

**AP English Language and Composition Course Curriculum**  
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**Description**

This course engage students in becoming skilled readers of prose written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts and in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes and audiences. Both their reading and their writing should make students aware of the interactions among a writer’s purpose audience expectations, and subjects as well as how the generic conventions and the resources of language contribute to effectiveness in writing. Much of the class discussion will focus on the author’s technique, meaning, and expression of philosophical ideas. Students should expect this course to be similar to an introductory college writing course that focuses on exposition, argument, and literary analysis.

**Standards**

Upon completing the AP Language and Composition course, then, students should be able to:

- Analyze and interpret samples of good writing, identifying and explaining an author’s use of rhetorical strategies and techniques.
- Apply effective strategies and techniques in their own writing.
- Create and sustain arguments based on readings, research, and/or personal experience
- Demonstrate understanding and mastery of standard written English as well as stylistic maturity in their own writings.
- Write for a variety of purposes.
- Produce expository, analytical, and argumentative compositions that introduce a complex central idea and develop it with appropriate evidence drawn from primary and/or secondary source material, cogent explanations, and clear transitions.
- Demonstrate understanding of the conventions of citing primary and secondary source material.
- Move effectively through the stages of the writing process, with careful attention to inquiry and research, drafting, revising, editing, and review.
- Write thoughtfully about their own process of composition.
- Revise a work to make it suitable for a different audience.
- Analyze image as text.
- Evaluate and incorporate reference documents into researched papers.
- Analyze the historical and cultural development of American literature with insight and clarity.
- Write under time constraints.
- Read and analyze a minimum of nine longer works (e.g., novels, plays).

**Textbooks**

*The Language of Composition 2007*

*Literature: Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes*

Writing Handbook

Selected novels, essays, longer non-fiction, and plays

**Grading**

Nine weeks grades will be based in an average of written assignments, projects, compositions, tests, quizzes, in-class writings, homework, preparation, and class participation. An approximate breakdown of the weights of the various components might be something like this:

Compositions, projects, and tests	50%
Quizzes, In-Class Writing, Etc.	30%
Homework, participation	20%

Individual writing assignments will have rubrics that fit each compositional requirement.

**Writing Assignments**

Students will write many formal and informal pieces for a variety of audiences and purposes. For the formal essays, the final product will develop as it emerges from the writing process. Much time will be devoted to prewriting, drafting, and revision. For each of these pieces, students will have multiple opportunities for revision after peer review and teacher conferences and commentary. For each assignment, the first draft will go through a guided peer review in which the teacher asks students to

identify and comment on particular aspects (e.g., verb usage, sentence structure, idea development, vocabulary, etc.). After the second draft, students will work in writing workshops to share their progress and comment on each other's work. After the next draft, each student will meet with the teacher in a writing conference to reflect on writing strategy, effect, and voice. These three reviews of each formal assignment will help develop the student as writer. After the student submits each final essay, the teacher provides additional feedback regarding key traits (e.g., thesis development, use of support, citing sources, cohesion, emphasis, voice, etc.).

Each week students will participate in exploratory writing activities that are informal in nature. These activities ask students to imitate style, create varying sentence types, play with language, and reflect on their own writing and learning, respond personally to other readings, or write critical analyses. Throughout these exploratory activities students have the opportunity to try new strategies and techniques to help them become more aware of themselves as writers.

At least three times during each trimester, students will write under timed situations. These writing activities are designed to imitate the English AP Language exam and are generally used as assessments.

#### **Vocabulary Instruction**

Students will be responsible for assigned vocabulary words given each week.

#### **Course Content**

For each of the texts identified, students are applying their analytical skills to examine how writers use particular strategies and techniques to achieve particular effects. When fiction and poetry are read, students examine the same: how writers use technique to achieve particular effect. Students then practice these skills to link technique with meaning.

#### **First 9 weeks Aug-Oct**

##### **Skills:**

Thesis development

Rhetorical modes, skills

Syntax and Sentence Variety: sentence types and purposes, coordination/subordination, clauses, punctuation

Style

Organizational patterns

Topic sentences

Transitions

Phrases as modification

##### **Major Writing Assignments**

Personal Essay (writing about a personal experience using narration)

Literary analysis (critical analysis of writer's technique)

##### **Rhetorical Focus**

Narration, Analysis

##### **Possible Readings**

*The Scarlet Letter*

*The Red Badge of Courage*

*The Crucible-Drama*

*New York Times* editorials

17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century writings and contemporary writings relevant to the rhetorical modes

Seminal American documents

#### **Second Nine Weeks Oct-Dec**

##### **Skills**

Tone

Phrases as modifications

Documentation and citation of Sources (MLA)

Parallelism

Diction: connotation and denotation

Strategies for effective conclusions and introductions

##### **Major Writing Assignments**

Documented Research paper (4-5 pages, documented MLA style, multiple sources, argumentative)

Editorial (writing analytically about a public policy for a general audience)

