

AP English Language and Composition
Centennial High School
2010-2011

Contact Information

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Introduction

An AP 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.

Course Goals: AP Language and Composition

Upon completing the AP English Language and Composition course, 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;
- 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 sources, cogent explanations, and clear transitions;
- demonstrate understanding and mastery of standard written English as well as stylistic maturity in their own writings;
- demonstrate understanding of the conventions of citing primary and secondary sources;
- 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; and
- evaluate and incorporate reference documents into researched papers.

Advanced Placement Course Description, Fall 2010

Course Content

The goals of an AP English Language and Composition course are diverse because the college composition course is one of the most varied in the curriculum. Although the college course provides students with opportunities to write about a variety of subjects from a variety of disciplines and to demonstrate an awareness of audience and purpose, **the overarching objective in most first-year writing courses is to enable students to write effectively and confidently in their college courses across the curriculum and in their professional and personal lives.** Most composition courses emphasize the expository, analytical and argumentative writing that forms the basis of academic and professional communication, as well as the personal and reflective writing that fosters the development of writing facility in any context. In addition, most composition courses teach students that the expository, analytical and argumentative writing they must do in college is based on reading as well as on personal experience and observation. Composition courses, therefore, teach students to read primary and secondary sources carefully, to synthesize material from these texts in their own compositions, and to cite sources using conventions recommended by professional organizations.

Writing in this Course

All writing in this course will require students to work through their own individual writing process. Prewriting and brainstorming will be required, and in this initial stage of the writing process, students will often work with the instructor and peers to develop your ideas. Additionally, multiple drafts will be required for each writing assignment. Constant reflection on your writing will help students both find their voices and develop their personal style.

Through feedback from the teacher and from peers, students will be expected to analyze author's styles and methods and develop their own unique voice using the following elements:

- A wide-ranging vocabulary used appropriately and effectively
- rhetorical terms
- vocabulary from readings
- tone vocabulary
- A variety of sentence structures, including appropriate use of subordination and coordination
- Logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques to increase coherence, such as repetition, transitions, and emphasis
- A balance of generalization and specific, illustrative detail
- An effective use of rhetoric, including controlling tone, establishing and maintaining voice, and achieving appropriate emphasis through diction and sentence structure

In addition, the course teaches and requires students to write in several forms (e.g., narrative, expository, analytical, and argumentative essays) about a variety of subjects (e.g., public policies, popular culture, personal experiences). See individual units for

writing assignments. In addition to these formal writing experiences, students will write informally throughout the year in the form of a "reader's journal." Teacher feedback will be an important part of these journals, though not on grammatical elements, but on the formulation of ideas.

The Reader's Journal

Students will be required to keep a "reader's journal" as part of this course. Students will write entries and keep them in a folder throughout the semester. In this journal, students should pick out passages or issues that draw their attention. Then, take those passages and react, evaluate, analyze, criticize, and make comments about what was read. Journal entries should NOT be a paraphrase or summary of each piece. We are looking for a personal record of the selections. Students are encouraged to ask questions, express curiosity, and even critique the pieces we read.

Journals will serve as an anchor for class discussions; students should bring it to class every day. We expect journals to be on every desk during class discussions. Journals should serve as a conversation starter in class. If something was troubling, angering or puzzling, students should write about it in the reader's journal—then bring it to the class discussion.

We will check journals occasionally throughout the semester, usually at the end of each unit. **Journals should always be kept up to date.** Students are encouraged to take this assignment seriously, and consider deeply what we read in class. This will help students grow as readers. In addition, informal writing of this nature will help students find their voice as writers and give them an opportunity to experiment with language and forms.

(Adapted from Dennie Palmer Wolf's Reading Reconsidered)

The Research Paper

In each unit, students will engage in research to expand their understanding of both literary movements and current events. Literary movements never occur in isolation, but are directly influenced by the social and political forces. Having a broad knowledge of larger cultural events is important to understanding the works we study.

