

AP English Language and Composition Syllabus 2023-2024

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“Word-work is sublime...because it is generative; it makes meaning that secures our difference, our human difference—the way in which we are like no other life.”

Toni Morrison

OVERVIEW

American Literature and Composition is a study of the major literary topics and themes across the history of the U.S. from pre-colonial times to present day. Students will focus on the major literary forms of the emerging nations, analyze the literary themes and trends, and research and compose several papers, speeches, and presentations using representative forms of discourse.

Advanced Placement Language and Composition is designed to promote divergent thinking and in-depth analysis so that students will write cohesive and grammatically persuasive essays. Rhetoric will be learned through both in-class and out-of-class essays, enabling the students to merit passing and top scores on the national exam. Since this course is on the college level, students are required to put forth many hours of study and preparation. The reading and writing and vocabulary development will be both extensive and intensive.

THE TEST

The AP Lang test for 2024 will be May 14. The test is three hours long. For 60 minutes, candidates read prose passages and answer sets of multiple-choice questions on the passages. Then the candidates have 120 minutes to answer three essay questions (rhetorical analysis, synthesis, and argumentative). Performance on the multiple-choice section counts for 45% of the total score; performance on the essay section, 55%. Multiple-choice questions test students' ability to read critically and recognize rhetorical elements in individual passages. The two parts of the examination are complementary; the exam as a whole measures as many of the overall course objectives as possible in the three-hour exam period.

AP 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.

Course Goals: AP Language and Composition

Upon completing the AP English Language and Composition course, students should be able to:

- analyze and interpret samples of good writing, identifying and explaining an author's use of rhetorical strategies and techniques
- apply effective strategies and techniques in their own writing
- create and sustain arguments based on readings, research, and/or personal experience
- write for a variety of purposes
- produce expository, analytical, and argumentative compositions that introduce a complex central idea and develop it with appropriate evidence

- drawn from primary and/or secondary sources, cogent explanations, and clear transitions
- demonstrate understanding and mastery of standard written English as well as stylistic maturity in their own writings
- demonstrate understanding of the conventions of citing primary and secondary sources
- move effectively through the stages of the writing process, with careful attention to inquiry and research, drafting, revising, editing, and review;
- write thoughtfully about their own process of composition
- revise a work to make it suitable for a different audience;
- analyze image as text
- evaluate and incorporate reference documents into researched papers.

Advanced Placement Course Description, May 2007, 2008

The course teaches and requires students to write in several forms (e.g., narrative, expository, analytical, and argumentative essays) about a variety of subjects (e.g., public policies, popular culture, personal experiences). Student writing proceeds through several drafts and revisions aided by teachers and peers including but not limited to:

- persuasive speech
- research paper – literary criticism
- research assignment – synthesis
- personal narrative
- descriptive narrative
- journal writing
- Timed AP Practice essays

When responding to visual and oral texts and media (e.g., television, radio, film productions, and electronic media), the student:

- Recognizes strategies used by the media to inform, persuade, entertain (e.g., advertisements, perpetuation of stereotypes, use of visual representations, special effects, language).
- Analyzes visual or aural techniques used in a media message for a particular audience and evaluates their effectiveness.
- Develops and applies criteria for assessing the effectiveness of the presentation, style, and content of films and other forms of electronic communication.
- Identifies the aesthetic effects of a media presentation (e.g., layout, lighting, color, camera angles, background, etc.)

Year-Long Syllabus (Subject to change)

Unit One: Native American Traditions and Accounts of Exploration

Literature Focus

Students will analyze the oral tradition of the Native Americans as well as the first encounters of settlers to America. The issue of the “new world” and colonialism will be discussed.

Texts may include: Various creation myths and stories from the Native American tradition, excerpts from William Bradford’s *Of Plymouth Plantation*, and Olaudah Equiano’s *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, John Smith’s *General History of VA*, various poetry from Anne Bradstreet, Arthur Miller’s *The Crucible*

Rhetorical Focus

Students will study modes of discourse, focusing on the purpose of description and narration. Various rhetorical strategies will be introduced as well as the concept of purpose, audience, and strategy, and the rhetorical triangle. Students will study the basic tenets of argumentation including the warrant-claim model.

