

ENGLISH II - AP English Language and Composition

Course Description

In AP English Language and Composition, students read a wide variety of literary and informative texts and study these works as models of effective writing and argument. Students analyze essays, speeches, letters, novels, memoirs, and poems from a variety of historical and global perspectives; they study writers' perspectives, purposes and stylistic choices, and they learn to recognize the validity of authors' claims and the importance of relevant evidence and sound reasoning to support these claims. Most importantly, they learn the power of language to affect positive change in the world, and they develop their own capacities to use language to effectively share ideas and persuade audiences. Throughout the course, students practice sophisticated strategies for reading and writing. They should expect to read independently in preparation for class discussion and demonstrate their understanding through varied learning activities, such as comprehension quizzes, timed writings, journal writing, posts on message boards, projects, thesis-driven argumentative essays, and public speaking presentations. By becoming better readers and writers, students will strengthen their performance on the national AP English Language and Composition Exam. In alignment with the school's *Portrait of the Crusader*, students focus on developing their own moral compass and honing their ability to follow a moral compass rooted in respect, integrity, hope, and kindness. Students practice respecting the beliefs of others, learn to value the uniqueness of every human being, and learn to advocate for justice.

Essential Questions for the Course

Literature

- How does literature change us? How does it change the world?
- How do life experiences influence the writer and the reader?
- How does literature spark social change?

Language and Rhetoric (The Reasoned Argument)

- What is the rhetorical situation? What factors affect each writer's rhetorical situation?
- How are the writer's claims qualified through modifiers, counter arguments, and alternative perspectives?
- How does the organization of a text create unity and coherence and reflect a line of reasoning?
- How do writers and speakers strategically use words, comparisons, and syntax to convey a specific tone or style in an argument?
- How do writers and speakers use transitional elements to guide the reader through the line of reasoning?
- How can we make our analytical writing clear and effective?
- How can we make our own writing vivid and engaging?

Life

- How does one develop a sense of self?
- How does one flourish in society? How does one make a positive difference?
- What does it mean to be misjudged?
- What does it mean to have character?
- How does our language reflect our character?

Unit 1 - Rhetoric and Education

In this introductory unit, students learn the concepts and vocabulary needed to understand and discuss the rhetorical situation and rhetorical strategies, and they begin to analyze literary texts, argumentative essays, speeches, and articles as models of effective rhetoric. Here, students analyze texts that are focused on the topic of education and the way education intersects with culture, including language, politics, race, athletics, and gender. In response to the topics studied, students begin to create their own narrative arguments about enhancing and reforming education. These arguments are the students' first experience creating a thesis statement backed by evidence and a sound line of reasoning. Throughout the course, students are also introduced to the standards and content of the AP Exam that they will take in May. In this unit, students are introduced to the three different types of essays included in the AP Exam.

Reserved Reading Options:

Novels: *Fahrenheit 451*, Bradbury, Raymond; *The Book Thief*, Zusak, Markus.

Non-Fiction Articles, Speeches and Memoir: *Night*, Elie Wiesel; *The Perils of Indifference*, Elie Wiesel; Selections from Shea's *The Language of Composition* (Chapters 1-3, 5, 8, 9); *I Know Why the Caged Bird Cannot Read*, Francine Prose; from *Education*, Ralph Waldo Emerson; *A Talk to Teachers*, James Baldwin; *School*, Kyoko Mori; *Superman and Me*, Sherman Alexie; *Best in Class*, Margaret Talbot; *Aria: A Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood*, Richard Rodriguez; from *Report of the Massachusetts Board of Education*, Horace Mann; *The Liberal Arts in an Age of Info-Glut*, Todd Gitlin; *Let Teenagers Try Adulthood*, Leon Botstein; *Millennials Rising*, Neil Howe and William Strauss; *Community Service Mission Statement*, The Dalton School; *Volunteering Opens Teen's Eyes to Nursing*, Detroit News; *Study: "Resume Padding" Prevalent in College-Bound Students Who Volunteer*, Dennis Chaptman; *Effects of "Mandatory Volunteerism" on Intentions to Volunteer*, Arthur Stukas, Mark Snyder, and E. Gil Clary; *Youth Attitudes toward Civic Education and Community Service Requirements*, Mark Hugo Lopez; *The Dumbest Generation*, Mark Bauerlein; *.The Dumbest Generation? Don't Be Dumb*, Sharon Begley; *Living and Learning with New Media: Summary of Findings from the Digital Youth Project*, Mizuko Ito et al.; *Is Google Making Us Stupid?* Nicholas Carr; *Are We Getting Our Share of the Best?* R. Smith Simpson; *Your Brain on Video Games*, Steven Johnson; *The New Literacy*, Clive Thompson; "The New Marshmallow Test," Students Can't Resist; "Multi-tasking," Annie Paul; "Cooking Time," Anita Roy (Honors and CP)

