

AP English Language and Composition

Greenville High School / Mr. Cartwright

September 2, 2014

Course Description

An AP course in English Language and Composition is open to all students willing to commit to its challenge course of study. Our theme is a meld of character, compassion, and citizenship.

In accordance with the College Board's *AP English Course Description*, the AP English Language and Composition course involves students in becoming skilled readers of non-fiction written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts and in developing skills as writers. The students' writing and reading help make students aware of the interactions among a writer's purposes, audience, and context as well as the way use of conventions, figurative language, syntax and diction contribute to effectiveness in writing.

This course has the expectation that students will write in a variety of forms—narrative, exploratory, expository, argumentative—and on a variety of subjects from personal experiences to public policies, from imaginative literature to popular culture. Our overarching goal is to enable students to write more effectively and confidently in high school, in their college courses across the curriculum and in their professional and personal lives. We will be reading primary and secondary sources carefully, to synthesize material from these texts in our own compositions and to cite sources using conventions recommended by the Modern Language Association (MLA) and possibly the American Psychological Association (APA) and the Chicago Manual of Style (University of Chicago Press).

This course will emphasize expository, analytical, and argumentative writing. As in the college course, its purpose is to enable students to read complex texts with understanding and to write prose that will communicate effectively with mature readers. An AP Language and Composition course should help students move beyond such programmatic responses as the five-paragraph essay that provides an introduction with a thesis and three reasons, body paragraphs on each reason, and a conclusion that restates the thesis. Although such formulaic approaches may provide minimal organization, they often encourage unnecessary repetition and fail to engage the reader. Students will be encouraged to place their emphasis on content, purpose, and audience to guide their organization and writing. Students will keep a journal.

Skill in writing proceeds from each student's awareness of his/her own composing processes in exploring ideas, reconsidering strategies, and revising work. This experience of the process of composing is the essence of first-year college courses as well as this AP Language and Composition Course. Students will write essays that proceed

through several stages or drafts, with revision aided by teacher and peers. Although these extended, revised essays cannot be part of the AP Examination, the experience of writing them will help make students more self-aware and flexible writers with confidence and practiced skills that help them on the AP English Language and Composition Exam, itself.

I will be available for support both personally, electronically, as needed to suit the needs of each student. I will work with students to develop vocabulary and skills in utilizing a variety of sentence structure (including appropriate use of subordination and coordination) as well as logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques to increase coherence, including repetition, transitions and emphasis. Students will be helped to develop writing which balances generalization and specific, illustrative detail. We will strive to augment students' skills in use of rhetoric, including development of voice and tone, achieving appropriate emphasis through diction and sentence structure

This course proceeds with the expectation that students already understand and use standard English grammar. The intense concentration on language used in this course will help develop each student's ability to use grammatical conventions both appropriately and with sophistication as well as to enhance style and sophistication in her/his writing.

In the non-fiction reading assigned for this course, students will become aware of the way in which stylistic effects are achieved by writers. Since imaginative literature incorporates use of these stylistic decisions, fiction and poetry will find a place in informing students of author decisions regarding diction, syntax and organization in this AP Language and Composition course.

In general, this class will provide sustained, explicit instruction in these areas:

- Analytical reading strategies
- Analysis of Style
- Writing in several genre and for a variety of purposes
- Organization, conventions and traits of effective expository writing

Students do not all come into the course with a wide range of prior experience that will allow them to read critically or analytically, write analytical prose, engage in academic discourse about literary and expository texts, take notes and annotate, or take advanced tests. The students will learn, in context as needed, to do these things so that all might succeed in class and in their academic futures. Academic Essentials woven into this course:

- Critical Reading
- Academic Writing
- Academic Discourse
- Analytical Thinking
- Notetaking and Annotation
- Test Taking

Guiding Principles:

This course is constructed in accordance with the guidelines described in the AP English Course Description. Writing is central to the class, and not limited to writing AP Essays. Students will write daily both in class and at home for three primary reasons, outlined by the College Board: to evaluate, to explain, and to understand. In-class writing will be done daily in the student's Reader's Notebook.

We will write major essays throughout the semester spending a few weeks on each one as a cycle for writing instruction, idea development, feedback and revision; the process continuing when students receive their papers back for all students to make suggested changes. This process will hold them accountable and work to raise their standards over time. Students will use their Reader's Notebooks to reflect on their own personal connections to the readings, as well as to prepare themselves to writing by using the notebook to gather ideas and take notes as directed. Penzu will be used as an on-line writer's notebook, and students will also be expected to keep a journal.

