan	Johnathan Kozol
Oscar Wilde	Martin Luther King, Jr.	Jonathan Swift
Ursula LeGuin	Henry David Thoreau	Michael Eric Dyson
Lars Eighner	Judy Brady	Nancy Mairs
Plato	Elizabeth Cady Stanton	Frederick Douglass
Sullivan Ballou	Ta-Nehisi Coates	Jonathan Donne
Thomas Paine	Mary Wollstonecraft	Sojourner Truth
David Foster Wallace	Jeannette Walls	Barbara Jourdan
Amy Tan	Dorothy Parker	Ronald Reagan
H. L. Mencken	Winston Churchill	Harriet Jacobs

Performance Tasks

- Completing vocabulary exercises throughout the year
- Demonstrating mastery of assigned vocabulary terms through weekly quizzes
- Mastering graphic organizers, visual texts, annotation, double-entry journals, paragraph responses, practice AP test questions and prompts
- Regular outside reading which may take the form of essays and articles
- Taking periodic quizzes on reading selections
- Writing essays styled after the genres/modes in the units of study
- Using the writing process to workshop personal essays
- Participating in Socratic seminars
- Mastering elements of advanced grammar
- Writing timed essays (based on past AP prompts)
- Preparing for May AP exams by studying and taking past exams and progress checks in AP Classroom

Some Comments About Assignments

Reading: The most important requirement for this course is that you read every assignment carefully and on time. Students unaccustomed to AP courses will need to plan for more reading time than most other courses require due to the amount of annotation or “active reading” expected.

All readings require annotations and are subject to spot checks at any time without advance warning. Journal entries, written responses, writing a précis, completing “puzzle paragraphs,” quizzes, and questions may or may not be assigned depending on the material or unit of study.

Writing: You will write many papers using MLA format including one that is research-based. Your papers will include explication of modes of discourse and analysis and synthesis, through close reading, of stories and essays. I will be more specific about the requirements for these assignments later on, but in general, each paper will use specific and well-chosen evidence to support an argument/perspective about all works. All papers will follow my specific writing guidelines. These papers will involve writers’ workshop and peer editing. I will not mark all errors on your writing and essays. If you have a question about your grade, please come after school when I can go over it with you in more detail.

In-class

Writings: These will include quick writes, author’s craft notes, passage study activities, and timed writes taken primarily from previous AP examinations.

Quizzes: I will not always announce quizzes ahead of time. There will be a number of reading comprehension quizzes, in addition to ones that ask you to engage an idea or concept. The quizzes will always be given in the beginning of class; if you come in late, you may not take the quiz.

You will have regular vocabulary quizzes, usually each Friday at the beginning of class.

Outside

Reading: This course cannot cover everything; therefore, you will be expected to read and write outside the classroom. You will be responsible for reading additional works and reporting on them. Personal responsibility is a hallmark of the AP system. There are a great number of resources on my web page and Schoology class.

General Guidelines

Be prepared. Every day you need to bring the following materials:

- binder (2-2 ½" is recommended) with 4-6 dividers
- a dedicated AP Lang notebook (spiral bound or other; 100 pages recommended)
- lined paper (buy a ream and secure it in the back of your binder)
- pencils and blue or black pens
- highlighters (at least four colors)
- option: Post-its of various shapes and colors
- your assignments/handouts

You are required to keep all of your handouts. If you misplace your copy, it is your responsibility to get your own replacement; I will not provide you with another copy.

Pay attention to due dates. All assignments must be turned in when they are due.

- Homework: due at the beginning of the hour
- Classwork: due at the end of the hour or time given by teacher
- Assignments for unexcused absences will not be accepted
- Late assignments will not be accepted for any reason
- Computer/printer problems are not an excuse for missing an assignment
- If you are absent, it is **your** responsibility to find out what you missed and to make it up. Do not complete this work during our class time; it is homework. You are responsible for obtaining your make-up work and turning it in on time. Ask some students in class what you missed and then collect the work from me at the appropriate time (usually before class). When you turn in absent work, mark "Absent" at the top of the front page of the assignment and turn it in to the appropriate tray on my desk at the **beginning** of the hour the following day.
- Things that will result in loss of credit for assignments:
 - copying/plagiarism of any kind
 - using your phone unless otherwise instructed to do so
 - sleeping
 - doing work for other classes
 - unexcused absences
- **If you are in school for any part of the day, but leave before your class period, you are expected to find a way to get your assignment, homework, paper, etc. to me** (you may give it to a trusted friend, bring it to my room, slide it under my door if I am not in my room, or drop it off with the Attendance Office for delivery).

Attendance is important. Be in class and on time every day.

