

AP[®] Language and Composition 2020-2021
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Course Description:

An AP English Language and Composition course cultivates the reading and writing skills that students need for college success and for intellectually responsible civic engagement. The course guides students in becoming curious, critical, and responsive readers of diverse texts and becoming flexible, reflective writers of texts addressed to diverse audiences for diverse purposes. The reading and writing students do in the course should deepen and expand their understanding of how written language functions rhetorically: to communicate writers' intentions and elicit readers' responses in particular situations. (The College Board, AP[®] English Language and Composition Course and Exam Description, 2019. p. 11)

Big Ideas and Enduring Understandings:

The big ideas serve as the foundation of the AP[®] English Language and Composition course and enable students to create meaningful connections among course concepts. They are threads that run throughout the course, and revisiting them and applying them in a variety of contexts helps students to develop deeper conceptual understanding. Below are the big ideas of the course, along with the enduring understanding associated with each one:

RHETORICAL SITUATION (RHS) Enduring Understanding: Individuals write within a particular situation and make strategic writing choices based on that situation. **Context and perspective shape the truth. Everything is an argument. Recognize the bias.**

CLAIMS AND EVIDENCE (CLE) Enduring Understanding: Writers make claims about subjects, rely on evidence that supports the reasoning that justifies the claim, and acknowledge or respond to other, possibly opposing, arguments. **Purpose = Thesis, Thesis Extensions, and Thesis Realized**

REASONING AND ORGANIZATION (REO) Enduring Understanding: Writers guide understanding of a text's lines of reasoning and claims through that text's organization and integration of evidence. **Find the unifying thread; delve into the implications; make arguments about arguments**

STYLE (STL) Enduring Understanding: The rhetorical situation informs the strategic stylistic choices that writers make. **Marry the method with the message; connect the content with the craft. Tone leads the way to the purpose.** (The College Board, AP[®] English Language and Composition Course and Exam Description, 2019. p. 15; LaPlante, 2019. p. 2)

Course Objectives:

This course will be organized into thematic units structured to build skill progression. Each unit will culminate in written assessment/project meant to reflect the learning and skill practice that students have been working on within the unit, and students will read a variety of texts that serve as a mentor texts for the student's purpose or act as the basis for rhetorical analysis that will follow. Students are therefore expected to develop the following over the course of the class:

- a diverse vocabulary used accurately and effectively
- understanding of complex and diverse sentence structures used appropriately
- awareness of bias within a text and ability to seek out any possible alternative perspectives
- an effective use of a variety of rhetorical strategies in analysis and composition of writing

Students will find in the course through their interactions with texts, discussion, and experimentation with stylistic choices, the purpose of writing is to communicate clearly to a larger audience; writing is the way in which language is artfully and masterfully constructed in a manner that claims a stake in the larger conversation that is continuously carried out around the world on any manner of topic. To write well is to create rich imagery, elicit strong reader response on an emotional or intellectual level, and to maintain clarity and cohesiveness throughout a given piece.

Thus, when students engage with texts and the writing process, they come to wrestle with and gain understanding of the human condition in small and perhaps large ways. In order to do this well, students must understand the importance of the craft of writing and its larger implications in the world and what is at stake for each writer within the classroom sphere. Writing is to be seen as an ongoing process that does not end with a single iteration of a paper; rather it should undergo change and revision as understanding is more fully fleshed out and integrated with new knowledge and experiences. This course will provide the opportunity to revisit and revise writing as conceptual understandings undergo shifts over the duration of the course.

Additionally, within this course, one axiom will be stressed repeatedly: ***Good readers write; good writers read. Very good readers reread; very good writers rewrite.*** Further, for each reading assignment students must identify the following:

- Thesis (Implied and/or Direct), Thesis Extensions, and Thesis Realized
- Tone or Attitude
- Purpose
- Unifying Thread
- Audience and Occasion
- Evidence or Data
- Appeals: Logos, Ethos, Pathos
- Assumptions or Warrants
- Style (how the author communicates his message: rhetorical mode, rhetorical devices always including syntax and diction) (LaPlante, 2019. p. 3)

Expectations/Grading:

For the purposes of this course, all assignments should be turned in on time. As a class on par with entry level college courses, it is expected that you maintain the same level of responsibility over the completion of work in a timely manner. If there is an extenuating circumstance, please be sure to communicate with me expeditiously to determine the possibility of an extension on the work. I understand that life happens sometimes in ways that are unpredictable..

Assessments, papers, presentations, and projects: The majority of classwork will serve as formative assessment to demonstrate acquisition of skills of the course. Summative final assessments should be typed and submitted both as a paper copy and electronic copy (details of electronic submission process to be shared later in class). Formatting should follow MLA guidelines including proper in-text and works cited citations.

Mini Quizzes and Mini Practice AP tests: Quizzes will serve to hold students accountable for their reading and to determine a level of deeper understanding of the text at hand. Students should be prepared for mini quizzes on any reading assigned for class, and it is recommended that students get in the habit of critically annotating texts that are assigned to better understand the text. There may also occasionally be practices to test students on course-specific vocabulary and for AP prep.

