

What's the difference between AP Language and AP Literature?

Here are the two course descriptions from the curriculum guide:

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition This challenging, year-long course is designed to prepare students for all types of college-level writing. Students will develop the skills they need to write academically, professionally and personally for all kinds of purposes. Students will practice the stages of the writing process from brainstorming through revision, engage in peer review of one another's work, and complete many informal and formal writing assignments. In addition, students will become skilled readers of a wide variety of non-fiction work, from memoir to essays to scholarly research. In May, students have the opportunity to take the AP English Language and Composition exam that may enable them to receive college credit in English.

Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition In this challenging year-long course, students will engage in an intense, in-depth look at imaginative literature, including drama, novels, poetry and short stories. Students will study representative works from various genres and periods, concentrating on works of recognized literary merit. Using these works, students will develop the skills needed for critical evaluation of texts and academic writing. Strategies for developing these skills include engagement in large and small group discussion and writing in several forms. Writing assignments will involve a focus on the process of academic writing, and include expository, analytical, and argumentative essays; some creative writing assignments may also be used. In May, students can take a College Board examination that may enable them to receive advanced standing or credit in English in college.

Who can take these courses? Both courses are open to 11th and 12th grade students. There is no GPA or class rank requirement for taking an AP course, but students need to know that they are making a year-long commitment to a college-level class that will require lots of time and effort.

Is there a particular order in which students should take these courses? No. We have decided as a department that both courses are open to both juniors and seniors.

Who should take which course? Students can take both courses, one during their junior year and one during their senior year. But some students will want to move on to English electives, to PSEO, or to the CIS Writing and CIS Literature courses during their senior year. Both courses will be of great benefit to students, but here's what the College Board says:

- Students who are interested in writing various kinds of essays on non-literary topics will like AP English Language and Composition.
- Students who are interested in studying literature of various periods and genres and writing analyses of that literature will like AP Literature and Composition.

	AP Literature and Composition	AP Language and Composition
Who can take it	Juniors and seniors	Juniors and seniors
Reading involved	Fiction: prose, poetry, drama from several historic periods from a variety of cultures and viewpoints	Non-fiction: articles, speeches, essays on topics in science, history, psychology, cultural studies from a variety of cultures and viewpoints
Writing involved	Literary argument and analysis	Multiple genres, including research, persuasive essay, rhetorical analysis, personal narrative, advertising analysis
Most like what college course?	College literature course	College writing course