##### **Rhetorical Focus**

Argument/Persuasion

Cause/Effect

##### **Possible Readings**

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*  
*The Great Gatsby*  
Selected essays and poetry

### **Third 9 Weeks Jan-Mar**

#### **Skills**

Persuasion and persuasive techniques  
Tone and Irony  
Point of View and Structure  
Elements of satire

#### **Major Writing Assignments**

Satire (essay using irony, pun, hyperbole, parody, etc.)  
Comparison/contrast essay (expository/analytical documented essay)

#### **Rhetorical Focus**

Comparison/contrast  
Description  
Satire

#### **Possible Readings**

*The Grapes of Wrath*  
*A Raisin in the Sun-Drama*  
The Onion  
Dave Barry  
Selected essays  
Visual Rhetoric

### **Fourth 9 Weeks Mar-May**

#### **Skills**

Visual rhetoric and analysis-using graphics as argument  
Style and Voice  
Analyze the impact of author's choices

#### **Major Writing Assignments**

Synthesis Essay (blending sources, refutation, argument structure, contemporary issue, visual analysis)  
Reflective essay on Literacy

#### **Rhetorical focus**

Ambiguity  
Reflection  
Figurative Language

#### **Possible Readings**

*The Turn of the Screw*  
*Flannery O'Conner* short stories  
Posters, banners, cartoons  
Charts/graphs  
Poetry

#### **Novels**

Students are required to read seven novels from August to April. Five of the novels are embedded in the preceding assignments. Two novels will be student choice. For each novel, students will complete a moment sheet and take a short multiple choice quiz. Also, the students will choose one of the novels to present creatively to the class (rhetorical analysis, PowerPoint, dramatic presentation, Book Trailer, etc.). This will count as a summative grade along with the moment sheet and a one page summary of their presentation. The student should tell me when they are ready to present (any time during the year). The presentation guidelines will be on a separate handout.

#### **Ongoing Assessment**

Throughout the year we will practice the writing, reading, and multiple choice strategies the students will need in order to be successful on the AP Exam in May, the ACT test in March, and the On-demand writing test.

**EXPECTATIONS FOR CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:** My primary goal is to ensure that all students will have the opportunity to learn in a mutually respectful classroom. I have high expectations for all of you to succeed not only on the AP exam but in the course and work to the best of your ability. I will do everything in my power as your teacher to ensure your success in this class and on the AP exam as long as you put forth the necessary effort.

- 1.) Be on time, in your seat, and ready to work when the bell rings.
- 2.) Be prepared with paper/pen and all needed materials EVERY day.
- 3.) Be respectful to yourself and others.
- 4.) Follow all school rules and procedures.
- 5.) Have a positive attitude and come to class everyday ready to learn!

**Consequences:**

- 1.) Individual warning from teacher
- 2.) Discipline referral/ write-up
- 3.) Write-up and telephone call/email to parent or guardian
- 4.) Write-up and Teacher/Parent/Student conference (appropriate measures will be agreed upon)

**Attendance**

Attendance is very important in this class! Students who are frequently absent find it difficult to keep up with discussions and assignments and do poorly. If you are absent, bring your excuse promptly. Late work without a proper excuse will receive only 1 point. Any excuses MUST be school approved as outlined in the student handbook.

**Materials Needed for Class:**

- 1.) Spiral or composition notebook for bell work, writer's notebook/ journal writing, and/or notes
- 2.) A 1 ½' three-ring binder for handouts, writing assignments, etc. with dividers for units
- 3.) Textbooks and/or books (bring appropriate ones when asked)
- 4.) \*Although not required, a flash drive may make the school to home transition easier when we are working on our writing pieces.

**Prep Sessions:**

Students are encouraged to participate in the three Saturday Prep Sessions. The first one is a general prep session to be held at Clay County High School. The second is a mock exam to be given at JCHS, and the third is analysis of mock exam scores to be held at a school in our region. Research shows that students who participate in the prep sessions are more than likely to pass the AP exam than students who do not participate.

**Technology**

Students are expected to word process all major writing assignments in MLA format. Also, students will be expected to research and use the Internet and technology as an educational tool to enhance their assignments and discussions. Students are required to use their school email to contact me outside of school. I encourage students to visit AP Central online to become more familiar with the AP Exam.

**Final note**

I look forward to a productive year with you in the AP Language Course. This course will challenge you to discipline yourself to read and read out of your comfort zone. You will write like never before in order to improve their writing. The goal of the class is not just to pass the AP exam, but also to prepare them for advanced reading and writing skills necessary in order to be successful in college and career. This is a rigorous course that demands commitment to high academic standards. I will work hard and I expect the same from the students.

One final bit of information is that if a student passes the AP Exam in May, they will receive \$100 from Advanced Kentucky in the fall. Also, most colleges award three credit hours for a qualifying score of 3 on the AP exam. If a student scores a 4 or 5, they may be eligible for 6 college credit hours! The qualifying score varies by college, so check with the university you plan to attend. Scores are reported in early July.

Mrs. Sue Smith

The teacher reserves the right to alter this syllabus at any time.