Critical Commentaries: Critical commentaries will ask students to respond to text specific prompts or guided questions to aid students in scrutinizing the text in a particular manner. They are meant to guide student thinking and push students to arrive at the deeper implications embedded within the text rather than relying on surface only analysis. These should be typed and reflect a deep level of critical thought as well as citing textual evidence to support the claims made within commentary.

Class participation/Writer's Notebook: Students are expected to actively engage with and contribute to class discussions as well as to actively write in their writer's notebook. This participation demonstrates students' engagement with the often complex themes and ideas present within the course texts. Students will also see how participation in open discussion elicits rich and meaningful conversation on ideas and allows texts to be examined through a variety of different lenses and from several peer perspectives.. It is also an avenue for students to practice asserting their claims and supporting with evidence these claims as well as synthesizing various inputs through conversation.

Mid-terms/Final exams: Mid-term examinations will consist of practice timed AP[®] writing prompts to simulate testing conditions and familiarize students with the process within the timed setting as well as the sustained writing endurance/pacing needed. This will also serve as a checkpoint for students to mark their progress on honing their craft for each of the essay types and will allow for self reflection on what specific skills need to be built up during second semester. The final exam will include a reflective element which will ask students to consider the course in totality and examine aspects which they found especially helpful as well as areas of challenge.

General Expectations for Behavior

- *Respect for Self and Others*—In terms of behavior, I ask that you please show respect toward yourself, your classmates, and me, so that everyone can learn within the classroom space.
- *Active Participation*—One of the biggest parts of this course is critical thinking and applying what we know in order to participate in a larger conversation. That being said, active participation is encouraged and expected.
- *Bullying*—Bullying of any kind will not be permissible at all. See me immediately if you feel this has occurred toward you or another student.
- *Academic Integrity*—Academic dishonesty of any kind is not permitted whatsoever in this course. If unsure in a given situation, ask me. See ROHS policies in IB MYP policy guide related to copying, cheating, colluding or plagiarizing on any assignment.

Course Text

The Language of Composition: Reading, Writing, Rhetoric Second Edition
Ed. Shea, Scanlon, Aufses 2013

Units of Study:

First Semester:

To begin: Poetry and Small Moment Personal Narrative

Course Readings will derive from each list TBD

Intro to Rhetoric

“Good Readers and Good Writers” Nabokov
“Once More to the Lake” E.B. White
“Battle Royale” Ellison
“9/11: The Skyscraper and the Airplane” Goodheart
“Nobel Prize Speech” Faulkner
“On Writing” King
“The Motive for Metaphor” Frye
“The Death of the Moth” Wolf
“How we Listen” Copland

Assessment: Critical Commentary 1

Personal Experience

Course Readings & Other Supplemental Materials:

“Coming Home Again” Lee
“On Going Home” Didion
Excerpt from An American Childhood Dillard
“Under the Influence” Sanders
“We Do Abortions Here: A Nurse’s Story” Tisdale

Education & Language

Course Readings & Other Supplemental Materials:

"Learning to Read" Douglas

"How to Tame a Wild Tongue" Anzaldúa

"Superman and Me" Alexie

"College is a Waste of Time and Money" Bird

"A Talk to Teachers" Baldwin

Assessment: Critical Commentary 2

Culture & Race

Course Readings & Other Supplemental Materials:

"A New Beginning" Obama

"Black Men in Public Space" Staples

"How it Feels to be Colored Me" Hurston

"The Problem We All Live With"—Podcast

"Saudis in Bikinis" Kristoff

Excerpt from Persepolis Satrapi

Excerpt from Reading Lolita in Tehran Nafisi

Assessment: Socratic Seminar

Ethics, Philosophy, & Religion

Course Readings & Other Supplemental Materials:

"Allegory of the Cave" Plato

"Consider the Lobster" Wallace

"Salvation" Langston Hughes

Stanford Prison Experiment (maybe)

Excerpt from The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks

"Existentialism" Sartre

"Surprised by Death" Tholen

"The Moral Instinct" Pinker

"The Case for Torture" Levin

"When Doctors Make Mistakes" Gawande

Assessment: Comparative Synthesis Essay

Review

MIDTERM: Practice AP Test

Second Semester:

Changing Landscapes: Nature, Technology, & Pop Culture

Course Readings & Other Supplemental Materials:

"Confluences" Signor

"Marshland Elegy" Leopold

"Is Google Making us Stupid?" Carr

"Five Women" This American Life

Assessment: Practice for Argument - Group Project

Gender, Feminism, & Identity

Course Readings & Other Supplemental Materials:

"I want a Wife" Brady

"What is a Homosexual?" Sullivan

"On Being a Cripple" Mairs

"Letters" John and Abigail Adams

Class Structures (An American Experience)

Course Readings & Other Supplemental Materials:

"Take the F" Frazier

"On Dumpster Diving" Eighner

Excerpt from The Glass Castle Walls

"Behind the Formaldehyde Curtain" Mitford

"Working at Wendy's" Franklin

Politics, Government, & Social Advocacy

Course Readings & Other Supplemental Materials:

Excerpt from Dead Man Walking Sister Prejean

"A Modest Proposal" Swift

Assessment: Final Argument Essay

Test Prep

AP TEST DATE: May __ 2021