

AP English Language and Composition: Syllabus

(Structure/Content modeled after Syllabus 2 1058801v1 – AP College Board Website)

SC #	Scoring Components	Pages
SC1	The course 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).	2, 4
SC2	The course requires students to write essays that proceed through several stages or drafts with the revision incorporating, as appropriate, feedback from teachers and peers.	4
SC3	The course requires students to write in informal contexts (e.g., imitation exercises, journal keeping, collaborative writing, and in-class responses) designed to help them become increasingly aware of themselves as writers and/or aware of the techniques employed by the writers they read.	2, 4
SC4	The course requires students to produce one or more expository writing assignments. Topics should be based on readings representing a wide variety of prose styles and genres and might include such topics as public policies, popular culture, and personal experiences.	3-5
SC5	The course requires students to produce one or more analytical writing assignments. Topics should be based on readings representing a wide variety of prose styles and genres and might include such topics as public policies, popular culture, and personal experiences	4
SC6	The course requires students to produce one or more argumentative writing assignments. Topics should be based on readings representing a wide variety of prose styles and genres and might include such topics as public policies, popular culture, and personal experiences	4-5
SC7	The course requires nonfiction readings (e.g., essays, journalism, political writing, science writing, nature writing, autobiographies/biographies, diaries, history, criticism) that are selected to give students opportunities to explain an author's use of rhetorical strategies or techniques. If fiction and poetry are also assigned, their main purpose should be to help students understand how various effects are achieved by writers' linguistic and rhetorical choices.	2, 3, 5
SC8	The course requires students to analyze how visual images relate to written texts and/or how visual images serve as alternative forms of texts	2, 4
SC9	The course requires students to demonstrate research skills and, in particular, the ability to evaluate, use, and cite primary and secondary sources.	4
SC10	The course requires students to produce one or more projects such as the researched argument paper, which goes beyond the parameters of a traditional research paper by asking students to present an argument of their own that includes the synthesis of ideas from an array of sources.	4
SC11	Students will cite sources using a recognized editorial style (e.g., Modern Language Association (MLA), The Chicago Manual of Style, American Psychological Association (APA), etc.).	4
SC12	The AP teacher provides instruction and feedback on students' writing assignments, both before and after the students revise their work that help the students develop a wide-ranging vocabulary used appropriately	2-4
SC13	The AP teacher provides instruction and feedback on students' writing assignments both before and after the students revise their work that help the students develop a variety of sentence structures.	2-4
SC14	The AP teacher provides instruction and feedback on students' writing assignments, both before and after the students revise their work that help the students develop logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques to increase coherence. Such techniques may include traditional rhetorical structures, graphic organizers, and work on repetition, transitions, and emphasis.	2-4
SC15	The AP teacher provides instruction and feedback on students' writing assignments both before and after they revise their work that help the students develop a balance of generalization and specific, illustrative detail.	2-4
SC16	The AP teacher provides instruction and feedback on students' writing assignments both before and after they revise their work that help the students establish an effective use of rhetoric including controlling tone and a voice appropriate to the writer's audience.	2-4

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Course Overview

The course overview and objectives for the course are taken from the AP® English Course Description published by the College Board.

The choice of texts is based primarily on the course textbook, *The Language of Composition: Reading, Writing, Rhetoric*, second edition, published by Bedford/St. Martin's in 2013. Ancillary texts will include Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. All course textbooks, along with publication data, are listed in the Teacher Resources section at the end of this syllabus.

Course Planner

Fall Semester

The fall semester serves as an introduction to Rhetoric focusing heavily on Ethos, Logos, and Pathos as represented by a variety of early works in the textbook. Major concepts and themes will be explored for expository, argumentative, and rhetorical concepts, as seen in a number of short introduction essay from the textbook.

Stance Journals [SC1/SC3/SC12/SC13/SC14/SC15/SC16]

Throughout the year, students will be confronted with a variety of topics connected to both the literature being studied and the modern day. Students will respond to debatable prompts using methods learned from the weekly class readings. These writings will be administered at a minimum of three times per week and will allow students to practice key elements of argumentation, support, alternative points of view, and professional language.

Over the course of the first nine weeks, students will become aware of specific, rhetorical techniques and be able to properly implement said techniques into their own writings. These techniques will include: Supporting details, varied sentence structure, parallelism and parallel structure, proper balance of general and specific details, and appropriate combination of ethos, logos, and pathos.

