

Syllabus: AP English Language and Composition (AP Lang)

COURSE OVERVIEW & PLAN

The course overview is taken from the *AP English Course Description* published by the College Board.

As a college-level course, AP Lang’s purpose is to enable students to read complex texts with understanding and to write prose of sufficient richness and complexity to communicate effectively with mature readers. Varied writing focuses on expository, analytical, and argumentative styles. Students must read primary and secondary sources carefully, synthesize material from these texts in their own compositions, and correctly cite sources. This course assumes that students understand and use Standard English grammar. The informed use of research materials and the ability to synthesize varied sources are integral parts of the course. All students participate in the nationally recognized AP Exam in May.

We will study, model, and practice expository, analytical, and persuasive writing through a presentation of various writing styles: narrative, descriptive, example, comparison and contrast, definition, process analysis, cause and effect, and argumentation and persuasion. As we move through the differing styles, we will constantly be identifying rhetorical strategies found in the assigned readings, practicing these same strategies in our own writing, and relating this knowledge to practice AP style prompts, multiple choice reading selections, and current journalistic and academic writing. In our analysis of writing, the goal will remain to successfully identify an author’s - as well as our own - purpose, thesis, overriding tone, intended audience, and effective use of rhetorical devices.

The organizing principles of the course require students to:

- Examine the nature and history of the English & American essay
- Read broadly among a variety of authors, rhetorical purposes, and eras
- Learn to employ the fundamentals of sound argumentation
- Analyze images and investigate how they relate to written texts and serve as texts themselves
- Engage in a significant study of writing as an art
- Develop a wide-ranging vocabulary to use appropriately and effectively
- Study logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques to increase coherence, such as repetition, transitions, and emphasis
- Learn to properly document using MLA

TEXTS

ANTHOLOGIES – provided by school

The Language of Composition – provided by instructor

50 Essays, A Portable Anthology – provided by instructor

BOOKS – various editions and publishers

East of Eden, John Steinbeck

Frankenstein, Mary Shelley

Wuthering Heights, Emily Bronte

In Cold Blood, Truman Capote

Me Talk Pretty One Day, David Sedaris

Beowulf, Anonymous

Fight Club, Chuck Palahniuk

A Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass, Fredrick Douglass

ESSAYS – (this is just a glimpse of what we will read)

“Politics and the English Language”, George Orwell

“A Modest Proposal”, Jonathan Swift

“The Allegory of the Cave”, Plato

“Letter from Birmingham Jail”, Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Why I Write”, Joan Didion

The course is constructed in accordance with the guidelines described in the *AP English Course Description*.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

The most important requirement for this course is that students read every assignment—read it with care and on time. Students unused to college-level courses will need to plan time in their schedule for more reading than most courses require. 30-50 pages per night (this varies depending on the unit)

WRITING

While timed writings are an integral component of the AP Program, mastering the skills of thinking and organizing in a specific amount of time will prove to be very advantageous during a student's college years, in employment opportunities, and in everyday life. To prepare the student with these academic and life skills, students will practice one timed writing every three weeks.

AP Timed Writings

You will complete approximately ten timed writing essays before the AP exam in May. Students will initially analyze timed writing prompts, then move to timed annotation, before attempting their first practiced timed writing. Prompts are presented to coincide with the weekly reading assignments and, as much as possible, are presented for similar historical period, syntax, and diction. Timed writings provide practice in exposition, rhetorical analysis, and argumentation. As with all other writing assignments, timed writings involve self scoring and evaluation, peer evaluation, revision, and instructor scoring -- all aspects of the recursive writing process. Of the total timed writing essays you practice, one will be scored by the instructor at the end of each quarter; four of the timed writings will be synthesis essays. The final synthesis essay will be scored by the instructor.

We also write informally, on a daily basis. Initially, we will study tone, diction, audience, purpose, syntax, mood, and voice in very brief pieces each day at the beginning of class. This informal writing will be kept in your classroom journal. Additionally, you will keep a record of each author/piece studied and any additional information regarding each piece of writing/lyric/poem/music/etc. Ultimately, each quarter, you will produce a Bibliography that exhibits correct MLA style.

AP English Language and Composition students write frequently. The grading of essays sometimes focuses on specific skills such as a point of grammar, use of a variety of sentence patterns, organization, and/or appropriate tone and diction. However, grading always takes into account the content of the student's essay, and thus writing is graded holistically. Often at the beginning of the year, students will receive instruction and the scoring guidelines for essays in advance. As the year progresses, they are expected to know the criteria for good writing and will see scoring guidelines and get other feedback when the papers are returned.

AP Multiple-Choice Items

Students practice reading selections initially during untimed periods, then in a timed situation; students will also respond to corresponding multiple choice (MC) test items. This is done with both previewed and previously unseen readings. Class time is necessary to “unpack” these essays/excerpts and their related MC test items, and we discuss these in class. Many of these MC items also serve as “spot checks” for retention of rhetorical terminology. It is essential that students evolve from a previous pattern of “read and regurgitate” to “read and analyze.” We do not simply read for information or to memorize facts; we study how writers employ language and to what effect.

METHODS of INSTRUCTION used may include, but are not limited to:

- Question/answer
- Lecture/discussion/Socratic seminar
- Small group activities
- Close-reading and annotating using dialectical journals
- Daily writing in journals
- Research process and writing (note taking, documentation, citations)
- Argumentative and persuasive writing and speaking (*logos, ethos, pathos*)
- Written homework and class assignments
- Individual speeches
- Practice AP tests (multiple choice; passage analysis; synthesis; argument)
- Use of film, magazines, cartoons, advertisements
- Use of library and electronic research

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STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students will be required to be active participants in and outside of class. Students are expected to keep up with all reading and writing projects; and should come to class every day prepared to learn and discuss assignments. All assignments must be completed prior to the commencement of class. Students will be required to maintain a thorough and organized binder with five tabs for this class.

Four tabs should be labeled as follows:

- Rhetorical Terms
- Notes & Readings
- MC Practice
- Classwork/Homework
- Writing assignments/Tests

EVALUATION

Assignments will be weighted as follows:

- Classwork/Homework = 20%
- Journals/Quizzes/Short Writing = 25%
- Tests/Essays/Projects = 35%
- Final = 20%

CONTACT INFO

- Website: www.reedforenglish.weebly.com
- Remind: text message reminders—see website for instructions
- Email: kkreed27@gmail.com or reedk@mdusd.or

SAMPLE COURSE SCHEDULE

Because this class is modeled on a three-credit college freshman English composition course, we use our class periods as follows: three periods (M/Tu/W) are devoted to lecture, discussion, analysis of assigned readings; one period (Th) is used for timed writings and multiple-choice practice and discussion; one period (F) is used for tests, quizzes, and book groups.

Assigned work is accomplished before its due date. Do not expect to use class time for homework.

FIRST QUARTER

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| Week 1 | <p>Introduction to Course: AP standards
 Summer assignment: discussion of summer reading <i>In Cold Blood (ICB)</i>
 Daily “starters” -- PURPOSE
 Diagnostic in-class ESSAY #1; TEST – relative to summer reading
 Rhetorical terms I and Textbook Glossary items I</p> |
| Week 2 | <p>Summer assignment: finish discussion <i>ICB</i>
 Daily “starters” – AUDIENCE
 Self-evaluation of diagnostic in-class writing prompt // class Focus Correction Areas (FCA)
 AP Essays – student samples for each score 1 – 9 – read and discuss; AP standards
 Rhetorical terms II and Textbook Glossary items II</p> |