- Tardies: fourth and eighth – detention; eleventh – loss of credit
- Absences: eleventh (excused or unexcused) – loss of credit
 - Leaving the room for more than 6 minutes will result in an unexcused/6 minute absence

All assignments are important. Your quarter and semester grades are based on the percentage of total possible points that you accumulate. You must pass at least one quarter and the final exam to earn credit. You are not guaranteed an "A" for the class simply because you signed up for it. All grades will be assigned based on the quality of your work in comparison to the quality of work generally accepted in a college-level course. **I will not mark every error made on your writing assignments. Some comments will be provided, but if you have specific questions about your grade on a paper, please arrange to see me after school so we may go over it in detail.**

Grading Scale

93-100	A	87-89	B+	77-79	C+	67-69	D+	0-59	F
90-92	A-	84-86	B	74-76	C	64-66	D		
		80-83	B-	70-73	C-	60-63	D-		

Advanced Placement Tests. Two exams offered in English, one emphasizing literary interpretation skills and the other emphasizing writing skills, are given in May of each year. **You are not required to take the AP exam in May.** If you choose to take the exam, the cost is approximately \$98 per test and you must sign up for these tests through the new online registration site. Information regarding this procedure will be provided during the year.

Units of Study

This is a tentative syllabus; therefore, I reserve the right to modify this at any time. Units of study may overlap with one another or may not be presented in chronological order. For instance, the class will be working on AP Exam test practice throughout the school year.

UNIT ONE: WRITERS BOOTCAMP

During this unit we will be covering:

the writing process	line of reasoning	essay development
five <u>part</u> essay	reading skills/annotation	context
glossary of rhetorical terms	grammar review	SPACE CAT/SOAPStone
the three appeals: logos, ethos, pathos		

UNIT TWO: EXPOSITION & NARRATION

Readings: "On Dumpster Diving," excerpts from *The Glass Castle*, "Consider the Lobster," "Salvation," "Orange Crush," "Shooting an Elephant," "A Plague of Tics"

Epistolary Rhetoric: "Letters from Far and Near," "Sullivan Ballou's Letter"

- **Essay:** Students write a biographical incident paper
- **Timed Essay:** The AP Rhetorical Analysis Essay (FRQ 2 on national exam)

UNIT THREE: ARGUMENTATION/PERSUASION

Identifying thesis and argumentative purpose

Evaluation of propaganda and logical fallacies

Readings: "College is a Waste of Time and Money," "Why Colleges Shower Their Students with As," "The Gender Gap at School," "Gender Differences," "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," President Obama's inaugural address, "Lincoln's Second Inaugural," Vonnegut's commencement address to St. Agnes, "That's Outrageous!" "Go Ahead, Hurt My Feelings," "Are the Homeless Crazy?"

View: *Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism*, *Miss Representation*

- **Essay:** Write a letter to the editor
- **Group Project:** The Sales Pitch

Satirical elements/how to spot satire (handout)

Satirical examples: articles from *theonion.com*, "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema," "A Modest Proposal"

- **Essay:** The Social Satire Essay
- **Timed Essay:** The AP Argumentative Essay (FRQ 3)

UNIT FOUR: DEFINITION

Readings: "Elements of Definition," "Generation Q," "The Post-Everything Generation," "Pride," "An Album of Styles," "Of Youth and Age," "Sex, Drugs, and the Extinction of Dinosaurs," "A Word's Meaning," "You Can't Say That," "The Female Body," "Guys v. Men," "Ain't I a Woman?"

- **Essay:** Extended Definition Essay

UNIT FIVE: COMPARISON/CONTRAST

Readings: "Notes on a Native Son," "Turkeys in the Kitchen," "Two Ways to Belong to America," "Where I Lived and What I Lived For," "Is Google Making Us Stupid?"

- **Essay:** comparison and contrast paper

UNIT SIX: VISUAL RHETORIC

Analyzing visual arguments (handouts/assignments)

This unit surveys the study of the rhetoric of visual media including photographs, drawings, films, advertisements, comic strips, political cartoons, and graphic novels.

Synthesizing sources, "Reading Visual Rhetoric" (handouts)

Practice synthesis: reading and discussion, reading and writing for the AP Synthesis FRQ, analyzing author's use of images and the media (handouts)

- **Timed Essay:** The AP Synthesis Essay (FRQ 1)

UNIT SEVEN: PROCESS ANALYSIS

Readings: "Your New Computer," "I am a Cripple," "How to Foil a Terrorist Plot in Seven Easy Steps," "Camping Out," "Principles of Poor Writing," "Getting Coffee is Hard to Do," "How to Escape from a Bad Date," "The Embalming of Mr Jones," "How to Write with Style"

- **Essay:** User's Manual
- **Essay:** "How to _____ with Style"

UNIT EIGHT: CAUSE AND EFFECT

Readings: "The America I Love," "On Teenagers and Tattoos," "The Origins of Anorexia Nervosa," "The March of the Monoculture," "Sex, Lies, and Conversations," "The Growing Cowardice of Online Anonymity," "Why We Crave Horror Movies"

- **Essay:** cause and effect paper

UNIT NINE: FINAL AP TEST PREPARATION

In addition to practicing throughout the year, we will spend some time reviewing for the exam. During these weeks leading up to the national exam we will use sample tests to practice strategies for approaching the multiple choice section, mastering essay responses, especially the synthesis essay. I will give some specific information regarding the test and we will practice the parts in a timed environment. After school study session(s) will be optional.