Texts may include: various essays from past AP exams, Orwell's *Shooting an Elephant*, Sedaris's *Me Talk Pretty One Day*, White's *Once More to the Lake*, Angelou, *My Name is Margaret*, other supplementary essays

Assessments include: Reading quizzes, Socratic or Harkness seminars, journal writings, timed writings, unit tests, classwork/homework checks, narrative/descriptive essay, visual responses (original cartoons), dramatic readings, AP practice essay questions (rhetorical analysis/synthesis questions). Students will research various topics relating to Colonial America. At least one formal writing assignment will require a student-teacher conference to discuss revision.

Unit Two: Writers in the Time of Revolution/ Age of Reason

Nonfiction/Literature Focus

Students will analyze how the Puritan style serves the Puritan culture and detect loaded language. Students will also define the cultural principles that led to the Revolution, including the philosophies of Locke, Rousseau, and Hobbes, and discover how literature affected the Revolution.

Texts may include: Jonathan Edwards' *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, Thomas Paine's *The Crisis*, Patrick Henry's *Speech in the Virginia Convention*, *The Declaration of Independence*, excerpts from Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac* and *Autobiography*, Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer*, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, Singer's *The Singer Solution to World Poverty*

Assessments include: Reading quizzes, Socratic or Harkness seminars, journal writings, timed writings, unit tests, classwork/homework checks, persuasive essay, in-class public forum debates which include a research component.

Rhetorical Focus

Continuing our focus on the modes of discourse, the students will analyze the use of argumentation/persuasion and apply to their own writing. Study will also include the five canons of rhetoric and the rhetorical process in writing. Students will use rhetorical strategies and synthesize supporting reasons, warrants, and evidence in the study of argument.

Questions to consider: What does the narrative reveal about the perspective of the author? Is man essentially good? What are the essential components of an argument?

Unit Three: Romanticism, Transcendentalism and Gothic Literature

Literature Focus

Students will define the elements that make up Romanticism, Transcendentalism and American Gothic literature and contrast to earlier periods of literature.

Texts may include: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, *Rappacini's Daughter*, *The Minister's Black Veil*, Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven*, *The Philosophy of Composition*, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *A Rose for Emily*, and excerpts from writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau

Rhetorical Focus

Style analysis will be heavily emphasized in this unit as students will look at how description contributes to mood and setting. Our study of author's purpose will continue as well. Our study of Poe will investigate his unusual uses of syntax and diction.

Additional Literary Focus: Poetry

Students will examine the works of Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman and their influences on American poetry.

Assessments include: Reading quizzes, Socratic or Harkness seminars, journal writings, timed writings, unit tests, classwork/homework checks, process analysis, cause/effect essay (Singer here is possible). Students will write a minimum of two practice AP essays in class. ONE practice essay will involve extensive pre-writing using groups and conferencing.

Questions to consider: How does the individual maintain a sense of self and still be a part of society?

Unit Four: Realism and the Civil War

Nonfiction/Literature focus

Students will learn how fiction allowed for vicarious experience of life and how the war experience influenced American literature. Students will examine both biographical and fictional war narratives and other examples of Realism. Students will also discuss and examine satire in society.

Texts may include: Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Kate Chopin's "Story of an Hour," Edith Wharton's "Roman Holiday," Stephen Crane's *To Build a Fire* and *Open Boat*, Abraham Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address* and *Second Inaugural Address*, Ambrose Bierce's *Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*, *The Awakening*, *Bartleby the Scrivener*, and various personal Civil War accounts, slave narratives, and other supplementary stories/novels. ADD HOWELL painting with *Open Boat*

Assessments include: Reading quizzes, Socratic or Harkness seminars, journal writings, timed writings, unit tests, classwork/homework checks, comparison/contrast essay, satirical essays, analysis of visual media, analysis of political cartoons. Students will recognize strategies used by the media to inform, persuade, entertain (e.g., advertisements, perpetuation of stereotypes, use of visual representations, special effects, language). Students will write at least two timed AP practice essays – both rhetorical analysis and open-ended or synthesis questions. Students will peer review one practice essay for revision.

Rhetorical Focus

Students will continue to look at the persuasive mode of discourse in the context of the Civil War. Students will also analyze the use of detail in creating realistic fiction.

Questions to consider: How does the literary shift to Realism reflect the impact of the Civil War? How does Realism contradict the perception of American life?

