

AP Language and Composition
Sun Valley High School
2024-2025

Instructor:
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Room C83

AP Language and Composition Course Description

- The Advanced Placement course in English Language and Composition engages 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. Both their writing and their reading should make students aware of the interactions among a writer's purposes, audience expectations, and subjects as well as the way generic conventions and the resources of language contribute to effectiveness in writing. The choice of texts is based on a list of representative authors provided by the College Board, a list that is predominantly nonfiction. Additionally, AP English Language and Composition is designed to introduce content and foster skills commensurate with a college-level English Composition course. The experiences of the course will prepare students to sit for the AP English Language and Composition Test in May, giving students the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and earn college credit.
- At the end of this course, students will be able to...
 - read and comprehend high-level texts from a variety of different genres
 - write within a particular situation and make writing choices based on that situation
 - make claims about subjects, rely on evidence that supports the reasoning that justifies the claim, and often acknowledge and respond to other, possibly opposing, arguments.
 - guide understanding of a text's lines of reasoning and claims through that text's organization and integration of evidence.
 - make stylistic choices in their writing informed by the rhetorical situation

Big Ideas:

- Skill Category 1 – Rhetorical Situation (Reading): Explain how writers' choices reflect the components of the rhetorical situation.
- Skill Category 2 – Rhetorical Situation (Writing): Make strategic choices in a text to address a rhetorical situation.
- Skill Category 3 – Claims and Evidence (Reading): Identify and describe the claims and evidence of an argument.
- Skill Category 4 – Claims and Evidence (Writing): Analyze and select evidence to develop and refine a claim.
- Skill Category 5 – Reasoning and Organization (Reading): Describe the reasoning, organization, and development of an argument.
- Skill Category 6 – Reasoning and Organization (Writing): Use organization and commentary to illuminate the line of reasoning in an argument.
- Skill Category 7 – Style (Reading): Explain how writers' stylistic choices contribute to the purpose of an argument.

- Skill Category 8 – Style (Writing): Select words and use elements of composition to advance an argument.

Reading Skills:

- Identifying rhetorical strategies and devices
- Analyzing effects of rhetorical strategies and devices
- Analyzing author's purpose
- Evaluating effectiveness of author's choices
- Identifying arguments and supporting evidence
- Identifying structure and organization strategies
- Interpreting effects and implications of arguments
- Identifying various perspectives and gaps in arguments
- Identifying biases and logical fallacies
- Identifying topics and questions in writing prompts

Writing Skills:

- Analysis of rhetorical strategies and choices, including evaluation of the effectiveness of arguments and strategies
- Presentation of an argument using rhetorical strategies and devices and a diverse set of knowledge
- Synthesizing arguments, sources, and evidence to contribute a perspective on the topic
- Writing claims
- Blending quotes with commentary
- Citing Sources using MLA style
- Editing grammar mistakes
- Using punctuation accurately and effectively
- Organizing information for logic and effect
- Utilizing structure and genre for purpose and effect

The course provides opportunities for students to write argumentative essays synthesizing material from a variety of sources.

The course provides opportunities for students to write essays analyzing authors' rhetorical choices.

The course provides opportunities for students to write essays that proceed through multiple stages or drafts, including opportunities for conferring and collaborating with teacher and/or peers.

Teacher Strategies:

- **SOAPStone**
Speaker: *the individual or collective voice of the text*
Occasion: *the event or catalyst causing the writing of the text to occur*
Audience: *the group of readers to whom the piece is directed*
Purpose: *the reason behind the text*
Subject: *the general topic/main idea*

Tone: *the attitude of the author*

- **OPTIC**

Overview: *write down what the visual appears to be about*

Parts: *focus on the parts of the visual. Write down any details that feel important*

Title: *highlight the words of the title (if available)*

Interrelationships: *uses the title and the parts to detect interrelationships in the graphic*

Conclusions: *draw a conclusion about the visual. What does it mean? Summarize its message.*

- **Spacecat**

Speaker, Purpose, Audience, Context, Exigence, Choices, Appeals, Tone

- **Toulmin Method**

- **Rhetorical Precis**

- **Weekly Annotated Readings (WAR)**

- **Timed Writing**

- **FRQ/MCQ Practice**

Textbooks/Resources

- Shea, Renee, Lawrence Scanlon, and Robin Dissin Aufses. *The Language of Composition: Reading, Writing, Rhetoric. 2nd ed.* Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013.
- Rankin, Estelle M. and Barbara L. Murphy. *5 Steps to a 5: AP English Language and Composition. 2nd ed.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007.

