

**AP English Language and Composition (ELCAP)**

**Syllabus and Course Overview**

**Instructor:** Mrs. Melissa Yaffie

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**Conference Period**: 3rd Period **Tutorials:** Tues. and Thurs. @ 2:50-3:20

Mornings and other days by appointment.

**Course Description:** In this introductory college-level composition class, you will learn how to closely and analytically read a variety of texts, both fiction and non-fiction, both traditional and contemporary. You will also learn how to respond to, critique, and analyze these works in a variety of written formats, including formal writing requiring multiple drafts and revisions, as well as informal writing completed in class. As your exposure to ideas and rhetorical techniques grows, so too should your awareness of yourself as a writer-reader and as a contributing player in our culture, country, and world. The mantras “Meaning dictates form” and “Everything is an argument” are central.

The AP curriculum is designed to prepare you for the rigorous intellectual demands of college and university study as well as develop the analytical and communication skills required for the AP exam. The AP Language and Composition course is designed to provide you numerous opportunities to learn and work with rhetoric. We will examine authors’ purposes, subjects, and audiences and the interplay between the three. You will write in a variety of modes for a variety of audiences on a variety of topics, developing a sense of style and an ability to analyze, articulate, and practice how language and rhetoric operate in a given context. You will learn to read closely primary and secondary sources, to synthesize material from these texts in your own compositions, and to cite sources using conventions recommended by the Modern Language Association (MLA). As co-creators in a media-rich society, we will also study the rhetoric of visual media, in relation to written text and as stand-alone texts.

**About the AP English Language and Composition Exam :** This year’s AP English Language and Composition exam will take place on **Tuesday, May 14th, 2024**. It is my hope that *all* AHS AP students will take the exam this year. Historically, we have had excellent scores in the AP program at Austin, and I expect that this trend will continue this year. Later in the year, you will receive further information from me, as well as from the AHS counselors and the College Board, regarding AP exam registration and score reporting.

I *strongly* encourage you to visit the College Board’s AP Central website at [www.APcentral.collegeboard.com](http://www.APcentral.collegeboard.com) for information about the course and the exam.

**Exam registration:**

You will enroll in Yaffie’s AP Classroom by 9/1.

Exam decision AND payment deadline is 11/1.

$98 regular registration

$21 for students who qualify for free and reduced lunch

**Exam Structure:**

1) 45 multiple choice questions—1 hour:

2 reading analysis passages, primarily focused on rhetorical analysis of the arguments

3 writing/composition skills passages

2) 15-minute reading period for essay sources and prompts

3) 3 essays-2 hours and 15 minutes:

Synthesis (question 1)

Rhetorical analysis (question 2)

General argument (question 3)

**Course Reading:**

Cooley, Thomas. *Back to the Lake: A Reader and Guide.* Online textbook.

Graff, Gerald and Kathy Birkenstein. *They Say, I Say.* Online textbook.

You will also read two additional full-length nonfiction books over the course of the school year. An overview of these assignments will be provided prior to the unit, and a finalized reading list will be provided for all students at that time as well. Please do not purchase books until we reach the unit.

**Supplemental Texts**: Additional short readings will come from reader anthologies, current newspapers and periodicals and online sources, including, but not limited to *Language and Composition, 100 Great Essays, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The Atlantic, The Onion, Slate.com, Vanity Fair,* and *The New Yorker.*

Finally, I encourage you to purchase your own AP practice book. Because the test has changed substantially as of the 2019-2020 school year, if you choose to purchase a practice book be sure that it covers the new exam (i.e. the book was published in 2019 or later). Any of the major practice books available (e.g. *Five Steps to a 5, Barron’s AP English Language and Composition,* etc.) on the market will suffice, and since they are mostly of fairly consistent quality I don’t recommend any specific brand.

* This year, we will use Schoology constantly, for both in-class and out-of-class purposes. Schoology will be your one stop for everything for this course!
* I will post lesson materials, assignments, and homework daily as updates, along with important reminders, resources, and information.
* Be sure to turn on notifications in Schoology so that you see the daily updates!