Unit Five: Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance

Nonfiction/Literary Focus

Students will study the Harlem Renaissance and the cultural milieu that surround this American literary movement. The major themes in our study of Modernism will center around isolation and alienation. Students will learn about stream of consciousness and how this literary style communicates the struggle of authors in this time. The students may study naturalism through *The Grapes of Wrath* and how it is reflected in man's degradation to the role of the animal.

Texts may include: from Hurston's "Dust Tracks on a Road", "The Negro Speaks of Rivers", "The Tropics in New York", "Storm Ending," from "How it Feels to be Colored Me", *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, *Native Son*, "The Weary Blues," "A Black Man Talks of Reaping" "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," "The Red Wheelbarrow," *The Grapes of Wrath*, "Mending Wall," "Chicago," "anyone lived in a pretty how town" "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall"

Assessments include: Reading quizzes (including AP multiple choice questions), Socratic or Harkness seminars, journal writings, timed writings, unit tests, classwork/homework checks, classification/division essay, exemplification, analysis of political cartoons. Students will demonstrate the research process and proper documentation in both a formal literary paper on a novel to be read outside of class, and a report on various topics relating to the unit, possibly in the form of a bulletin board. Students will write at least two timed AP practice essays in class – one will be a synthesis essay and the other a response to a visual text. One practice essay will be chosen for revision using the SOAPStone process.

Rhetorical Focus

Students will look at the development of authors' styles including the analysis of figurative language and detail. Students will also synthesize their knowledge of rhetorical modes and look at how authors blend the modes for specific purpose.

Questions to consider: How does the struggle for equality manifest itself in the literature?
How does humanity react to the loss of faith caused by war?

Unit Six: Postmodernism and Contemporary Literature

Nonfiction/Literary Focus

Students will study the postmodern movement and how literature in America developed in response to social change.

Texts may include:

Dinh, *How the USA PATRIOT Act Defends Democracy*

Miller, *Death of a Salesman*

Walker, *Everyday Use*

Klein, *A Web of Brands*

Vidal, *Drugs*

Various contemporary essays

Assessments include: Reading quizzes, Socratic or Harkness seminars, journal writings, timed writings, unit tests, classwork/homework checks, classification/division essay, exemplification. Practice AP multiple choice questions. Students will write at least two timed AP practice essays. A short research component will be part of a synthesis essay. Students will work on revising AP practice essays in a timed setting in preparation for the exam through peer-review and student-teacher conferencing.

Rhetorical Focus

Students examine essays that blend the modes for various purposes and audiences. They will also examine the cultural changes in America and how writers responded accordingly.

Questions to consider: What is man's responsibility to himself, his nation, and his world?

Textbooks

Primary:

Savvas: My Perspectives

For use in class:

The Bedford Reader, X.J. Kennedy and Jane E. Aaron 2006 (Boston Bedford/St. Martin's)

Everything's an Argument with Readings, Third Edition, Andrea A. Lunsford (Stanford U.), John J. Ruszkiewicz (The U. of Texas at Austin), Keith Walters (Portland State U.) 2004

Everyday Use: Rhetoric at Work in Reading and Writing (Paperback), by Hephzibah C. Roskelly, David A. Jolliffe, 2005, Prentice Hall

50 Essays, A Portable Anthology, Cohen, Samuel, 2/e, 2007, Bedford/St. Martin's

The Structure of Argument (Paperback), by Annette T. Rottenberg, Donna Haisty Winchell, Bedford/St. Martin's; 5th edition, 2005

The Norton Reader, W. W. Norton & Company; 11th edition, 2003

Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide, by Laurie G. Kirszner, Stephen R. Mandell, Bedford/St. Martin's 2006

The Lively Art of Writing, by Lucile Vaughan Payne Follett, 1982

The Compact Reader: Short Essays by Method and by Jane E. Aaron, Bedford/St. Martin's; 7th edition 2002

Evaluation and Assessment

Overview: assessment for the semester may include but is not limited to classwork and homework checks, quizzes for reading comprehension, vocabulary and grammar skills, unit tests, teacher made and standardized items, writing evaluation with rubric. A point system will be used to evaluate each student's progress. All assignments will NOT equal 100 points. As a general rule quizzes and classwork will be worth 50 points; tests and writing assignments 100 points. Homework will be averaged as an additional grade. An exam at the end of semester one and two will each be worth 15% of the overall grade for the semester.

