



AP ENGLISH – LANGUAGE & COMPOSITION
(11TH GRADE)

Description

The chief function of the AP English Language and Composition course is to offer a broad writing experience to students wanting to further sharpen their analytical and rhetorical skills. The special focus of the course is upon argumentation and the analysis of arguments.

The organizing principles of the course require students to

- examine the nature and history of the English essay
- read broadly among a variety of authors, rhetorical purposes, and eras
- engage in a significant study of writing as an art
- learn to employ the fundamentals of sound argumentation

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 combined effect of content and expression of the student’s essay, and thus writing is graded holistically. Often at the beginning of the year students receive the scoring guidelines for essays in advance of the assignment. 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.

As research has shown, students also learn to write through the reading and analysis of prose. Good reading skills make for good writers; therefore, instructors assess reading comprehension in a variety of ways, including AP-style multiple choice questions, tests and essays on major and minor works, as well as the prompts for in-class essays.

Students typically engage in a variety of assignments and activities in class: class discussion, debates, note-taking, small group and independent work, impromptu writings

Out of class assignments include: essay drafting, revision, and editing, required readings, journal writing and other informal writing assignments, reading assignments requiring rhetorical analysis

Since this is an eleventh-grade course and thus requires the study of American literature, students study American works in their rhetorical aspects. Although some fiction, drama, and poetry may be part of the curriculum, most of the course’s emphasis is on nonfiction. The nature of class discussion and assignments differ, perhaps significantly, from those typically encountered in a literature-based course.

All students must complete a major research project utilizing one or more libraries as well as electronic media.

Special Requirements

AP English Language and Composition students ideally have very good to excellent reading and writing skills. Although instructors emphasize that this is not a remedial course, they welcome all students who have good writing and wish to improve. In addition, students’ ability to think abstractly, interpret, and read beyond mere summary are keys to success. Summer reading and assignments will be required.

Student costs/Materials to be supplied by students

Other information

Students may receive college credit for this course by taking the Advanced Placement Examination and earning a score acceptable to their college. This acceptable score varies from school to school and department to department.