

Advanced Placement[®] English Language and Composition Syllabus

Purpose

As a first-year, college-level course on rhetoric, the ultimate purpose of the AP[®] Language and Composition course, according to The College Board's *AP[®] English Course Description*, is to enable students to "read complex texts with understanding and to write prose of sufficient richness and complexity to communicate effectively with mature readers." Students become "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." Additionally, students become "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."

Desired Outcomes

From *AP[®] English Language and Composition Course Description*, 2014:

The AP English Language and Composition course is designed to help students become skilled readers and writers through engagement with the following course requirements:

- Composing in several forms (e.g., narrative, expository, analytical, and argumentative essays) about a variety of subjects
- Writing that proceeds through several stages or drafts, with revision aided by teacher and peers
- Writing informally (e.g., imitation exercises, journal keeping, collaborative writing), which helps students become aware of themselves as writers and the techniques employed by other writers
- Writing expository, analytical, and argumentative compositions based on readings representing a variety of prose styles and genres
- Reading nonfiction (e.g., essays, journalism, science writing, autobiographies, criticism) selected to give students opportunities to identify and explain an author's use of rhetorical strategies and techniques
- Analyzing graphics and visual images both in relation to written texts and as alternative forms of text themselves
- Developing research skills and the ability to evaluate, use, and cite primary and secondary sources
- Conducting research and writing argument papers in which students present an argument of their own that includes the analysis and synthesis of ideas from an array of sources
- Citing sources using a recognized editorial style (e.g., Modern Language Association, The Chicago Manual of Style)
- Revising their work to develop
 - A wide-ranging vocabulary used appropriately and effectively;
 - A variety of sentence structures, including appropriate use of subordination and coordination;

- Logical organization, enhanced by techniques such as repetition, transitions, and emphasis;
- A balance of generalization and specific, illustrative detail; and
- An effective use of rhetoric, including tone, voice, diction, and sentence structure.

Course Content

Reading: The course will incorporate a wide variety of non-fiction texts including speeches, novels, historical documents, diaries, memoirs, court decisions, essays, editorials, cartoons, advertisements (from various media), and films from a range of time periods. Many texts are chosen to complement the student's study of United States History in order to build interdisciplinary connections. The author list demonstrates a range of background, ethnicity, nationality, and gender.

A note to parents/guardians: Please preview any of the texts your student will be asked to read. Each text is carefully considered for its literary merit and ability to engage students in the requirements of the course. However, great writing addresses important ideas and may contain situations or language some people may find objectionable. This is a college-level course and texts reflect college-level topics. *Please note that the focus of the course is rhetorical analysis, not literary analysis.*

Writing: The course emphasizes expository, analytical, and argumentative writing that forms the basis of academic and professional communication. Students are introduced to the rhetorical modes and invited to write in the modes with their own voice, incorporating rhetorical techniques. Students write multi-draft essays that proceed through stages of revision aided by peers and the teacher, and are asked to analyze how images, graphics, and other visual texts both relate to written texts and serve as alternate forms of text themselves.

Per AP[®] requirements, “the course teaches research skills, and in particular, the ability to evaluate, use, and cite primary and secondary sources.”

Grammar, Syntax, Diction: The course requires a broad vocabulary, and vocabulary building will be a focus of reading and writing development. Students will focus on style at the sentence level and consider grammar in terms of rhetoric.

Major Texts

The following list details most major texts in the course. It is suggested that the student acquire his/her own copy of **all texts** so that he/she can annotate freely in the margins. However, many texts are available via the SHS library and online. You may also find texts available for e-readers. It is recommended that students have a “hard” copy of each text, as electronic devices will not be allowed during certain activities.

Required Titles

- Shea, Renee H., Scanlon, Lawrence, Aufses, Robin Dissin. *The Language of Composition: Reading, Writing, Rhetoric*. First Edition 2008, Bedford/St. Martin's.