Essays will primarily be graded using the AP grading scale of 1-6. This translate to the following scale:

6 = 100-97

5.5 = 96-94

5 = 93-90

4.5 = 89-86

4 = 85-80

3.5 = 79-76

3 = 75-70

2.5 = 69-66

2 = 65-60

1 = 59 AND below

Materials Needed For Class:

- 3 ring Binder with five tabs: syllabus, rhetorical analysis, argument, synthesis, multiple choice
- Plenty of college-rule loose leaf paper
- Blue or black pens and #2 pencils
- Highlighter
- Access to a computer, Internet, and printer-the Media Center is open from 7:30-4:00
- A RED three-pronged folder with pockets – not a binder -- for journals and your portfolio. You will keep this folder in class most of the time.

***Many days you will be required to write one page in a journal. You may not type your journal entries, and you must single space. You must have 5 full pages to get full credit for the journal assignment. One entry each week must be about something we learned, discussed, or did in class. One entry should be about a current event or editorial you read—please attach the article or editorial. The other 3 journal entries can be about any topic. For your elective writing assignments, you might want to do some research and write about one of the famous people we discuss or a specific grammar or punctuation issue.**

You will receive points for some in-class seminars/discussions. If you miss an in-class discussion of any kind that involves points, you will not receive points for that seminar. I will average your grade w/out those points.

Administration:

- All work you turn in must be in INK or typewritten
- Compositions must be turned in on time. A late essay will drop 1 letter grade for each day it is not turned in. You will receive a zero for a composition not turned in within 3 days of the due date. If you are absent the day a composition is due, it is due the day you return. No exceptions!
- If there is homework due and you are absent, it is due the day you return. No exceptions. Recovery for students who are failing (and only those students who are failing may ask for recovery) must be initiated by the *student*. The type of recovery is up to the discretion of the teacher. Students who have not completed all assignments are not eligible for recovery; for example, you can not wait until December to “recover” the work you neglected to do in September. It is rare for a student in an English course to meet the recovery requirement – most students are failing because they have not done all of their work – particularly writing assignments.
- Tests will be made up the day you return to school unless you make other arrangements with me.
- **BE ON TIME FOR CLASS.** You need to be in your seat ready to start class when the bell rings. The tardy policy WILL be enforced.

Recovery

Recovery opportunities will be allowed if a student's performance indicates a significant decline in achievement or a failing cumulative grade. Recovery work must be directly related to the course objectives.

Compositions

All phases of the writing process will be checked and graded at some point. Prewriting (outlines and rough drafts) must be done completely and presented on time in order to receive full credit.

Passes

Conduct personal business on your own time. Restroom passes are available for your use **ONLY** when instruction is not being given by myself or anyone else (this includes another student). I am not the restroom police – if this privilege is abused, the passes will not be available. No students may leave the room to visit the vending machine at any time.

Technology and Phones

Technology can be a distraction or used productively. Each student is expected to come to class with their laptop charged each day. Failure to have a laptop will not be a valid excuse for missed assignment. Students will have a login to AP Classroom, which we will utilize in class often; it also has information that may be helpful relating to the AP exam. We will also utilize Microsoft Teams weekly.

Students are expected to have their phones and ear buds put away during class time unless given permission by the teacher. School policy will be followed for infractions.

Class Norms:

- Be respectful.
 - Everyone shall give the person who has the floor his or her respect by paying attention and not talking. Respect yourself by doing your best. Respect the teacher by following directions.
 - Students will not retrieve their phone until the bell rings to end class unless the teacher has given permission or wants the students to use the phone for academic purposes. No one is to touch or check on phones during class.
- Be responsible.
 - Makeup work must be scheduled within three days of absence. Failure to show up for a scheduled makeup appointment will be excused one time a quarter. The second time it happens, a zero will go into the gradebook. Unexcused late work will result in a 10% reduction in grade per school day.
 - Be prepared for class. This includes having reading and homework done on time. Contact me or a responsible student if you are absent to find out what you missed as well as what is due the next day.
- No excuses.

IF WHAT YOU ARE DOING INTERFERES WITH LEARNING, HURTS SOMEONE'S HEART (intentionally or unintentionally), OR HINDERS YOU FROM BEING THE PERSON YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE, YOU SHOULDN'T BE DOING IT!

Access to Instructional Materials

Instructional materials can be accessed anytime through Savvas or Microsoft Teams.