If you are absent, **check Schoology for information and make-up assignments.** If you are not sure where to find the materials for that day, check my daily update posts, where I explain the lesson for the day and where to find make-up work materials, including notes and assignments.

**TURNITIN.COM**

You will turn in all writing assignments to Turnitin.com.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Class ID** | **Enrollment Key (Password)** |
| **1st period** **44804931**  **7th period 44804944** | bulldogs2024 (same for all classes) | |

* Students must turn in a digital copy of their essay by the day the final copy of their paper is due.
* If the paper is not uploaded on the day the essay is due, 15 points will be deducted from the major grade. If the paper is never uploaded to [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com), it remains a zero until the paper is uploaded or emailed to the teacher to be uploaded with a deduction of 15 points.
* I do *not* collect the digital receipt, though I may check when your essay was uploaded if there is any question.
* **If all requirements are not met, (a hard copy, the uploading of the paper and submission of a hard copy) the student may receive a grade of 0.**

**AP CLASSROOM**

AP classroom is a comprehensive resource from the College Board. Here, you will be able to access progress checks and practice for the AP exam. You will also use AP Classroom to sign up and pay for the AP exam.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Period** | **Join Code** |
| **Period 1** | QJAAPQ |
| **Period 7** | A9EVDN |

**Online Textbook Access**

You will be able to access the *Back to the Lake, Little Seagull Handbook,* and *They Say, I Say* textbooks through your 1Link. [This page](https://www.fortbendisd.com/1link) will take you to Fort Bend’s 1Link landing page, which includes instructions for setting up and using 1Link. Once your 1Link is prepared, you will see the icons for the textbooks among icons for other resources. I recommend that you bookmark the 1Link page for easy access, and that you move the textbook icons towards the top of your 1Link page (you can drag and drop them).

**Classroom Policies and Procedures**

**ABSENCES**

Check your school handbook. You have as many days to make-up work as you are absent. It is **YOUR** responsibility to check the “Make-up Folder” and Schoology, and to see me at the **BEGINNING** of class the **first** day you return to see what material, test, quiz and/or homework you missed. If you do not see me, I will assume you are choosing not to make up the work missed, and you will receive a grade of ZERO. **Work assigned before your absence and due during your absence or the day of your return is due when you return.**

# GRADES

# **Your nine-week grade will be averaged from tests, quizzes, written assignments, homework, and papers. Grades may be taken for class participation. All tests will be announced in advance to allow you time to prepare. Some quizzes will be announced, but some will be unannounced; all quizzes will be timed. It is required that you have three major grades and eleven daily grades each nine weeks.\*\* Most nine weeks that will be the total number of grades given; therefore, each grade is important, and your best work should be done on each. My grading scale is as follows:**

# **A= 90-100 B= 80-89 C=70-79 F=69 or below**

District Grading Policy: All daily grade assignments, quizzes, and tests are to be graded and uploaded to Skyward 5 business days after being taken up in class. All timed writes are to be graded and uploaded to Skyward 10 business days after being taken up in class. All major grade process essays and projects are to be graded and uploaded to Skyward 15 business days after being taken up in class.

**HOMEWORK**

**Assignments are posted in the classroom and online**. Access to the assignments will be through Schoology. The homework assignments listed there do not necessarily represent all assigned homework, but rather all ***POSTED*** homework. **When absent please check the Schoology; this will help you know what work you missed and the opportunity to work on the assignments and not fall behind in your work.** You may also e-mail the teacher for missed work.

**RE-TESTING**

Students who earn a grade below a 75 on a major grade test will have the opportunity for a reassessment. Reassessment Methods: The decision as how to reassess objectives that are retaught is the option of the classroom teacher. However, there must be evidence that reassessment has occurred. Reassessment methods include, but are not limited to:

* + - 1. Additional assignments
      2. Cumulative tests (unit, six weeks, semester, etc.)
      3. Demonstration/performance
      4. Discussion/review
      5. Observation
      6. Oral questioning
      7. Problem-solving teacher made check list
      8. Reteaching in another unit-correcting the original assignment

**PAPERS**

To be accepted, all major papers MUST be typed, double-spaced and in 12 point Times New Roman font (adhere to MLA format and style), and uploaded to turnitin.com by the deadline(s) given.