Individual research throughout the year will culminate in the argumentative research paper, where students will formulate clear research questions and utilizes appropriate research venues (e.g., library, electronic media, personal interview, survey) to locate and incorporate evidence from primary and secondary sources in order to create an informed argument on a particular issue. Students will use appropriate conventions for documentation in the text, notes, and bibliographies by adhering to those in style manuals (e.g., Modern Language Association Handbook, The Chicago Manual of Style). We will discuss and cover several types of research formats, all papers in this course must adhere to MLA format.

Viewing in this Course

Visual literacy is an important component of this course and life in general as a consumer. We will examine art and other visual elements in many contexts during this course. As you analyze art and other visual media, here are some questions to ask yourself:

Subject and Symbols

- Why did the artist select the subject matter he/she did (e.g., commission, popular topic at the time, religious reference, literary reference)?
- Is the object based on a story from history, religious text, mythology, literature? (If the answer is yes, you should spend some time researching the story, even if it won't be the central focus of your essay.)
- Does the object portray conventional symbols or icons? (Research them to find out what they mean).

The Arts in Historical Context

- What was the status of artists in the place and time in which the object was created?
- What were the contemporary trends in other art forms (music, literature, theater, etc.)?

(Use your answers to the following questions as potential interpretive pathways to understanding your object.)

Political and Historical Context

- What was the international political situation (e.g., peace, unrest, war)?
- What was the local political situation? Who/what was the governing power? How well did they govern? How did they come to power?
- What was the local and/or international economic situation?
- What were the dominant local industries? Was there significant socio-economic stratification?

- Were there significant political or cultural minority groups? What was their position within the larger context?

Religious and Philosophical Context

- What was the dominant local religion?
- Was there significant religious dissent?
- What was the position of religious minorities within the larger context?
- What were the dominant philosophical trends of the period?
- What were the major scientific or technological discoveries of the period?

The Artist

- Who was the artist?
- When and where did the artist live?
- When did the artist create this work of art (both in terms of historical date, and in terms of the artist's overall production)?

Artist's Reputation and Place in Art History

- What was the attitude toward this work/the artist's work in general at the time this object was created? Why?
- Has the attitude toward the artist's work changed for better or worse? Why?
- Did the artist teach or influence others? What notable artists or groups

Texts

- *Prentice Hall Literature, Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes: The American Experience*. Ed. Kate Kinsella.
- *The Bedford Reader*, 9th Edition. Eds. X.J Kennedy, Dorothy M. Kennedy, and Jane E. Aaron.
- Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter*.
- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

If time permits, we may read one or more of the following texts:

- Faulkner, William. *As I Lay Dying*.
- Wilder, Thornton. *Our Town*.
- Other supplementary novels or plays

Please note:

Students who begin this course are expected to finish the year in this course. Students will take the AP exam in May 2011. The completion of this course or resulting score from this course does not guarantee college placement or credit. Rather, students are responsible for checking with their respective universities to see if they offer credit or placement for a passing score on the AP exam.

Grading Policy and Scale

Final grades will be based on a point system with the following **approximate** values:

Assignment Description	Approximate Point Value
Exams / In-Class Essays / Out of Class Essays: In order to prepare you for the AP exam, the majority of essays in this course begin as in-class essays. For many of these assignments, the in-class essay will be a rough draft that you will then edit and revise extensively. The revised essays will often be scored again. Out-of-class essays will always include a rough draft, peer editing, and a final draft. Revision is an important component in improving your writing.	30% (Exams 5%/In-Class Essays 15%/Out-of-Class Essays 10%)
Quizzes (Reading and Vocabulary), AP Multiple Choice, Classwork	20%
Unit Portfolios (Reader's Journals, Great Works and other work)	15%
Class Discussion	10%
Final Exam	20%
Participation	5%

Grading Policy

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
69 & below	F

Make-up Policy

I will not ask you for your make-up work. It is YOUR responsibility to remember to ask for make-up work or turn in missing assignments. Please check your class website (<http://www.chsrumpf.org>) regularly for class assignments and homework.

- **NO LATE HOMEWORK** is accepted for a grade.
- If you miss a major test or other assessment, you have ONE WEEK from the day you return to school to make up for that assessment. **It is your responsibility to schedule the make up. If you do not make it up, you will earn a zero for that test.**
- For each day absent from school, you will receive 24 hours to make up any missed work.
- Major papers/assignments will not be accepted late. This includes out of class papers, the research paper, and unit

portfolios. This policy will be discussed more completely in class.