Strategies [SC7/SC8]

Students will become familiar with the SOAPS strategy as defined in the textbook on page 5. They will use these techniques as well as the CLOSE reading techniques covered in chapter 2 of the textbook, to analyze ethos, logos, pathos, style, craft, effectiveness, and purpose of selections from the following textbook works:

Author	Work	Page
Lou Gehrig	<i>Farewell Speech</i>	2
King George VI	<i>The King's Speech (Sept. 3, 1939)</i>	6
Alice Waters	<i>Slow Food Nation</i>	10
Richard Nixon	<i>The Checkers Speech</i>	13
Benjamin Banneker	<i>From Letter to Thomas Jefferson</i>	18
Geoffrey Nunberg	<i>From The Decline in Grammar</i>	24
Winston Churchill	<i>Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat</i>	33
Queen Elizabeth	<i>Speech to the Troops at Tillbury</i>	40

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Vocabulary

Throughout the school year students will be introduced to and complete assignments based on new, high level vocabulary words. Students will be required to understand and effectively use a wide range of vocabulary words.

Discussion [SC12]

The majority of discussion in this class will arise naturally by means the stance notebook entries, rhetoric based readings, modern day connection pieces/assignments. Students also have three presentation opportunities which will include class input: The first is a presentation of Native American Literature/History as connected with Lori Alvord's work, *Walking the Path Between Worlds*. The second is a group based roundtable discussion related to their final research essay topic. The final presentation opportunity is a persuasive speech which will be evaluated and discussed by teacher and peers.

Style [SC14]

Apart from their Stance Journals, students will be required to perform writing imitation exercises in which they can identify learned rhetorical/literary devices and make use of them in their own writing. A variety of devices will be focused on during these portions of class, including: Parallel structure, thesis, antithesis, ellipsis, alliteration, metaphor, simile, personification, irony, oxymoron, and paradox.

Exposition and Argumentation [SC4/SC7]

The first semester is highly focused on reviewing and discussing how effective writers make use of the techniques studied during the introduction to Rhetoric section of first quarter. Exposing students to a wide variety of effective rhetorical writers will aid students in reading comprehension and give them a chance to see what possibilities exist for their own writing. Apart from the excerpts listed under the introduction strategies above, the following readings will take place over the first and second quarters, with second quarter and all readings thereafter divided into themes:

First Quarter: The Elements of Rhetoric

Author	Work
John F. Kennedy	<i>Inaugural Address, January 20, 1961</i>
Thomas Jefferson	<i>The Declaration of Independence</i>
Ralph Waldo Emerson	<i>From Education</i>
Martin Luther King Jr.	<i>Letter from Birmingham Jail</i>
Lori Alvord	<i>Walking the Path between Worlds</i>
Booker T. Washington	<i>The Atlanta Exposition Address</i>
Virginia Woolf	<i>Professions for Women</i>
John and Abigail Adams	<i>Letters</i>
Jennifer Oladipo	<i>Why can't Environmentalism be Colorblind?</i>
Francine Prose	<i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Cannot Read</i>

Second Quarter: Rhetoric in Modern Society

Author	Work	Modern Theme
Sherman Alexie	<i>Superman and Me</i>	Education
Margarat Talbot	<i>Best in class</i>	Education
Diane Ravitch	<i>Stop the Madness</i>	Education
Henry David Thoreau	<i>From Where I Lived, and What I Lived for</i>	Community
Scott Brown	<i>Facebook Friendonomics</i>	Community
Nathaniel Hawthorne	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i>	Community
Lars Eighner	<i>On Dumpster Diving</i>	The Economy
Matthew B. Crawford	<i>The Case for Working with Your Hands</i>	The Economy
Juliet Schor	<i>The New Consumerism</i>	The Economy

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Essay Writing [SC1/SC2/SC3/SC4/SC5/SC6/SC9/SC10/SC11/SC12/SC13/SC14/SC15/SC16]

First Semester

The majority of first semester writing is done in shorter essays, while the second semester features longer, more detailed writing assignments. Students will write minor argumentative essays three to five times first semester, each of which will be based on either a proposal, and argument of definition, and an argument of evaluation. All major writings will be revised either in class or outside of class by peers and/or the teacher for improvement.

The major writing assignments of first semester focus on the summer reading requirement, John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, and the major reading assignment of first semester, Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel *The Scarlet Letter*. All major writing assignments will include a peer editing process as well as a detailed rubric outlining expectations.

Alongside these essays, students will begin to acquaint themselves with MLA formatting, Citation, and Works Cited pages using the *Write in Style* MLA guidebook, published by Perfection Learning in 2012 and authored by Edward P. Von der Porten.

Second Semester

Second semester is largely focused on a major persuasive research essay featuring each component of MLA citation/formatting learned during fall semester. This paper not only incorporates rhetorical elements, but also focuses heavily on researching an argumentative stance thoroughly and properly. MLA organization and documentation will be emphasized, including the usage of professional, outside sources properly cited. This essay also features a modern day tie in as students will be required to choose and connect ideas between a rhetorical work read in class and a current societal issue.

