



## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition is designed for the student who has demonstrated the ability to meet the demands of college preparatory courses and who wishes to advance his or her English skills to the collegiate level. The demands of this course are rigorous; extensive reading and expository writing are required in preparation for the optional AP placement exam offered in May. Successful completion of this test may result in college English credit for the student.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course has many objectives, several of which will benefit you not only in this class, but in other classes, as well as life outside of school:

- To encourage an appreciation for nonfiction writing in its varied modes, including narrative, descriptive, persuasive, among others
- To teach, model, and encourage active reading skills of complex texts
- To provide opportunities to write in several forms—including narrative, expository, argumentative, and analytical—on many different subjects
- To encourage you to write effectively, reflectively, and confidently
- To assist you in moving beyond formulaic writing and instead place emphasis on content, purpose, and style
- To provide an understanding of correct and various revision techniques
- To teach, model, and encourage correct writing conventions according to the MLA format

\*The above objectives are in accordance with the prescribed goals of an AP English Language and Composition course as listed on the AP Central/College Board website ([apcentral.collegeboard.com](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com))

## **Student Objectives**

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- identify the characteristics of each of the various modes of discourse
- read texts actively, critically, and analytically
- analyze and interpret subject, purpose, meaning, and tone of written and visual texts
- evaluate and critique your writing and the writing of others
- identify and explain rhetorical strategies and techniques
- use the writing process, complete with editing and revisions, to produce a finished written product
- evaluate, use, and correctly cite sources using the MLA format
- formulate and present an argument in writing through appropriate research
- interpret, evaluate, and employ critical feedback on written drafts to improve writing skills

\*The above objectives are in accordance with the curricular requirements of an AP English Language and Composition course as listed on the AP Central/College Board website ([apcentral.collegeboard.com](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com))

## **Class Policies and Expectations**

As this course is labeled “advanced,” I expect my students to be responsible for their behavior and motivation. Because of the heavy work load and advanced pace of the class, I cannot

stop to handle behavioral problems. Thus, students will be expected to adhere to the following rules:

## 1. Respect others and yourself.

Do your best; be polite and positive; keep our space clean. Disrespect will NOT be tolerated.

## 2. ARRIVE ON TIME.

Be ready to work every day when the bell rings.

## 3. BE PREPARED FOR CLASS.

Make sure you have your ID, completed homework assignments, pens, book, binder, agenda every day.

## 4. Be Attentive and Work While You are Here.

Pay attention and do your work. Give me the courtesy of being 100% present in my class.

## 5. TAKE CARE OF PERSONAL BUSINESS BEFORE CLASS.

If you really need to go, ask. If you can wait, wait.

## 6. Take Responsibility for Yourself and Your Learning

Show maturity by being an active participant in your own education. Be smart about your behavior and develop a good work ethic. There is NO OPTING OUT!

## PLAGIARISM/CHEATING POLICY

To plagiarize means to use another's thoughts, ideas, or words and pass them off as one's own. Cheating is copying another's work or accepting answers from another student. Cheating also includes offering one's work or answers to another student. Academic honesty is expected in this class—no student shall cheat or plagiarize in this class. If any resources are included in **ANY** of your work, proper citation must be used. If a student is caught cheating or plagiarizing, he or she will lose credit for that assignment and a referral to the proper school administrator will be written. A second offense may result in the loss of credit for the course.

## Homework Policy

- **Assignments** are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Place your work in the designated tray as you enter the classroom.
- **Late assignments** will not be accepted. This course is designed to help prepare you for college and a professional working environment; many professors and bosses will not excuse late work. You are responsible for handing your work in as directed, and I do not take excuses lightly. Waiting until the last minute to complete your work is unacceptable.
- **If you are absent**, it is YOUR responsibility to check my classroom website ([denomme.myteachersite.org](http://denomme.myteachersite.org)) from home to see what was covered during your absence. Please note, however, that a great deal of work will be done in class. Frequent absences may affect your overall chances for success.