Behavior

Students are expected to be in class on time, to bring materials needed for class, and to show respect for themselves and others. No food or drinks (except water) will be allowed in the classroom. I expect students to turn in their assignments at the beginning of class in the designated location. Students should have their materials on their desks and be ready to start working when the bell rings. Any violation of class rules (including tardiness) will result in the following consequences:

1st Offense: Warning / 2nd Offense: Detention / 3rd Offense: Detention & Parental Contact / 4th Offense: Office Referral

Recovery Policy

Opportunities designed to allow students to recover from a low or failing cumulative grade will be allowed when all work required to date has been completed and the student has demonstrated a legitimate effort to meet all course requirements including attendance.

It is the student's responsibility to request a recovery plan from the instructor.

Components of the Recovery Procedure

1. Student may not have earned any zeros in grade book
2. Student must submit recovery form within **three days** of learning of decline or failure
3. Teacher determines nature of recovery assignment
4. Assignment must be related to course objectives
5. Teacher determines reasonable time period to complete assignment
6. Recovery work must be completed 10 school days prior to the end of the semester

English Department Plagiarism Statement

Plagiarism is the use of another's words or ideas and the presentation of them as though they are entirely one's own.

Acts of plagiarism might include, but are not limited to 1.) using words or ideas from a published source without proper documentation; 2.) using the work of another student (e.g. copying another student's homework, composition, or project); 3.) using excessive editing* suggestions of another student, parent, or paid author.

Plagiarism on any project or paper will result in a zero for the assignment and an honor code violation. Unless directly stipulated by the teacher, collaboration on written work is not acceptable. Students who willingly provide other students with access to their work are in violation of the Honor Code.

***A Note about "Excessive Editing":** Students learn to write well by doing just that, writing. Struggling independently through the writing process produces growth (as well as a certain amount of agony), and eventually the student's own voice. When well-meaning parents, siblings, tutors, or others contribute their ideas, words, phrases, revisions, etc. to students' writing, student writers miss the opportunity to achieve literary self-reliance.

What is helping, but is NOT excessive editing? The answer is: questioning and cueing.

For example:

- "Is this word strong enough? Interesting enough? Specific enough?"
- "Can you think of another word that word fit better?"
- "Does this sentence seem awkward?" "What exactly do you mean?"
- "I don't understand what you are trying to say here; can you say it more clearly?"
- "This sentence has a powerful verb; can you find one as powerful for that other sentence?"

These kinds of questions and statements allow the students to think and write independently. Students should be allowed to achieve their own voices and to develop their own writing skills.

Units of Study

****Please note that the syllabus may be amended and altered as time class needs demands. Changes will be made at the discretion of the instructor.**

When we read American literature texts, we will examine them through this lens, asking, what conflict emerges in this text? What is happening in American society at this time that reveals a cultural conflict? In each unit students will relate a literary work to primary source documents of its literary period or historical setting. This year, we will explore the following time periods/ literary movements in American Literature.

- i. Native American literature
- ii. Colonial/Revolutionary/National literature
- iii. Romanticism/Transcendentalism
- iv. Realism

- v. Naturalism
- vi. Modernism (including Harlem Renaissance)

In each unit, we will also have a rhetorical focus where we will bring in supplementary nonfiction pieces that will move beyond American literature. The AP English Language/Composition Exam focuses heavily on nonfiction from all literary traditions.

Unit One: Expectations vs. Reality - Conflicting Narratives

Questions to consider:

- How do authors use the resources of language to impact an audience?
- How is our understanding of culture and society constructed through and by language?
- How can language be powerful?
- How do our personal experiences shape our view of others?
- How did the expectations of the “New World” conflict with reality?
- What does the narrative reveal about the perspective of the author?

Rhetorical Focus

Students will study modes of discourse, focusing on the purpose of description and narration. Various rhetorical strategies will be introduced as well as the concept of purpose, audience, and strategy, and the rhetorical triangle.

Literary Focus

Students will analyze the oral tradition of the Native Americans as well as the first encounters of settlers to America. The issue of the “new world” and colonialism will be discussed.