Short Stories: "There will Come Soft Rains," Bradbury, Ray; "The Ones Who Walk Away from the Omelas"

Poetry: "The Trees are Down"

Concepts and Skills:

Language and Argument

- Identify components of the rhetorical situation: the exigence, audience, writer, purpose, context, and message.
- Define and recognize the three types of rhetorical appeal, logos, ethos and pathos, used by persuasive writers and speakers.
- Analyze specific texts and determine how writers' choices reflect the components of the rhetorical situation and the three types of rhetorical appeal.
- Identify and describe the overarching thesis of an argument, and any indication it provides for the argument's structure.
- Explain the ways that claims are qualified through modifiers, counter arguments, and alternative perspectives.
- Explain how word choice, comparisons, and syntax contribute to the specific tone or style of a text.

- Develop the skills needed to write each section of the argumentative essay:
 - Write thesis statements that require proof or defense and that may preview the structure of the argument.
 - Develop paragraphs that include a claim and evidence supporting the claim.
 - Write introductions and conclusions appropriate to the purpose and context of a given rhetorical situation.
 - Use language purposefully to engage and persuade the reader.
 - Structure and punctuate complete sentences; use commas accurately within sentences.
 - Maintain consistent verb tense and point of view.

Reading:

- Apply literal and inferential reading strategies to varied written works.
- Analyze authors' motivations, interactions, and development of their central ideas/themes over the course of the text.
- Determine how the interaction of conflict and character illustrates theme(s).
- Determine the authors' purpose and the political/societal concerns in varied texts.
- Compare and contrast the societies portrayed in literature with the societies and political structures of the modern world.

Assessment Options:

- Quizzes on assigned readings.
- Short-answer written responses to ensure literal and inferential comprehension of texts.
- Initial synthesis of summer reading selections for identification of arguments and themes.
- Rhetorical analysis responses.
- Reflective practice of AP English Language and Composition multiple choice sections.
- Literature assessment.

Unit 2 - Rhetoric and Politics

While continuing to study the role of education in culture and politics, students also begin to read a number of speeches that have appeared on the AP exam to bolster their understanding of the rhetorical situation and how it affects the rhetorical choices made by writers. Students learn that novelists, essayists, and speech writers use similar techniques for similar reasons. They use this insight to better understand how to write effective argument and synthesis essays on the AP Exam.

Reserved Reading Options:

Novels: *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe

Non Fiction: Selections from *The Language of Composition* (Chapters 4, 6, 11, 13); *There Is No Unmarked Woman*, Deborah Tannen; "Why Johnny Won't Read," Mark Bauerlein and Sandra Stotsky; *Mind over Muscle*, David Brooks; *Pay Dirt: College Athletes Deserve the Same Rights as Other Students*, Frank Deford; *Serfs of the Turf*, Michael Lewis; *My Priceless Opportunity*, Bill Walton; *As Colleges' Greed Grows, So Does the Hypocrisy*, Michael Wilbon; *Despite Criticism, NCAA Takes a Firm Stance on Professionalism*, Steve Weiberg; *Why Students Aren't Paid to Play*, National Collegiate Athletic Association; *Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid*, Virginia Woolf; George Orwell, *Politics and the English Language*; "The Destruction of Culture," Chris Hedges.