- Eschholz, Paul, Rosa, Alfred, Clark, Virginia. *Language Awareness: Readings for College Writers*. Twelfth Edition, 2016, Bedford/St. Martin's.
- AP English Language and Composition Exam Practice Book – I strongly recommend either Kaplan's or Barron's publishers, although there are many options available.

Recommended Titles

- Axelrod, Rise & Cooper, Charles. *The St. Martin's Guide to Writing*. 10th Edition. Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Krakauer, John. *Into the Wild*.
- Text for Literature Circles (list provided with unit)

Sequence

Units and associated required readings are listed below; other current, timely readings will supplement those listed. Units center on specific themes relevant to rhetorical analysis and the American experience. The summer assignment will be addressed in class. Students will receive a Unit Scope and Sequence, including CCSS standards, for each unit of study.

Unit One: Introduction to College Reading and Writing

- Presentation – Word Etymology project
- From *Language of Composition*
 - Ch. 1 – An Introduction to Rhetoric
 - Ch. 2 – Close Reading: The Art and Craft of Analysis
- From *Language Awareness*:
 - Ch. 1 – Reading Critically
 - Ch. 2 – Writing in College and Beyond
 - Ch. 3 – Writing with Sources
- Introduction to SOAPStone and OPTIC as a help toward understanding audience, purpose, and strategies
- Introduction to the rhetorical triangle and rhetorical précis

Unit Two: Education – What is it to be educated?

- Online - Malcolm X – “Learning to Read” (1964 process analysis)
- LC - Prose – “I Know Why the Caged Bird Cannot Read” (1999 example, cause-effect, argument)
- LC - Alexie – “The Joy of Reading and Writing: Superman and Me” (1998 narrative, process analysis)
- LC - Talbot – “Best in Class” (2005 example)
- LA - Yousafzai – “Address at the Youth Takeover of the United Nations” (2013 essay)
- Online - A focus on *satire*: Borkat – “A Liberating Curriculum” (1993 essay)
- LC - Emerson – from *Education* (1821-26 definition, process analysis, argument)
- Essay – *Definition/Personal Narrative*: What is it to be “educated?” Relate a time you received an education; ensure your personal narrative and definition correlate.
- Essay peer response, editing activities, focused revision, polished final draft, reflection

- Timed writing (1-2) – Timed write; annotation/dissection of an AP prompt; analysis of AP essay scoring guidelines; investigation of anchor student essays
- Revision of and reflection on timed write
- Multiple Choice exam practice – Individual and group work with rhetorical devices and citation of sources

Unit Three: Landmark American Rhetoric – How do authors craft arguments to achieve purpose?

- Online - U.S. Supreme Court – *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1894 legal argument)
- Online - U.S. Supreme Court – *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954 legal argument)
- LA - Martin Luther King, Jr. – “I Have a Dream” (1963)
- Online - Abraham Lincoln – “The Gettysburg Address” (1863)
- Online - Susan B. Anthony – “Women’s Right to Vote” (1873 argument)
- LC - Henry David Thoreau – *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience* (1850 argument)
- LA - Jonathan Swift – “A Modest Proposal” (1729 satire)
- LA - John F. Kennedy – “Inaugural Address” (1961 argument)
- Essay: *Rhetorical Analysis* - Select one of the landmark texts. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the speaker (or author) crafts the text to achieve his/her purpose.
- Essay peer response, editing activities, focused revision, polished final draft, reflection
- Timed write (1-2) – Timed write; annotation/dissection of an AP prompt; analysis of AP essay scoring guidelines; investigation of anchor student essays
- Multiple Choice Mock Exam – Individual and group work with rhetorical devices and author’s purpose

Unit Four: Community & Identity – What is the relationship of the individual to the community?