Students will:

1. Work independently, in pairs and in small groups
2. Process writing on multiple levels in various genres
3. Use tools and strategies to help them solve academic problems
4. Learn through a variety of instructional modes
5. Communicate understanding by various means, including electronic media
6. Monitor and evaluate their own performance and progress
7. Connect ideas and thinking to other studies, the world and their current and future lives
8. Develop skills and knowledge in the context of meaningful discussion and conversations
9. Understand what a successful performance looks like on all tasks and assessments
10. Read, write and discuss a variety of texts, including multi-media and visual

I am cognizant of the fact that few of the students in each class will go on to study composition or literature in college. I also know they all need to be able to read and write at advanced levels as required by their own chosen fields of study. Consequently, I will look for ways throughout class every day to make connections to other classes, as well as the demands college and life will make upon them. It is my goal to help prepare students for more than an AP Exam; it is my goal to help them prepare for life.

Each student will be provided a copy of all required readings for individual use both inside and outside the classroom.

Teacher Resources

Course Texts:

Albom, Mitch. *Tuesdays With Morrie*. New York: Broadway Books, 1997.

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow*, New York, New York Press, 2012.

Atwan, Robert. *AmericaNow*, 10th Edition. Boston, Massachusetts, Bedford/St. Martins, 2013.

Bullock, Richard. *The Norton Field Guide to Writing*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006.

Capote, Truman. *In Cold Blood*. New York: Vintage Books, 1965.

Cohen, Samuel. *50 Essays:: A Portable Anthology*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004.

Cooley, Thomas. *The Norton Sampler, 6th ed.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003.

Faigley, Lester. *Picturing Texts*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004.

Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference, 6th ed.* New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007.

Hosseini, Khaled, *And The Mountains Echoed*, New York, Penguin 2013

Junger, Sebastian. *The Perfect Storm*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997.

Krakauer, Jon. *Into the Wild*. New York: Anchor Books, 1996.

McCloud, Scott. *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1993.

Murphy, Barbara and Rankin, Estelle. *5 Steps to a 5*. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, 2002.

Peterson, Linda H. and Brereton, John C. *The Norton Reader, 11th ed.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004.

Shea, Scanlon, Aufses. *The Language of Composition*, 2nd Edition, Boston, Massachusetts, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013.

Stevens, Bryan, We Need To Talk About an Injustice, New York, TED Conferences, 2013
www.ted.com/talks/bryan_stevenson_we_need_to_talk_about_an_injustice.html

Stewart, Rory. *The Places in Between*. Orlando, Florida: Harcourt Books, 2004.

Trimmer, Joseph and Hairston, Maxine. *The Riverside Reader, Alternate ed.* Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2009.

Wolff, Tobias. *This Boy's Life: A Memoir*. New York: The Grove Press, 1989.

Course Planner

First Quarter: "Course Orientation, Introduction to Close Reading, and Rhetorical Awareness": September 2 – October 31, 2014

The summer reading assignment, *The New Jim Crow, Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander, will be the focus of the students' reading response journal and initiation into this course. With the journal writing, students focus on author's purpose, the thesis or central claim of the text, the tone, and the audience for the text. Students cite specific passages from the text that demonstrate the above elements as well as what they found extraordinary. In the summer, students also read, journal, and – in the early fall -- discuss *Anthem* by Ayn Rand and *Snow in the Kingdom* by Ed Webster.

Students, through journal writing, discuss the importance of the rhetorical strategies used in the text. Students study the introduction/Chapter 1 to the course's main texts (*50 Essays: A Portable Anthology*). The students learn the art of annotating, the importance of "close reads," and discover the purpose and context of a text. The class reads several essays and discusses the rhetorical strategies used in each. The class discusses Maya Angelou's *Graduation*, Gloria Anzaldua's *How to Tame a Wild Tongue*, and Martin Luther King Jr.'s *I Have a Dream* to discover the rhetorical strategies used.

Major Paper #1: After having read and discussed "The New Jim Crow," "Graduation", "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," and "I have a Dream," students select two of the pieces to use for their first paper. They are to identify the purpose of each text and how the author achieved or did not achieve his intended purpose.

What rhetorical strategies aided the author? Was tone a factor that either helped or hindered the author in achieving her/his purpose? Students may use the summer reading to also draw upon in their discussion of the other two texts. Students will meet with me to discuss their drafts, students will then revise their drafts, and will then prepare and submit final versions of their essays. Students and teacher will also discuss the paper after it has been assessed for the final time.