* All papers (hard copy if requested by teacher) must be turned in on the due date stated by the teacher, by the beginning of the student’s class period.
* If for some reason a student does not turn in their essay during their period or does not submit to Turnitin.com, the paper is considered late and 15 points will be deducted for each day it is late.
* DO NOT come to class and ask to print your paper on the day it is due. This must be done in advance.
* If you are absent from my class on the day a major essay is due, but **you are at school that day,** I will expect you to turn in your paper to me *that* day. If you do not, it will be considered late, and a point deduction will occur (see above policy).
* **FAILING AN ESSAY**: Any student that fails their major grade essay has the opportunity to revise their paper for the possibility of earning a grade up to a 70.
* The student must come in for a conference and fix both content issues and mechanics issues. The revised essay must be submitted within 7 days of receiving original graded essay.

**ELA Department Guidelines & Expectations**

**Expectations as Part of the Profile of a Graduate:** In order to equip you with skills for life, our goal is to create effective communicators who can adapt their communication style to the audience, who can prioritize the needs of others while accepting responsibility for themselves and become accountable for their own actions.

1. We will read, watch and discuss a variety of topics in our class this year because we are evaluating how a variety of people from different cultures, creeds, time-periods, backgrounds, and work-fields argue about the world around them through their own expressions. These skills are mandatory skills assigned by the State of Texas through its Texas Essential Knowledge & Skills (TEKS) that we are required to help high school students learn. As a class, we want you to make your own inferences and opinions and share them. We will discuss, read & write about a variety of topics that may be controversial to you. In some cases, you may be exposed to ideas that are contrary to your own beliefs. The goal is to teach you how to communicate in a constructive dialogue using concrete details, various argumentative strategies, and facts, not to change your personal beliefs. In our efforts to help create constructive discourse, we may watch or read a piece of text that could contain potential questionable language, ideas, or material to you. However, we will teach you how to analyze rhetoric and create your own arguments while exposing you to a variety of ideas from different cultures, creeds, backgrounds, and time periods that will help you learn and understand a variety of perspectives. We are teaching rhetoric. There will be more than one side of every issue/argument. You need to understand each side as well as the issue’s historical evolution to be able to evaluate how and why.

***It is your job to inform you teacher of any issues, ideas or language that make you uncomfortable to help us create a safe and trusting classroom environment.***

* You need to be open to other people’s ideas.
* If you do not agree with the ideas, then your job is to listen to the other side’s argument and understand, explain and argue how they put that argument together.
* You can look for faults in the way arguments are constructed.
* Your job is not to put down the other side. Putting down others repeatedly will result in disciplinary action.
* Your job is to take these new ideas and form your own argument from what you know.
* If you feel strongly about participating in an activity with the topic we are addressing, please tell me ahead of time so we can discuss any concerns. If necessary, we can provide an alternative assignment.