Reading

Fiction

- Various creation myths and stories from the Native American tradition

Nonfiction

- excerpts from Olaudah Equiano’s *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*
- excerpts from William Bradford’s “Of Plymouth Plantation”
- excerpts from John Smith’s *General History of Virginia*
- Orwell’s “Shooting an Elephant”
- Sedaris’s “Me Talk Pretty One Day”
- White’s “Once More to the Lake”

Viewing

- Various art by Thomas Smith
- Various art by Edward Savage

Assessments

- Reading quizzes - Students may have quizzes over required readings.
- Reader’s Journal/Portfolio Check - Students will turn in a portfolio of journal responses and a reflection at the end of the unit.
- Timed writings - Every other week, students will write in response to a prompt that connects to our study in this unit.
- Classwork/homework checks
- Composition –Students will write a narrative or descriptive essay.

Unit Two: Writing a Revolution

Questions to consider:

- What are the essential liberties?
- What are the factors that move nations to great sacrifice and what are the consequences?
- How does American literature reveal the values of Americans during the time of the Revolution?
- Is liberty and justice for all attainable?

Rhetorical Focus

Continuing our focus on the modes of discourse, the students will analyze the use of argumentation/persuasion and apply to their own writing. Study will also include the five canons of rhetoric and the rhetorical process in writing.

Literary Focus

Students will analyze how the Puritan style serves the Puritan culture and detect loaded language. Students will also define the cultural principles that led to the Revolution, including the philosophies of Locke, Rousseau, and Hobbes, and discover how writing affected the Revolution.

Reading

Nonfiction

- Jonathan Edwards' "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"
- Thomas Paine's "The Crisis, No. 1"
- Patrick Henry's "Speech in the Virginia Convention"
- *The Declaration of Independence*
- Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail"
- Singer's "The Singer Solution to World Poverty"

Viewing

- *Patrick Henry Before the Virginia House of Burgesses* (painting), Peter Frederick Rothermel (<http://www.redhill.org/images/burgess.jpg>)
- *I Have a Dream* (video clip), AmericanRhetoric.com
- *Despotism vs. Liberty* (political cartoon), 1776 (<http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/history/core/pics/0253/img0031.jpg>)

Assessments

- Reading quizzes - Students may have quizzes over required readings.
- Reader's Journal/Portfolio Check - Students will turn in a portfolio of journal responses and a reflection at the end of the unit.
- Timed writings - Every other week, students will write in response to a prompt that connects to our study in this unit.
- Classwork/homework checks
- Composition - Students will write a persuasive essay.

Unit Three: The Individual vs. Society

Questions to consider:

- How does the individual maintain a sense of self and still be a part of society?
- How do Romantic writers use language to communicate their sense of self?
- How did American writers begin to create a uniquely American voice through literature?
- What does the exploration of the human mind reveal about human nature?

Rhetorical Focus

Style analysis will be heavily emphasized in this unit as students will look at how description contributes to mood and setting. Our study of author's purpose will continue as well. Our study of Poe will investigate his unusual uses of syntax and diction.

Literature Focus

Students will define the elements that make up Romanticism, Transcendentalism and American Gothic literature and contrast to earlier periods of literature.

Reading

Fiction

- Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*
- Edgar Allen Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher"

Nonfiction

- Poe's "The Philosophy of Composition"
- Excerpts from writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau

Poetry

- Students will examine the works of Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman and their influences on American poetry.

Viewing

- Untitled (painting), Emanuele Leutze (depiction of westward expansion)
- The Passage of the St. Gothard (painting), J. M. W. Turner

Assessments

- Reading quizzes - Students may have quizzes over required readings.
- Reader's Journal/Portfolio Check - Students will turn in a portfolio of journal responses and a reflection at the end of the unit.
- Timed writings - Every other week, students will write in response to a prompt that connects to our study in this unit.
- Classwork/homework checks
- Composition - Write an essay that follows Poe's philosophy of the "unity of effect." In your essay, choose an abstract concept or feeling that you will focus on. Then, all of your syntax and diction choices should contribute to that particular effect.