Close reading and annotation become the next emphasis for the first quarter. With use of "We Need to Talk about an Injustice," a TED Talk video by Human Rights Attorney, Bryan Stevens and the following essays, William Buckley Jr.'s "Why Don't We Complain," Stephanie Ericsson's "The Way We Lie," Stephen Jay Gould's "Women's Brains," Mike Rose's "I Just Wanna Be Average," Joan Petersillia's "Beyond the Prison Bubble," Annie Dillard's "An American Childhood," and Virginia Woolf's "Death of a Moth," students annotate the pieces to develop their close reading skills.

Along with annotation, students will also complete close-reading response forms, double-entry notebooks, and says/does analyses. The class discusses the importance of

considering audience and context in visual texts. Two essay/photo combinations are considered: Donald Murray's "The Stranger in the Photo is Me," an essay/photo combination from *The Boston Globe* (August 27, 1991), and an essay/photo combination by Michelle Citron entitled, "What's Wrong with this Picture?" from *Picturing Texts*.

Major Paper #2: After reading and annotating Donald Murray's piece, students are to bring in pictures of themselves that they believe displays "A life-changing moment." In doing so, students are asked to consider Murray's, Citron's, and Tobias Wolff's This Boy's Life, an outside reading that they have done. With the picture in front of them, students formulate an outline of events that lead from the picture to who they are now. How has what happened in the picture influenced their lives? Is there anybody else in the picture that played a role in who they have become? After the outlines are completed, students meet with peers to discuss their "life changing moment." Peers ask questions and offer suggestions. The students then make changes to their outlines. The students turn in their outlines, where I will discuss with the students my suggestions and questions. With the use of the outline and the discussions they have had about their outline, the students will then begin to formulate their own "memoirs."

Students should focus on word choice, their purpose, their audience, and how the picture and their writing form together as one text. When drafts are completed, again the teacher and the student's peers will discuss the memoir with the writer before he/she completes a final draft. After the final draft has been completed, students will be asked to then post their picture as they read their memoir to the class. From here classmates will ask questions to the reader. Finally, the writer will have one final opportunity to alter his memoir. Teacher will then meet with the student to discuss the final outcome of the photo/essay combination. During the discussion, students fill out a discussion "comment card."

At the end of the first quarter, students write their first timed essay. The chosen topic is drawn from AP Released Exam free-response 2012 questions that highlight a student's ability to understand rhetoric. These tasks require students to read closely and account for how language and rhetoric are purposefully employed. Selections include President John F. Kennedy's news conference of April 11, 1962, in which he uses his "bully pulpit" to criticize the hike in steel prices which ran counter to his previous call for stable prices and wages as part of a program of national sacrifice. Students will be asked to carefully read Kennedy's remarks and then write an essay in which they analyze the rhetorical strategies President Kennedy uses to achieve his purpose, supporting analysis with specific references to the text.

Second Quarter: "Accounting for Purpose, Deepening Appreciation of Rhetorical Strategies, and Intimations of Argument": November 1 – January 23, 2-15

Quarter two draws from a multitude of essays that are grouped in "clusters" according to subject and theme. The first cluster includes essays that all relate to some form of gender, identity, race or cultural issue. Students discuss the pieces and write analytical essays comparing and contrasting the rhetorical strategies and differences in each cluster. The first cluster includes: Nancy Mairs, "On Being a Cripple," James Baldwin's "Notes of a Native Son," Zora Neale Hurston's "How it Feels to be Colored Me," Judith Ortiz Colfer's "The Myth of the Latin Woman," and N. Scott Momaday's "The Way to Rainy Mountain."

"The second cluster deals with history, government, and social hierarchy, including: Thomas Jefferson's "The Declaration of Independence," Elizabeth Cady Stanton's "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions," Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal," and Barati Mukherjee's "Two Ways to Belong in America."

Major Paper #3: After reading all the aforementioned, students write a major rhetorical analysis paper. The students are to choose several of the pieces to produce an essay which describes how each of the writer's "intersect with or diverge" from each other. How does each writer choose his words? How does he accomplish his purpose? The students build from outlines and says/does analyses of the pieces, to a says/does analysis of their own paper. They share these with both their peers and the teacher. Through discussion, students then have a basis to improve their original essays. Following the essay, a formal peer/teacher meeting will be used for analysis of their essay.