- From *The Language of Composition*: Ch. 3 – Synthesizing Sources: Entering the Conversation
- From *Language Awareness*: Ch. 3 – Writing with Sources
- Online - Carnegie – “Wealth” (1889 definition, analysis)
- LC - Hardin – “Lifeboat Ethics: The Case against Helping the Poor” (1974 argument)
- LA - Roberts – From *Understanding English* - “Speech Communities” (1954 essay)
- LA - Lederer – “All-American Dialects” – (2009 essay)
- Online - Standing Bear – “What the Indian Means to America” (1933 definition)
- LC - Arviso Alvord – “Walking the Path between Worlds” (2000 description)
- LC - King, Jr. – “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (1957 argument)
- Socratic Seminar – Prepare for and engage in a divergent learning experience relating to the unit guiding question.
- Essay – *Synthesis*: What is the relationship of the individual to the community? Synthesize the view of American community and/or identity in three or more of the unit texts. Cite sources using MLA formatting.
- Essay peer response, editing activities, focused revision, polished final draft, reflection
- Timed *synthesis* write, annotation/dissection of an AP *synthesis* prompt, analysis of AP essay scoring guidelines, investigation of anchor student essays
- Multiple Choice exam practice – Individual and group work with rhetorical devices and author’s purpose

Unit Five: Nature and the Frontier – What is the human responsibility to nature? What role does the frontier play in defining the American?

- From *Language Awareness*: Ch. 14 – A Brief Guide to Writing a Research Paper
- Online - Various readings related to the concept of “frontier”
- LC - Emerson – From *Nature* (1836 argument, description)
- LC - Thoreau – “Where I Lived, and What I Lived For” (1854 compare/contrast)
- LC - Carson – From *Silent Spring* (1962 argument, cause & effect)
- LC - Oates – “Against Nature” (1988 example)
- SHS - Krakauer – *Into the Wild*
- Film – “Into the Void” (*optional*)
- Socratic Seminar – Transcendentalism, the hero’s journey, and Chris McCandless
- Essay – *Research*: Identify a past or contemporary frontier (e.g. cure for cancer, genetically modify food supply, solve world hunger, cross the Pacific, summit Everest, hike across Antarctica, etc.). Identify the major explorers of this frontier - their goals, hopes, accomplishments, and failures. Explain the relevance/importance/promise of this frontier. Cite sources using MLA formatting.
- Essay peer response, editing activities, focused revision, polished final draft, reflection
- Multiple Choice exam practice – Individual and group work with rhetorical devices, citation of sources, and author’s purpose
- Timed write (1-2) – Timed write; annotation/dissection of an AP prompt; analysis of AP essay scoring guidelines; investigation of anchor student essays
- Revision of and reflection on timed write

Unit Six: Language – What is the value of language?

- LC - Rodriguez – “Aria: A Memoir of a bilingual Childhood” (1982)
- LC - Orwell – “Politics and the English Language” (1946)
- LA - Tan – “Mother Tongue” (1990 classification)
- LC - Thiong’o – From *Decolonising the Mind* (1986)
- LC - Agosin – “Always Living in Spanish” (1999)
- LC - Berkowitz and McFaul – “Studying Islam, Strengthening the Nation” (2005)
- LC - Hayakawa – “Bilingualism in America: English Should Be the Official Language” (1989)
- LA - Morrison – “When Language Dies: 1992 Nobel Prize for Literature Lecture” (1993)
- LA - Wiesel – “The Perils of Indifference” (1999)
- Essay – *Synthesis* - in an essay that synthesizes at least three of the sources for support, analyze how the use of language affects one’s identity.
- Essay – *Rhetorical Analysis* – analyze how the author uses rhetoric to achieve purpose
- Formal Essay peer response, editing activities, focused revision, polished final draft, reflection
- Timed Formal Responses (2-3) – Timed write, annotation/dissection of an AP prompt, analysis of AP essay scoring guidelines
- Revision of and reflection on Timed Formal Response – for grade submission

Unit Seven: Reflection and National Exam Prep

- Year-Long Course Review
- Full-length exam (MC + 3 Essays)

Unit Eight: Literature Circles and College/Scholarship Essays

- Various full-length texts to be read individually while participating in small group work
- Presentation – work together with group members to design, plan, create, and present a multimedia presentation
- Reflection – individual and group reflection of the process
- Resources for finding and crafting college and scholarship application essays
- Guest Speaker – tips and advice
- Materials and workshops for creating timelines and planning ahead for senior year and beyond

Online Resources

During the course of this school year, we will discuss a variety of online resources to use for supplemental study purposes. I strongly encourage you to explore websites and databases that you have used in educational settings in the past, and to share resources with classmates.