Unit Four: The Reality of Life – War and Loss of Faith

Questions to consider:

- How does the struggle for equality manifest itself in the literature?
- How does the rhetoric of wartimes show a sense of isolation?
- How does humanity react to the loss of faith caused by war?

Rhetorical Focus: Students will continue to look at the persuasive mode of discourse in the context of the Civil War. Students will also analyze the use of detail in creating realistic fiction.

Literary Focus: Students will learn how fiction allowed for vicarious experience of life and how the war experience influenced American literature. Students will examine both biographical and fictional war narratives and other examples of Realism. Students will also discuss and examine satire in society.

Reading

Fiction

- Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
- Kate Chopin's "Story of an Hour"
- Grace King's "The Little Convent Girl"
- Stephen Crane's *To Build a Fire* and *Open Boat*

- Ambrose Bierce's "Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"

Nonfiction

- Abraham Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address* and *Second Inaugural Address*
- various personal Civil War accounts, slave narratives

Viewing

For these pieces, students will consider what viewpoint the artist promotes.

- *Union Rider* (Painting), Edwin Forbes
- *John Bull Since the Southern Rebellion* (Political Cartoon), Harper's Bazaar

Assessments

- Reading quizzes - Students may have quizzes over required readings.
- Reader's Journal/Portfolio Check - Students will turn in a portfolio of journal responses and a reflection at the end of the unit.
- Timed writings - Every other week, students will write in response to a prompt that connects to our study in this unit.
- Classwork/homework checks
- Composition - Style analysis of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address
- Composition - Choose one significant event from the Civil War and write an expository essay describing the event and how it impacted the outcome of the war.

Unit Five: Isolation and Alienation

Questions to consider:

- How does the struggle for equality manifest itself in the literature?
- How did WWI affect American literature?
- Why does American literature shift to a literature of discontent, bitterness, and often brevity in style?
- What has happened to the American Dream?
- What common themes extend from the literature of the first half of the 20th century to the literature of today and the millennium?
- How does F. Scott Fitzgerald's work convey the cultural influences of the time?

Rhetorical Focus

Students will look at the development of authors' styles including the analysis of figurative language and detail. Students will also synthesize their knowledge of rhetorical modes and look at how authors blend the modes for specific purpose.

Literary Focus

Students will study the Harlem Renaissance and the cultural milieu that surround this American literary movement. The major themes in our study of Modernism will center on isolation and alienation. Students will also learn about stream of consciousness and how this literary style communicates the struggle of authors in this time.

Reading

Fiction

- Porter's "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall"
- Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*

Poetry

- "The Negro Speaks of Rivers"
- "The Tropics in New York"
- "Storm Ending"
- "The Weary Blues"
- "A Black Man Talks of Reaping"
- "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,"
- "The Red Wheelbarrow"
- "Mending Wall"
- "Chicago"
- "anyone lived in a pretty how town"

Nonfiction

- from Hurston's "Dust Tracks on a Road"
- from Hurston's "How it Feels to be Colored Me"

Viewing

- The Wedding (painting), Jacob Lawrence
- Aspiration (painting), Aaron Douglas
- Various Harlem Renaissance art: <http://www.fatherryan.org/harlemrenaissance/> - Analyze the art that emerges in the Harlem Renaissance. What images are prominent?
- Various Modernist paintings (classroom resources)

Assessments

- Reading quizzes - Students may have quizzes over required readings.
- Reader's Journal/Portfolio Check - Students will turn in a portfolio of journal responses and a reflection at the end of the unit.
- Timed writings - Every other week, students will write in response to a prompt that connects to our study in this unit.
- Classwork/homework checks
- Composition - Students will write an argumentative research paper.

Parents and Students,

I am looking forward to a great year. My expectation is that each student will come into my classroom prepared to learn and contribute. With the students' help, I plan to create an open environment for teaching and learning.

I will be available during office hours for the students and parents to confer with me regarding the class, and I can be reached at any time at the following email address: rumfelc@fultonschools.org. **Email is the best way to contact me;** please make an appointment if you would like to meet during my office hours.

I am excited about working with each student to make this class a successful learning experience for all.

Please complete the attached information sheet and return to me to verify that both student and parent(s) have read and understood the information in this syllabus.

Thank you,

Cathy Rumfelt