From here the class continues with work from *The Riverside Reader*. Students base arguments from different perspectives as they deepen their understanding of context, audience, and purpose. They read pieces like Barbara Kingsolver's "Stone Soup," Barbara Defoe Whitehead's "Women and the Future," and Steven J. Gould's "Carrie Buck's Daughter." They also explore visual texts and images and their outcomes. They work with a single question: "Does every text pose an argument?" To do this they use *Picturing Texts* and the following images: Elaine Reichek's *Red Delicious*, Jesse Levine's *Turnabout Map*, Michaela Sullivan's *King Leopold's Ghost*, and Jason Berry and Richard Misrach's *Cancer Alley: The Poisoning of the American South*. Here students need to understand the difference between persuasion and argument. Through discussion of these essays and some forms of propaganda, i.e. television commercials, students determine the effectiveness of arguments based on values, character, morals, and emotion.

Major Paper #4: Students will hone their persuasive skills by creating a position paper on a societal issue of their choice. They first present the subject matter or issue orally to the class without taking a position. After class discussion (and position-taking), the

student will create a written position paper designed to sway the class to her/his point of view. The creator of the issue is to focus on such elements as the use of appeals, choice of details, and audience. After having considered this, the student will then present the argumentative essay once again to the class. Upon completion, the student will then edit, revise and polish their fourth major paper, describing their argument, what was successful and unsuccessful, and strategies or moves that may have improved their argument. Finally, a required writing conference is set up between the student and the teacher to discuss the organization of the entire project, as well as the outcome of their essay.

At the end of the second quarter, students take their semester exam. A Multiple Choice Sample from www.APCentral.com is used as the basis of their semester exam.

Third Quarter: "Understanding and Developing Rhetoric": January 26 – April 3, 2015

During the third quarter students continue with their work of understanding argument and the rhetorical triangle of exigence, audience, purpose, message and visual rhetoric, as they study essays centered on the issues of sports in our society. Students will use synthesis and their own schema to develop perspectives on essential questions like “What role do you feel sports play in our culture?” Has the role of the athlete changed over time? Is he or she a hero, a role model? What skills or moral lessons do sports provide? Students will create a claim that speaks to a view of the role of sports, find a minimum of four sources to support their claim, and for each source point to a specific piece of rhetoric and its effect on the audience. The student will then present his/her findings in a speech of at least five minutes in length, providing a written text and MLA works cited sheet for all sources utilized. Students must present their talk using notes or keynote.

Suggested essays and texts:

Bissenger, “Why College Football Should Be Banned,” (Wall Street Journal, May 8, 2012)

Greenwell, “Do College Sports Affect Students’ Grades?” (Good, January 3, 2012) 173

“The Art of Failure.” The New Yorker; handout

Angier, “Drugs, Sports, Body Image and G.I. Joe” 486

Talese, “The Silent Season of a Hero” The Language of Composition, p. 591-604

Updike, “Ex-Basketball Player” The Language of Composition ; 482-485.

Taibbi, Matt, “The Jock’s Guide to Getting Arrested.: Men’s Journal; handout

Oates, "The Cruellest Sport," *The Language of Composition*, P. 622-630

The task also asks students, once they have chosen the appropriate sources, to properly cite those sources in MLA format. Students turn in "bib-cards" listing all the bibliographical information for their sources in MLA format. The "bib-cards" will be returned to the students so that they can return to the sources to pull the appropriate information out of the sources for their next activity.

In giving the speech, students will utilize at least three rhetorical strategies effective speakers implement: allusion, analogy, anecdote, antithesis, parallel structure, quotations, rhetorical questions or allegories, etc. Student will then be asked to put together her/his own synthesis question about the role of sports in society, providing readings and visual rhetoric.

Major Paper # 5: Students are to take the information they have found, evaluate it once more, and begin to formulate an essay in which the material they have found either supports or refutes their argument and the argument of the primary source(s) they have chosen. Students meet with their peers to discuss the paper, draft, revise, and complete a final version that will be handed to me. Once again, students will be asked to have a writing conference with me after the papers have been assessed. Concurrently, students have been reading Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*. Students carefully analyze selected passages that suggest Capote's various rhetorical purposes.