- **Formal Papers, as well as many of your homework assignments** MUST be typed and double spaced using Times New Roman font, 12 cpi, and must follow all MLA formatting guidelines. NO EXCEPTIONS!
- If you are **absent the day of a scheduled test**, you must make it up within one week or you will receive a zero for the test. You may make up tests/quizzes before or after school only. It is YOUR responsibility to **schedule a make-up test...do not rely on me to make the arrangements!**
- **If you are absent the day a major assignment is due (project or essay), you will be expected to send me the work via email by the end of the school day.**
- Please do everything in your power to print your work on your own, but, should you need me to print your work, you must send me an email by the beginning of the school day (during first hour) on the due date asking me to print your work. **If you simply send an attachment without a polite request, I will delete your email.**

## Grading Policy

The course will be weighted as follows:

Take-Home Essays and Projects: 35%

In-Class Essays: 20%

Exams: 20%

Quizzes: 10%

General Homework Assignments: 10%

Participation in Class Discussions: 5% (first semester only)

\* Many essays will be scored using the 9-point scale used on the Advanced Placement exam.

The following grading scale will apply:

Score	Percentage	Score	Percentage
9	100-97%	4	77-73%
8	96-93%	3	72-68%
7	92-88%	2	67-63%
6	87-83%	1	62-58%
5	82-78%	0	50%

\*By the way, here's another handy chart to break down how long it takes to grade essays, on average, depending on the number of essays and the amount of time spent per essay:

Number of Essays	5 minutes per essay	10 minutes per essay	20 minutes per essay
50	4+ hours	8+ hours	16+ hours
100	8+ hours	16+ hours	33+ hours
150	12+ hours	25 hours	50 hours

## MATERIALS

You must bring the following things with you to class every day unless otherwise noted:

1. Reader
2. ID
3. Agenda
4. Writing Utensils (Pens and #2 Pencils)
5. Highlighters
6. 3 X 5 Index cards
7. English Binder (for my class only!!)
8. Clean loose-leaf paper
9. Completed Homework Assignments
10. A Positive Attitude
11. An Open Mind
12. A Sense of Humor

## COURSE OVERVIEW

The course is divided into units throughout the two semesters. Weekly and bi-weekly assignments and activities include Vocabulary Lessons, In-Class Writings, Entrance/Exit Cards, Quick Writes, and released AP prompt studies all in addition to the daily work done in class and outside readings and writings.

- Vocabulary Lessons—Most Mondays, you will be assigned a vocabulary list of 15 words and accompanying activities, including application, etymology, and analogy exercises, as well as a reading excerpt from an essay coupled with related multiple choice questions in the style of the AP Exam. You will also write a unified paragraph using at least seven of the new words. You will have cumulative tests on the words throughout the year.
- In-Class Writings (Assessment)—Often, you will be given a topic, usually from a released AP English Language & Composition exam, and one class period to complete your written response. Most in-class writings will be collected, evaluated, and scored using the AP nine-point rubric.
- Entrance/Exit Cards—Now and again, I may assign one of these cards to help you reflect a bit more on a day's lesson. You will use your index cards for these.
- Quick Writes—A few times a month, I will post a quotation or prompt for you to read, think about quickly, and begin writing a response to. At the beginning of the year, you may start by using prewriting strategies or working toward a thesis, but by the end of the first semester, you should be pushing yourself to be drafting a working essay. The point, primarily, is to prepare for the on-demand writing you'll be doing for upcoming exams.
- Released AP Prompts—You will not only write essays on released prompts, but you will also examine released prompts and sample responses that have been evaluated and scored. I have found that this is one of the best ways for you to understand the kind of writing the AP board is looking for when scoring the essays. We will discuss the various strengths and weaknesses in the responses and use these discussions as a basis for not only determining the characteristics of each score, but also directing our own writing.

### Textbooks

- Baker, Sheridan. The Practical Stylist. 8<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: Addison, Wesley, Longman Inc., 1998.
- Stubbs, M., Barnet, S., and Cain, W. The Little, Brown Reader. 10<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: Pearson Longman, 2006.
- Supplemental Reader

## Course Timeline (Tentative)

The fall semester focuses primarily on reading critically and effectively by examining a variety of readings from a variety of time periods, perspectives, topics, and rhetorical modes. Lectures and readings also include activities and exercises to encourage thoughtful practice of skills. Throughout the semester, you will also be examining and strengthening your writing through a variety of short and long works. You will write in multiple modes, always looks to improve upon your organization, style, diction, and voice. In addition, we will be looking at the rhetorical triangle on which many of our future discussions will be based. In the second semester, we continue to read and analyze works as well as to work on writing, but we will also be focusing much energy on preparing for the SAT and AP exams. Please note that this syllabus is quite tentative and may change, subtly or drastically.