Poems: “For Mohammed Zeid of Gaza, Age 15” and “Why I Could Not Accept Your Invitation,” Naomi Shihab Nye, “The Second Coming,” W.B. Yeats.

Concepts and Skills:

Language and Argument

- Read and analyze varied texts and recognize the rhetorical situation and strategies used by the author.
- Analyze how thesis statements guide the structure of the text and the line of reasoning.
- Explain how the organization of a text creates coherence and facilitates understanding.
- Delineate claims and evidence within specific arguments. Determine if the writer has provided sufficient, relevant evidence.
- Describe the line of reasoning (commentary) in specific arguments and explain whether this line of reasoning supports an argument’s overarching thesis. Recognize common reasoning fallacies.
- Recognize and analyze the impact of literary devices, such as symbolism, irony, foreshadowing, and figurative language, to advance an argument as well as a theme.
- Write a structured argument:
 - Develop a thesis statement that conveys a defensible claim.
 - Select relevant evidence to support the thesis statement.
 - Create a purposeful structure and line of reasoning to present and connect evidence to the thesis statement.
 - Incorporate rhetorical strategies.
 - Address counterclaims accurately and effectively.
 - Maintain a formal style and objective tone.
 - Write and accurately punctuate varied sentences, including compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences.

Literature

- Read nonfiction narratives; trace central ideas; examine text structure, author’s style, explicit and implicit purpose.
- Determine what the work reveals about the time period portrayed and the author’s time period.
- Identify rhetorical strategies that are similar to those used in persuasive and argumentative writing.

Assessment Options:

- Quizzes on assigned readings.
- Short-answer written responses to ensure literal and inferential comprehension of texts.
- Reflective practice of AP English Language and Composition multiple choice sections.
- Rhetorical Analysis Essay
- Argumentative Essay
- Literature Assessment

Unit 3 - Science, Technology, Nature and Rhetoric

In this unit, students analyze rhetoric in science, technology, and politics, with a particular focus on studying letters in literature and history, noting how novelists and historical figures use letters to advance an idea or argument to a select audience. The epistolary approach of Mary Shelley in her cautionary novel *Frankenstein* offers comparison to letters from various historical figures. Students analyze how effective rhetoric has advanced culture through the epistolary works of Martin Luther King Jr., Benjamin Banneker, Theodore Roosevelt and others featured on the AP English Language and Composition exam. To prepare for the AP exam, students completed timed responses for the three types of essays expected on the AP Exam: Rhetorical Analysis Essay, Argument Essay, and Free Response Argument Essay.

Reserved Reading Options:

Novels: *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley

Non-fiction: "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," Martin Luther King Jr.; *The Apology: Letters from a Terrorist*, Laura Blumenfeld; Theodore Roosevelt's letter, *The Proper Place for Sports*; *The Veil* (graphic memoir) Marjane Satrapi; *Letter to King Ferdinand of Spain*, Christopher Columbus; Selections from Shea's *The Language of Composition* (Chapters 6, 9, 10) "In Which the Ancient History I Learn Is Not My Own," Eavan Boland; *Health and Happiness*, Robert D. Putnam; from *The Land Ethic*, Aldo Leopold; from *The End of Nature*, Bill McKibben; *A Naturalist in the Supermarket*, Michael Pollan; *The Locavore Myth*, James McWilliams; *The American Table and The Global Table*, Jonathan Safran Foer; *The Carnivore's Dilemma*, Nicolette Hahn Niman; *A Good Food Manifesto for America*, Will Allen; from *Silent Spring*, Rachel Carson; from *Nature*, Ralph Waldo Emerson; *The Clan of One-Breasted Women*, Terry Tempest Williams; from *The End of Nature*, Bill McKibben.