Major Paper # 6: (borrowed from John Brasil) "The students' study of what Capote called a 'nonfiction novel' culminates in a major paper. They closely read, annotate, and eventually compare two consecutive passages from the 'Persons Unknown' section of the book. In this segment, Capote presents consecutive representations of the same segment of time. These passages include shared reference points, including such remarkable phrases as 'Mountains. Hawks wheeling in a desert sky.' Students focus on particular quotations and representations that, presented in different contexts and from the different points of view of the two killers, suggest distinct purposes behind each rendition of the same period of time."

The students finish off the third quarter with an in-class, timed AP Writing Prompt. The prompt also focuses on *In Cold Blood* and was found in *AP English Language, 5 Steps to a 5*. The prompt reads, "The following paragraphs are from the opening of Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*. After carefully reading the excerpt, write a well-organized essay in which you characterize Capote's view of Holcomb, Kansas and analyze how Capote conveys this view. Your analysis may consider such stylistic elements as diction, imagery, syntax, structure, tone, and selection of detail."

Fourth Quarter: Synthesis Essay, "Focused Preparation for the AP English Language and Composition Exam": April 6 – June 11, 2015

The final quarter includes a cluster of letters and essays that all focus on heroes and leaders. Students read essays and other texts that include heroes and what it means to be a hero or a societal leader. The texts include Washington's Letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, April 28, 1788," Jason Utesch's "Personality," Natalie Angier's "Of Altruism, Heroism, and Evolution's Gifts," Colin Evan's "The Kelly Gang," Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," George Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant," and Sarah Vowell's "Cowboy's vs. Mounties." Students are also asked to look at other media (i.e. magazines, television, newspapers) to identify how they perceive heroism.

Major Paper #7 : While reading the aforementioned essays in class, students also read Khaled Hosseini's *Echoes From The Mountain*, this course's only newly written novel. Here students are asked to write their final major paper. The paper allows for the students to use any reading they have done along the way. From what they have read, they are to research "heroism," in an unbiased approach. They are not to come to conclusions until several secondary sources have been found and read. After having read all of the pieces, they are then to form an argument of their own. They then are asked to "synthesize" several sources, both primary and secondary, that help support their opinion. The purpose of this is to help them with the AP Exam synthesis questions. After students have all their materials, they must begin drafting their essay, first with an outline, then rough draft, a conference with the teacher, revise, and finally complete the final copy. The student will once again have a writing conference after the final copy has been assessed. This assignment also requires that students formulate their essay in accordance to The Modern Language Association's guidelines.

The last few weeks before the AP Exam, students take several practice exams in class. Each multiple choice question is reviewed with the students and explanations are given for the correct answers. Students also work with several AP essay prompts. After the students have written the essays for their prompts, the class will go over the rubrics and student samples together in hope that the students will get a grasp of what is expected of them. For the time after the AP Exam, students will be working on assignments that are school requirements and readings that most juniors complete at our school. The school requires all juniors to complete a "Career Portfolio." The portfolio has students gather letters of recommendation from their teachers and has documentation of community service that they have completed. Students draft a cover letter for the portfolio, and also include samples of student work.

Finally, while students are working on their "Career Portfolios," they also will be asked to read novels that many seniors are required to read from the curriculum. Because not much time is left in the year, each of the students is asked to choose two of the books from the list that they would like to read. That means students must read approximately one and a half books per week.

Upon completion of the readings, the students will form book discussion groups. The list of books includes:

Author Work

Author Work

Williams	<i>The Crucible</i>	Chekov	<i>Complete Short Novels</i>
Achebe	<i>Things Fall Apart</i>	Hugo	<i>Les Miserable</i>
Austin	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i>	Orwell	<i>1984</i>
Conrad	<i>Heart of Darkness</i>	Machiavelli	<i>The Prince</i>
Fitzgerald	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	Hawthorne	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i>
Stoker	<i>Dracula</i>	Hosseinni	<i>The Kite Runner</i>
Shakespeare	<i>MacBeth</i>	Dickens	<i>Great Expectations</i>
Krakauer	<i>Into the Wild</i>	Bronte	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>

Student Evaluation

Students are evaluated on the basis of major papers, homework, tests, and classroom participation and involvement. As in many college classes, the involvement of the student is necessary for a well-organized, intellectual conversation about the writing. Thus, students must be prepared for class at all times (i.e. having read the assignments and completed their homework).

Major Papers/Tests- 50%
 Participation/Character- 40%
 Homework-10%

Although the homework does not carry a large percentage of the assessment, keep in mind that without completing the assignment, students are not prepared for class and they thus lose points in the participation section as well.