An asterisk (\*) indicates an assessment (but this list is not all inclusive).

### **Unit One: “The Basics”**

- Syllabus, Rules, & Expectations
- “A ‘Short’ Guide to Surviving the AP English Classroom”
- Response card technique introduced
- Grammar
- Rhetorical Devices and Strategies
- A Look at Summer Reading: In-depth discussion of *Lord of the Flies*
- \*Exam upon completion of reading *Lord of the Flies*
- Brief review of MLA format and writing expectations
- An examination of the AP Exam
- Essay Selections

### **Unit Two: The Rhetorical Triangle**

- Discuss the various elements of the rhetorical triangle and its role in argument
  - Ethos/Speaker
  - Pathos/Audience
  - Logos/Argument
- Examine the role of each as separate elements
- Examine how each element is connected to the others
- Examine the role of each element in the context of writing
- Continue study of rhetorical devices
- First look at the rhetorical analysis essay
- Essay Selections
- \*Quiz on the Rhetorical Triangle

### **Unit Three: “Reading Well”**

- Reading critically/analytically with a focus on annotation
- Rhetorical Precis Analysis technique
- A look at Background Knowledge
- Lecture Little, Brown Reader (LBR): Chapter One—A Writer Reads
- Essay Selections

### **Unit Four: “Writing Well”**

- Lecture Practical Stylist: Chapters One-Four
- \*Test on Readings
- Grammar work
- Defining and Examining Process Writing (Special Attention: How to Evaluate)
- Examining the MLA Format (Formatting essay, quotations, citations)
- Examining the work of others: Critiquing writing samples
- Essay Selections
- \*In-Class Essay: Rhetorical Analysis
- \*Take Home Essay—Analysis of *Lord of the Flies*
- \*Rhetorical Strategies Test 1

### **Unit Five: Language— “For me, words are a form of action, capable of influencing change” (Bengis).**

- Examining Language use in the AP exam
- In-depth practice of rhetorical analysis
- Grammar work
- Essay Selections
- \*In-Class Essay: Rhetorical Analysis

**Unit Six: Community—“The universal brotherhood of man is our most precious possession” (Twain).**

- AP Exam Practice: Examining and “attacking” readings and related multiple choice questions from released and practice exams
- Special Attention: Reading Satire
- Essay Selections
- \*Project: A Modern Proposal
- \*Rhetorical Strategies Test 2

**Unit Seven: Education—“Education is all a matter of building bridges” (Ellison).**

- AP Exam Practice: Examining and “attacking” readings and related multiple choice questions from released and practice exams
- Essay Selections
- \*In Class Essays: Rhetorical Analysis and SAT
- \*Take Home Essay: Smiley Face Tricks

**Unit Eight: The Visual Image—“Exercising the imagination, experimenting with talents, being creative; these things, to me, are truly the windows to your soul” (Ross).**

- Lecture LBR: Chapter Five—Reading and Writing about Pictures
- Analyzing Visual Arguments: Advertising, Political Cartoons, Photographs, Paintings, Charts
- Dissecting visual selections
- In Class Essay: Synthesis

**Unit Nine: Identity—“There are three things extremely hard: steel, a diamond, and to know one's self” (Franklin).**

- AP Exam Practice: Examining and “attacking” readings and related multiple choice questions from released and practice exams
- Grammar work
- Essay Selections
- \*In Class Essays: Synthesis and Argument
- \*Take Home Essay: “How It Feels to Be \_\_\_\_\_ Me”

**Unit Ten: Argument—“For good ideas and true innovation, you need human interaction, conflict, argument, debate” (Heffernan).**

- Lecture Patterns: Chapter Twelve—Argumentation
- Lecture LBR: Chapter Four—Writing an Argument
- Essay Selections
- \*In Class Essays: Synthesis and Argument
- \*Take Home Essay: Paired Argumentative Research Essay