Concepts and Skills:

Language and Argument

- Delineate and analyze the development of specific arguments.
- Recognize and explain the methods of development to accomplish a purpose.
- Evaluate rhetorical strategies. Explain how word choice, comparisons, and syntax contribute to the specific tone or style of a text.
- Write clear and effective rhetorical analysis and argumentative essays based on released AP topics.
 - Develop a thesis statement that conveys a defensible claim.
 - Select relevant evidence to support the thesis statement.
 - Create a purposeful structure and line of reasoning to present and connect the evidence to the thesis statement.
 - Incorporate rhetorical strategies.
 - Address counterclaims accurately and effectively in argumentative essays.
 - Maintain a formal style and objective tone.
 - Attend to the norms and conventions of Standard English. Use precise transitional devices and marks of punctuation.

Literature

- Trace the narrative arc in varied literary works, identifying primary and sub plots and methods used by the author to engage the reader through flashback and parallel plots.
- Analyze works for specific literary devices and evaluate the author's ability to use imagery for thematic effect.

Assessment Options:

- Quizzes on assigned readings.
- Short-answer written responses to ensure literal and inferential comprehension of texts.
- Timed Rhetorical Analysis Essay.
- Timed Synthesis Argument Essay.
- Timed Free Response Argument Essay.
- Literature Test

Unit 4 - Satire, Popular Culture and Rhetoric

In this fourth and final unit, students focus on the use of irony, satire, comedy and other methods of cultural commentary found in popular culture and journalism, and they work to detect verbal irony and satire in contemporary and classical works. This exposure ensures that students will not miss the purpose and meaning of any satirical content they encounter on the AP English Language and Composition exam. As the exam approaches, the class offers simulated exam conditions for timed multiple choice and writing exercises.

Reading Options:

Non-fiction: *A Modest Proposal*, Jonathan Swift; from *Serving in Florida*, Barbara Ehrenreich; *Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted*, Malcolm Gladwell; *Corn-Pone Opinions*, Mark Twain; *Hip Hop Planet*, James McBride; *Facebook Friendonomics*, Scott Brown; *Shopping and Other Spiritual Adventures in America Today*, Phyllis Rose; *Waste*, Wendell Berry; *The New Consumerism*, Juliet Schor; *Shop-happy*, Joan Smith; *In Praise of Chain Stores*, Virginia Postrel; *Forbes Price Index of Luxury Goods Keeps Pace with Inflation* (table), Scott DeCarlo; *My Zombie, Myself: Why Modern Life Feels Rather Undead*, Chuck Klosterman; Mark Tansey, *The Innocent Eye Test* (painting); *Myths* (painting), Andy Warhol; *High-School Confidential: Notes on Teen Movies*, David Denby; from *Show and Tell* (graphic essay), Scott McCloud; *Watching TV Makes You Smarter*, Steven Johnson. **Poetry:** *Emily Dickinson and Elvis Presley in Heaven*, Hans Ostrom.

Concepts and Skills:

- Analyze writer's craft in varied texts.
- Explain how writers' stylistic choices contribute to the purpose and effectiveness of the text.
- Analyze the form and function of satire and when satire can be an effective strategy. Analyze the specific rhetorical strategies that contribute to effective satire.
- Explain how writers create, combine, and place independent and dependent clauses to show relationships between and among ideas.
- Write well-structured essays using rhetorical strategies to enhance the argument.
- Use established conventions of grammar and mechanics to communicate clearly and effectively.
- Strategically use words, comparisons, and syntax to convey a specific tone or style in an argument.

Assessment Options:

- Quizzes on assigned readings.
- Short-answer written responses to ensure literal and inferential comprehension of texts.
- Timed Rhetorical Analysis Essay.
- Timed Synthesis Argument Essay.
- Timed Free Response Argument Essay.
- Timed practice of AP English Language and Composition multiple choice sections.

Student Evaluation/Grading

Formative Assignments (40%): In-class writings, including drafts of essays, journal entries, reader's responses.

Formal Mastery/Summative (40%): Revised and final drafts of essays, tests, projects.

Engagement and Participation (20%): Promptness and participation in classroom and online discussions, seminars, and written discussion boards