FINAL PROJECT & UNIT OF STUDY

Once the national exam is over, students will work on an independent project outside of class that will count as the final exam grade. Specific information and instructions will be given *after* the AP Exam. In class work to be determined. In previous years this has included comparative film analysis, book clubs, or reading *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare.

- **Individual Project:** The Book of Others (outside of class)

Miscellaneous

Assessment – papers/essays will be assessed using formal rubrics and the following criteria:

- Stating the central question that each work raises
 - support the assertion using references to the selection(s)
 - focus - clear, competent paragraphs utilizing: transitions, topic sentences, supporting details, references to the text(s), references to how the text is written using our lexicon that describes the force or quality of the diction, images, and details to qualify *how* the work is written
- The use of a variety of sentence structures
- The essay is organized logically, coherence is smooth with an eloquent and appropriate use of repetition, transitions, emphasis, and syntax
- There is a balance of generalization supported with specific, illustrative detail
- Citations are provided for all quotes and paraphrases
- The use of rhetoric is effective and displays a controlled tone, maintains voice, and achieves appropriate emphasis through diction and sentence structure/fluency
- Criteria as defined by the AP College Board

Mid-Term Exam: will be comprised of a multiple-choice practice AP exam and a rhetorical analysis essay

Daily/Weekly Activities:

- vocabulary quizzes
- class discussion
- reading selections annotated by the student
- timed writing prompts and test practice (including test taking strategies)

A note about the syllabus for AP English: It is important to understand that *the syllabus is tentative*. I have made initial decisions regarding the topics that need to be covered and the selections we will use in each unit, however, I reserve the right to add, delete, or modify these as necessary.

Note: With few exceptions our pass rate on the exam (a score of three or higher) well exceeds that of the national average; however, success in the class does *not* guarantee success on the AP Language & Composition Exam.

It is also important to know that I cannot cover/provide you with all of the materials you may need, so you will have to do some outside research and reading on your own.

AP English Expectations

The following expectations are basic to classroom behavior and ethics. Since this is a fast-paced class with sophisticated material, please know that you may be asked to leave the program if you choose not to meet these expectations.

1. Commitment

I am willing to complete all the assigned work thoroughly, be cooperative, have good attendance, and be organized.

2. Preparedness

I will be prepared for class every day. Preparation will be measured by such behaviors as having materials for class, having completed assignments on time, participating in class discussions, and appropriately demonstrating that learning has taken place.

3. Work

*I will work hard **every day** to achieve success in this class. My work ethic will be demonstrated in my cordial and cooperative attitude and my efforts to complete each task in a thorough and timely manner.*

4. Discipline

I will behave respectfully toward my teacher and peers. I will observe classroom and school policies.

5. Honesty

I know that I alone am responsible for my work and that cheating is never an appropriate way to accomplish my goals. Cheating destroys trust and does not reflect true learning.

6. Guidelines/Class Expectations

I have read and understand my responsibilities for the course regarding late work and attendance. I accept that the quality of my work and effort must be comparable to that of a student taking a college-level course and that the expectations will be much higher than those of my previous English classes. I recognize that I must be resourceful and self-reliant inside and outside of the class in order to excel. I understand that success in the class does not guarantee success on the AP exam.

AP English Honor Code

High school AP classes approximate the learning found in introductory level college courses. Students who have signed up for an AP Course will be evaluated in the classroom to assess the knowledge that they have mastered and later take a national exam that will compare their knowledge in the subject with students across the country. It is extremely important that work in and out of the classroom honestly reflect each student's accomplishments; therefore, academic integrity is extraordinarily important in this level of instruction.

Academic dishonesty has many forms, but a few of the most destructive and the ones of particular concern are:

Cheating is violating the rules of the course. It includes copying others' work; giving your work to others to use as their own; and bringing notes to tests, written on paper, your hand, or anywhere else. Giving answers is the same as receiving answers. Using cell phones, smart watches, the Internet, or any other electronic device to obtain answers is also cheating. Cell phones and listening devices may be used between classes and during lunch, but usage is forbidden during class. Using an electronic device during class will result in a referral. It is strictly forbidden to be in possession of an electronic device during tests and quizzes. Possession of a cell phone during a test or quiz results is an immediate zero with no exception.

Plagiarizing is representing writing as your own when you are not the original source. This includes not citing references, improper use of quotes, and representing words and ideas as your own when they are not. Using answers from the Internet and turning them in as your own work is both cheating and plagiarizing.

Collaborating is working with others when you are required to work alone. This includes take home essays and reading and writing assignments. All analysis and questions/answers must be your own work. Unless specific instructions have been given, **ALL** work is to be done individually.

It must be understood by students and parents that the consequences for academic dishonesty are very high in this class. In addition to parent notification, students will be subject to:

- A "0" on the test, quiz, assignment, or project that is involved in the violation.
- A written referral outlining the violation. A copy of the referral will be sent for evaluation to the faculty advisor(s) for National Honor Society, if appropriate.
- Recommended removal from the class for repeated violations.