An invaluable resource for you this year is the AP English 11 web page, accessible through the Steilacoom High School website. I keep a daily log of due dates, assignments, and in-class activities, as well as upload a variety of useful tidbits of information. I strongly encourage you to make it a regular habit to check the web page (*especially* if you are or know you will be absent from class!)

Communication

If classwork is difficult and challenging, consider it normal. If you experience extreme difficulty with class work, it is expected you will *tell me* and we will build a plan *together* to help you. I encourage students with individual questions to email me, or to see me at an appropriate time during the school day.

Grading/Evaluation

Grades are an accurate account of what students know and/or can do. Grades are communication – not compensation. We will use standards based grading in AP Language and Composition. All scores will be entered into Skyward as CCSS ELA standards with assignment details listed, not by assignment titles. These standards will be given to students in rubric format. At the end of each semester, a student’s final transcript grade will reflect his/her highest scores on each standard measured during that semester. We will also use the AP Language rubric from College Board to evaluate timed writes. This grading system allows students to clearly see what they do well and in which areas they need additional help and focus. With the standards at the center of daily lessons and all assignments, students will at all times know where they are in relation to the

standards and what it takes to get to where they want to be – no surprises at the end of grading periods, or at the National Exam in May. I will hold informational sessions on this new grading policy in class with the students and after school by request.

Regarding late work: Good organization and planning are important life skills. Due dates exist in the real world. I expect all work to be turned in on time. If you need extra time on an assignment, make arrangements with me **prior** to the due date.

All English Language Arts Common Core State Standards will be assessed on a 4-point scale:

- o 4 = Exemplary (100%)
- o 3 = Proficient (85%)
- o 2 = Emerging (75%)
- o 1 = Insufficient (65%)
- o 0 = No Evidence (50%)

AP Score Rubric	SBG Correlation
9 – enhanced 8	Exemplary
8 – effective	
7 – augmented 6	Proficient
6 – adequate	
5 – limited devel.; uneven	Emerging
4 – inadequate	
3 – diminished 4	Insufficient
2 – little success	
1 – diminished 2	

About the AP[®] Language and Composition National Exam

Registration for the exam usually takes place in March. The exam occurs in early May. It is usual and healthy to be nervous about a college-level exam even when well prepared (as you shall be). Embrace the nerves, register for the exam, take it, and congratulate yourself on accomplishing a remarkable challenge. Earning a passing score of a “3” or higher may result in college credit, depending on the college or university. Please see me or a counselor with any questions regarding funding. In addition to the overall score on the national exam, be prepared to learn universal skills for high school and life in this class.

Note: I encourage all students enrolled in the course to register for and take the national exam. I expect a signed note from a parent/guardian if a student opts out of the national exam. Students who do not take the national exam will take a comprehensive final course assessment.

Contact Information

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Phone: (253) 983-2388 (leave a message!)

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Once you have read over the AP English Language and Composition course syllabus, please sign and fill out the following information. Your student will return this page and keep this syllabus to refer to during the year. I appreciate your time, and look forward to teaching your student this year.

Sincerely,

Ms. Kelsey Bochenek

Please fill out, sign and return THIS PAGE of the document no later than _____.

I have read and understand the policies contained within this document and agree to adhere to them for the duration of this course. I also understand how to contact Ms. Bochenek if I have any questions.

Student name – printed

Student signature

Date

Guardian name – printed

Guardian signature

Date

Contact: Phone number _____ E-mail _____

Comments: