

# Advanced Placement English Language and Composition

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## Course Overview

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition is a college-level, non-fiction rhetoric and writing course for Juniors. In prerequisite English courses, the focus of study is on the elements of fiction and literary devices, and thus, *literary* analysis. In AP Language and Composition, students engage primarily in the study of nonfiction and *rhetorical* analysis. Students analyze a variety of classic and contemporary texts, including memoirs, essays, editorials, letters, speeches, and visual texts such as editorial cartoons, with the goal of understanding the writer's craft. The primary text is *The Language of Composition* (Shea, Scanlon, and Dissin Aufses). Some imaginative literature is used, but the emphasis here is still on understanding the writer's craft instead of literary analysis. Students read, annotate, write, and discuss regularly.

Throughout the year, students are expected to demonstrate a high-level of skill in analytical, narrative, expository, and argumentative writing, both with and without research. Writing moves beyond the five-paragraph essay; students imitate the classical argument, but they consider structure more organically, and as a rhetorical choice. Topics for student writing are primarily student generated. The course begins with a focus on analysis of fundamental rhetorical features and style, progresses to a more specific study of argument, and ends with a focus on writing the synthesis essay and a multimedia project. A lengthy researched essay is submitted in the fourth marking period, the culmination of a year-long project.

Students admitted into the course have demonstrated a high-level of writing competence. **In addition** to having a firm grasp of grammar, syntax and basic structure, students have a strong interest in reading closely and developing their own writing through regular revision and with feedback from both the teacher and peers. Student engagement in a wide range of issues in a variety of subjects - historical, scientific, political, etc. - is critical to success in the course.

Students are **required** to take the Advanced Placement Language and Composition Exam in May. On this exam, they will demonstrate their abilities to read and write analytically, and write cohesive and convincing arguments, synthesizing sources where required. Integrated into the course are regular opportunities to practice for the exam by completing timed essays and multiple choice practice tests. College credit is offered by many institutions for a score of three or above on this exam. Any student not taking the exam will have the course notated as Honors on their transcript and colleges will be notified of their failure to fulfill the requirement.

## PROFICIENCIES AND OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

AP English Language and Composition aims to produce sophisticated readers of complex nonfiction print and visual text and writers of "prose of sufficient richness and complexity to communicate effectively with mature readers." To these ends, the course will:

- engage students in analyses of selections from both pre-twentieth and twentieth/twenty-first centuries to examine the purpose, speaker, audience, context, and the relationships between these entities;
- engage students in the identification, analysis, and use rhetorical and stylistic devices;
- provide students with opportunities to "write for a variety of purposes";
- provide students with opportunities to write in various modes- narrative, expository, and argumentative;
- provide guidelines for finding and evaluating sources in print, via databases and the internet for usefulness, appropriateness, and credibility;
- provide guidelines for incorporating and citing sources appropriately;
- engage students in moving "effectively through the stages of the writing process, with careful attention to inquiry and research, drafting, revising, editing, and review";
- engage students in making effective and appropriate grammatical choices;
- engage students in providing writers with effective feedback to help them revise;
- use feedback from other writers and the instructor to revise their own work;
- provide multiple frameworks resulting in effective analysis of graphic and visual images.

\*Quoted material is taken from the *English Course Description* published by the College Board.

## MAJOR TEXTS

*The Language of Composition: Reading, Writing, Rhetoric* – Renee Shea, Lawrence Scanlon and Robin Dissin Aufses. Third Edition. (Bedford/St. Martin's Press; 2019)

*Sadlier Vocabulary Workshop* -Jerome Shostak. Enriched Edition. (Sadlier, 2012)

The Stewart English Program: Book 3 Writing Plus...--Donald S. Stewart. (Educators Publishing Service, 1996)

## ADDITIONAL TEXTS:

*The Great Gatsby* – F. Scott Fitzgerald

*The Scarlet Letter*—Nathaniel Hawthorne

**Write in Style: A Guide to the Short Term Paper.** Edward P. Von der Porten. Seventh Ed. 2009.

In addition, the instructor will make regular use of on-line and print periodicals, such as *The New York Times* and web- sites, such as The OWL.

## STRATEGIES

Close reading and annotation

Formal and informal writing – analysis, exposition, argumentation - both processed and timed

Regular revision

Writing workshop in small groups

Class discussion

## EVALUATION

**Reading responses** – These are short (1-3 typed pages) informal responses to the readings. Close reading of text is the cornerstone of these responses. Quotes and details must be integrated into these responses. Students may be asked to answer a question or questions from the textbook, write an imitation, compare and contrast texts, or develop responses to their own questions. (See rubric for point values)

**Papers** – Students will write a variety of essays, both formal and informal. They will generate their own subjects and use teacher-suggested prompts. These papers will be processed and polished before submission. At least one paper will be a research paper. (40-100 points)

**Timed Writing** – In-class essays focused on rhetorical analysis, argument, or synthesis of ideas. (30-40 points)

**Tests** – These will be given periodically to assess the students' ability to read closely or for a specific purpose and to familiarize students with the AP exam. (50-100 points)

**Participation** – It is essential that students engage thoughtfully and respectfully in classroom discussion, teacher conferences and writing workshops. Students who are not prepared for a discussion or workshop will receive *significant* deductions. (at least 25 points per month)

## CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS: DO THE RIGHT THING

Students are expected to engage in responsible scholarship in this classroom. You should prepare for class, participate in discussion, communicate with me when you are having difficulty or need to be absent. Any assignment you hand in must reflect your own thinking unless collaboration or research is part of the assignment, and then you will attribute information to your sources. Read the LCCS Honor Code for school policies regarding cheating and plagiarism. All school rules are in effect in this classroom. In particular, take note of rules regarding lateness and electronic devices. *Texting during class or reading messages or email during class may result in your iPad being taken away and owed time/detention given.*

## HOMEWORK POLICIES, INCLUDING LATE WORK AND MAKE-UP WORK POLICIES:

- Homework is often preparation for a class; if you haven't completed the homework, you will not be able to fully participate in class. If you do not have your homework in class the day it is due, the following penalties apply: 1<sup>st</sup> violation - assignment receives half credit. 2<sup>nd</sup> violation and thereafter: assignment receives a zero. All homework must be printed out before you walk into class or you will not receive credit.
- Because assignments are posted on PowerSchool early, you are expected to complete your assignments on time, regardless of absence. **If you are absent from school the day an assignment is due, you must submit**

**the assignment the day you return in order to receive credit.** Drafts and papers are the exception. These assignments are discussed below.

- If you are absent the day a reading response or other homework assignment is due, and you do not bring it to class on the day you return, the following penalties apply: 1<sup>st</sup> violation: assignment receives half credit. 2<sup>nd</sup> violation and thereafter: assignment receives a zero.
- HOWEVER, all drafts and major papers must be submitted the day that they are due, **regardless of whether or not you are present** in order to receive full credit. Drafts and essays that come in the day after they are due get a 40% reduction and after that, receive no credit.
- If you need an extension, you must see me before the assignment is due. Extensions will be given in rare cases.
- You will be alerted to any changes I make to the calendar AFTER assignments have been first posted. Please check the calendar regularly.

**ASSIGNMENTS ARE POSTED REGULARLY ON POWERSCHOOL. IN ADDITION, THERE ARE RUBRICS, ARTICLES AND LINKS THAT WE WILL USE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. CHECK OFTEN. Assignments are also posted on the board in the classroom. There are usually no reminders in class.**