Supplemental Resources

- Purdue OWL for MLA 9
- Capote, Truman. *In Cold Blood.* Penguin Classics, 2000.

Course Units

- The units below show the general scheduling for the course. Please note that our school year extends to mid-June. Students will complete Unit 9 before the AP Exam. After the AP Exam, students will write their college essays and complete a research project.

Unit 1: The Rhetorical Situation and Argumentation: *close reading and synthesizing sources*

Overview: In this unit, students will analyze the relationship between subject, speaker and audience. (Rhetorical triangle). Students will examine various texts and identify the use and effectiveness of the rhetorical appeals to logos, ethos, and pathos. Students will be able to identify the various rhetorical modes. Students will use various techniques to organize their information gathered from their close readings to explain claims and evidence from argumentative writing.

Unit 2: Rhetorical Analysis/Essay Composition

Overview: In this unit, students will continue to develop proficiency in recognizing claims and evidence in other writers' arguments, while emulating such models in their own paragraphs. In addition, they will begin identifying the ways effective writers appeal to and persuade their audiences, while practicing such appeals in their own paragraphs. During this unit, students should build a collection of claims and evidence about a topic or issue so that they can move beyond individual paragraphs to derive a thesis statement from the patterns they see within their collection.

Unit 3: How to Develop an Argument

Overview: Students should continue to see themselves as evidence collectors, continually assembling and reviewing a range of evidence to identify overarching patterns that can be used to craft a thesis statement. But in this unit, students should focus on improving the ways they explain and connect evidence and claims to establish a clear line of reasoning through their essay. Students will also become familiar with

several traditional methods of development that writers have used for centuries to advance their arguments.

Unit 4: How to Further Develop an Argument/Counter Claims

Overview: Students should enter this unit having learned to evaluate evidence to develop a thesis statement and organize an argument. Now the focus is on improving the quality, interest, and power of the argument by crafting introductions and conclusions that demonstrate a real understanding of the rhetorical situation. In addition, students will practice a few additional methods of development.

Unit 5: Writing Fundamentals

Overview: The first four units focused on the fundamentals of analyzing and writing arguments. This unit examines ways to strengthen the coherence of an argument and should also help students become much more attuned to the effects of specific words and phrases in others' arguments.

Unit 6: Introduction to Synthesis

Overview: This unit asks students to recognize and account for biases and limitations within the evidence they are utilizing in an argument. Students should develop an initial thesis statement and line of reasoning based on a pool of evidence that is fairly consistent, and then the teacher should introduce contradictory evidence that requires the students to revise their thesis statements to account for it. Accordingly, teachers should be especially thoughtful in sequencing the readings and evidence base for the topic of this unit. This unit also continues to examine the subtle and significant impact of specific words and phrases, with students analyzing how connotations of particular words convey an author's attitude or feeling about a subject.

Unit 7: Nonfiction

Overview: In this unit, students will read *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote and apply skills of rhetorical analysis, argument, and synthesis through nonfiction/creative writing. Students should continue to practice revising claims (and sometimes the overarching thesis statement) to account for nuance, complexity, and contradictions in their sources. By the end of this unit, students should be highly facile consumers of evidence, able to determine quickly whether a new piece of evidence supports, refutes, or qualifies their claims, and then able to use modifiers to revise claims accordingly.

Unit 8: Synthesis, Rhetorical Analysis, & Argument Review

Overview: To provide teachers with time to focus on skills their students have not yet mastered, this penultimate unit only includes a small number of additional essential knowledge statements. AP teachers should utilize information they have gained from the Personal Progress Checks (PPCs) to identify the skills where their students most need additional instruction and practice, and focus the remaining class periods accordingly. Teachers can use the AP Question Bank to create additional practice on the skills the PPCs identified as students' greatest needs for further focus.

Unit 9: Synthesis, Rhetorical Analysis, & Argument Review

Overview: To provide teachers with time to focus on skills their students have not yet mastered, this final unit only includes a small number of additional essential knowledge statements. AP teachers should utilize information they have gained from the Personal Progress Checks (PPCs) to identify the skills where their students most need additional instruction and practice, and focus the remaining class periods

accordingly. Teachers can use the AP Question Bank to create additional practice on the skills the PPCs identified as students' greatest needs for further focus.