Second semester also features a number of smaller, in class rhetorical analysis writing assignments designed to hone and improve rhetorical techniques first learned in the fall.

Timed Writings/ACT

A large portion of the second semester is focused on improving timed writing skills. January through March focus heavily on State standardized test relevant materials, especially focusing on reading comprehension and short, 45 minute essays. These essays come in a few different forms, including elements of personal reflection, thesis argumentative, expository, and free writing. Some, though not all, of these timed essays incorporate some of the shorter excerpts from the second semester reading list below.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the usage of another person's thoughts, ideas, words, or accomplishments without proper acknowledgement or documentation. It is a serious offense and the classroom policy is that any work deemed to be plagiarized will receive a zero in the class. To prevent plagiarism, it is vital students review and properly understand all MLA citation related elements discussed in class.

Analyzing Visual Arguments [SC1/ SC5/SC8]

Students will analyze and write about a number of different artistic mediums, using methods of analysis previously learned. These include images, advertisements, painting, and photographs which often go along with a CLOSE reading of the assigned textbook readings. Students will also make use of their own visual texts in their end of the year persuasive speech.

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Exposition and Argumentation [SC4/SC6/SC7]

Second semester features addition examples of expository and argumentative writings to aid students in their own writings and presentations. The following works will be used during the second semester, separated by theme:

Third Quarter: Reading/Writing Rhetoric

Author	Work	Modern Theme
F. Scott Fitzgerald	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	The Economy/Gender
Stephen Jay Gould	<i>Women's Brains</i>	Gender
Brent Staples	<i>Just Walk on By: A Black Man Ponders...</i>	Gender
Rebecca Walker	<i>Putting Down the Gun</i>	Gender
Theodore Roosevelt	<i>The Proper Place for Sports</i>	Sports
Malcolm Gladwell	<i>How Different Are Dogfighting and Football</i>	Sports
George Orwell	<i>Politics and the English Language</i>	Language
Walt Whitman	<i>Slang in America</i>	Language
Steven Pinker	<i>Words Don't Mean what they Mean</i>	Language

Fourth Quarter: Language and Presentation Today

Author	Work	Modern Theme
James McBride	<i>Hip Hop Planet</i>	Popular Culture
Mark Twain	<i>Corn-Pone Opinions</i>	Popular Culture
Steven Johnson	<i>Watching TV makes you Smarter</i>	Popular Culture
Rachel Carson	<i>From Silent Spring</i>	The Environment
Bill McKibben	<i>From The End of Nature</i>	The Environment
Joy Williams	<i>Save the Whales</i>	The Environment
Henry David Thoreau	<i>On the Duty of Civil Disobedience</i>	Politics
Abraham Lincoln	<i>The Gettysburg Address</i>	Politics
Chris Hedges	<i>The Destruction of Culture</i>	Politics
Sarah Vowell	<i>The Partly Cloudy Patriot</i>	Politics

Syntax Analysis Chart [SC13]

At various times, students will be required to create Syntax Analysis Charts, as generated by the AP College Board. This tool will aid students in evaluating professional writing, as well as their own. This reflective assignment will help students eliminate repetitiveness, run on sentences, fragments, weak verbs, and a lack of variety in their writing.

Student Evaluation

Student grades are based on an accumulated point system. The student's quarter grade is determined by dividing the total number of points earned by the maximum amount possible.

Compared to a non-AP course, fewer grades are given. This grading for this class is performance based, and depending on the specific assignment grades will be given based on mastery of content material, complexity of ideas, integration of learned concepts, and overall ability to meet assignment requirements. To mirror the college experience, typical daily grades are not given, though class participation and informal writings will be required weekly.

The following grading scale demonstrates what each numerical grade translates to in letter grade:

100–99 percent = A+	89–87 percent = B+	79–77 percent = C+	69–67 percent = D+	59–50 percent = E
98–93 percent = A	86–83 percent = B	76–73 percent = C	66–63 percent = D	
92–90 percent = A–	82–80 percent = B–	72–70 percent = C–	62–60 percent = D–	

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Teacher Resources

Course Texts

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. New York: Scribner, 2004. Print.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter*. New York: Dover Publications, 1994. Print.

Shea, Renee Hausmann, Lawrence Scanlon, and Robin Dissin Aufses, et al. *The Language of Composition: Reading, Writing, Rhetoric*. 3rd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2013. Print.

Course Supplements

Von Der Porten, Edward. *Write in Style: A Guide to the Short Term Paper*. Logan: Perfection Learning, 2006. Print.