Unit 10: College Essay

Overview: In this unit, students will be given the opportunity to explore the essay prompts from the Common Application many colleges and universities use for admission. Students will choose a prompt, draft their ideas, peer review, and submit a final draft in preparation for applying to colleges in the fall. This unit will take place after the AP Language and Composition exam.

Essential Questions:

- What qualities are you looking for in a potential college destination? What qualities are they looking for in an applicant?
- What sets you apart from other potential applicants?
- What important qualities of your personality, character, or experience would not be revealed by your college application without the personal statement?
- What types of writing catch the attention and stick in the memory of college admissions officers?

Texts:

- Sample college essays

Assessments:

- College essay draft responding to one of the Common App essay prompts

Unit 11: Isearch Project

Overview: In this unit, students will choose an adult in their life that they look up to (teacher/parent/sibling/family friend/ect.). Students will ask their mentor to recommend a book that was influential to them. This project will require students to be reflective about their own experiences in addition to conducting interviews and research. The written portion of this project will task students with further exploring the syntactic, analytical, and rhetorical practices they have learned throughout the year. This unit will take place after the AP Language and Composition exam.

Essential Questions:

- How does an author select appropriate second-hand evidence?
- What sources can provide a variety of views on a contemporary topic? Why is that variety useful?
- What makes a source credible? Does this change based on its audience?
- How can rhetorical techniques be applied to contemporary issues?

Texts:

- Dependent on text chosen by mentor
- Student Research

Assessments:

- Annotated Bibliography
- 8-10 page written research paper

Attendance:

Attendance is important for your success, as participation, exploration, correction, discussion, and engagement with your peers and teacher during class cannot be reproduced. If you have a planned absence, please speak with your teacher in advance to plan for your success. If you have an unplanned absence, please email your teacher and check Schoology for assignments so you do not fall behind. Take

responsibility for your learning to be successful.

*Contact your teacher ahead of time if you know you will be absent to arrange for makeup work.

*Talk with your teacher if you have an unexpected absence.

*Communication is key!

Late Work Policy:

No late work will be accepted for credit unless you have extenuating circumstances or have arranged ahead of time for a different due date. You may complete late work for feedback.

Communicate with your teacher if you have difficulty completing an assignment and utilize class time to fully understand the assignment before leaving. Arrange with your teacher for extra help if needed.

Excused Absences due to illness will be allowed 1 day for every excused absence to make up assignments.

School Activity/Sports related absences must be communicated with the teacher in advance to arrange for makeup assignments.

Revision Policy:

You will be given opportunities to revise your work on various assignments for a better grade. No late work will be accepted for revisions unless prearranged with the teacher.

Behavior Expectations:

1. Put away cell phones, headphones and personal electronic devices that are not used for learning in the classroom.
2. Use Respectful Behavior and Language.
3. Be on time.
4. Use appropriate time for everything (bathroom break, talking, throwing away trash, sharpening pencils...)
5. Stay Engaged (Be Involved)
6. Be Responsible (bring homework and learning materials to class, clean up after yourself)

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a violation of honor and ethics codes and is considered an act of cheating. You are committing plagiarism when you do any of the following:

1. Take someone's ideas/words without giving them credit.
2. Copy someone's answers (even if it's just annotations).
3. Copy work from Artificial Intelligence.
4. Copy work from the internet and pass it off as your own.
5. Give someone your answers.
6. Let someone copy your writing or answers to an assignment or test.

Any cases of plagiarism will result in a 0 for the assignment.

assignments and readings subject to change at the discretion of teacher

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

Thank you in advance for your partnership towards a successful year in Advanced Placement Language and Composition. Please read the course syllabus to be informed about skills, assignments, units of study, and expectations and contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

I am excited to empower my students with one of the most powerful tools that they can use to protect themselves, protect others, be successful in their careers, and make a positive impact on the world around them. I encourage you to use the tools of the classroom (Schoology, AP Classroom on College Board).

Parents/Guardians: Please sign and print your name below to indicate you have read our class syllabus and provide your contact information so I can contact you in regards to your student's progress and achievements.

Sincerely,

Ms. Lansberry

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Email: _____ Phone: _____

Students: Please sign and print your name below to indicate you have read the syllabus and understand the course requirements and expectations.

Student Printed Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____