1. Technology & Cell Phone use: We will be using technology in order to develop your 21st Century skills to help you take ownership of your own learning. For some activities, we will allow you to use your cellphone to assist in the learning process for learning such as notes or research, assessment such as Kahoots, Quizlets, Socrative, written discussion, papers, revising & editing, and activities or projects such as creating sways, podcasts, Powerpoints, Prezis, movies etc. Cell phone use in the classroom is restricted to class activities, as it can become a distraction to your learning as well as others learning. In order to follow the expectations of the Profile of a Graduate, **you need to learn how to separate using technology for learning versus for personal reasons.** If you have an emergency or situation where you need to contact a family member or arrange transportation, ask the teacher for permission to use your phone.
2. Teachers will inform you if you should keep your cell phone on your desk, in your backpack or in a cell-phone “jail”, each day. If necessary, a cell-phone plan will be created for you with the goal of helping you prioritize your personal cell phone use, respecting the needs of others, and taking accountability for your own actions as we work to make you a more successful 21st century learner. In addition, each student will be assigned a number for a “Cell-Phone Jail” to dock your phone during quizzes, tests or other assignments to secure the technology to prevent cheating. On assessment days or at the teacher’s discretion, cell-phones will be checked into the Cell Phone jail at the beginning of the class period. Failure to do so will result in the creation of a cell-phone use plan in the class and can result in disciplinary action.
3. If the class is using a cell phone as a part of a class activity and it is abused, the student will have limited technology access in my classroom.
4. **Group Projects:** for all group work, you will sign an agreement to work with your group as well as perform a group work survey/review about the performance for each group member. After signing your group agreement, you may not switch groups. Concerns need to be expressed to the teacher before final groups are formed. I trust you to communicate with me about your group’s effort. Keep in mind, unfairly evaluating group members can inflate or deflate grades and affect class rank. It is in your best interest to be fair to each other. Professionalism while working in groups will create effective collaboration. Professionalism includes focusing on the assignment and not attacking other student’s character for any reason. For students who struggle effectively collaborate, I will create an action plan on how best to serve that student’s needs.
5. Failure to work with your group will result in a lower grade for yourself and may affect other group members. Any problems with group work must be reported to the teacher immediately to help you come up with solutions to your problems. You may never kick someone out of your group. If a group member becomes ill, alterations to your assignment will be made to accommodate for all members of the group.
6. **Google Docs & Group Work:** if you are using a google sharable document on a group assignment, it is your responsibility to not share your password or change it after the assignment is over. Using someone’s password to steal their intellectual property and turn it in as their own equates to theft and cheating. If you share your password with a “friend” and they take your work, you are culpable in the act.
7. Assignments will be posted on Schoology and it is the student’s responsibility to read the updates on work, print out assignments for class, and come to class prepared every day and be expected to have read any assignments, completed homework and may be quizzed or assessed over that material at the teacher’s discretion.
8. Students agree to not touch, take or use other people’s phone or property (this includes digital work that is viewable for the entire class) without permission from that student.
9. Never slide work under a teacher’s door to turn in work. If you cannot find your teacher, find another teacher to turn your work in and have **them date and time stamp the work** to avoid any “misplaced” work.

***Cheating/Plagiarizing***

Austin High School values class and character, and Bulldogs do not lie, cheat, or steal, nor do we tolerate those who do. Please keep in mind that academic integrity is crucial. Being an AP/Pre-AP student means that you are a leader, and with this gift of intelligence comes great responsibility. Therefore, make choices with honesty and integrity and allow yourself time to do your work so you do not have to compromise your integrity. High school is as much about implementing time management with discipline as it is learning about academics. Both are valuable assets to your future success.

* 1. Cheating includes letting others copy your answers on homework, classwork, or any other type of assignment. Notice that there is a difference between supporting another student while doing homework and flat out copying their work. Tutoring others is beneficial, but enabling a student to not learn by allowing them to copy your work is unacceptable.
  2. Cheating is sharing test questions/ answers with other classes. Doing this compromises the integrity of the test.
  3. Cheating/plagiarizing includes not reading a book and solely depending on Sparknotes or other Internet sources as your means of thinking/analysis.
  4. Cheating is taking pictures of other student’s work, the teacher’s power points, tests, quizzes, and then distributing to others and copying it as your own. This is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
  5. Cheating is using your phone for answers when it is not permitted.
  6. Also, remember that plagiarizing is copying more than three words of a scholar’s work and calling it your own. To avoid this, simply cite the source when writing a paper. But in timed writes, and short answers, your answers should be based on your own reading and analysis. Being able to think on your own and having a creative voice in your writing is invaluable.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have **ZERO TOLERANCE** for:

* **CHEATING**—this will result in a **zero** for that test/quiz/assignment and a call home to your parents. All work should be done independently unless you are told directly that you may work together. This includes AI-generated work; the burden of proof that your work is original is on you, so please keep all drafts and revisions to show your authentic work.
* **FOUL LANGUAGE**—this is an excellent opportunity for you to expand your vocabulary for different, more professional language to use in class.
* **BULLYING**--- will not be tolerated under any circumstance will result in a discipline referral.

We are going to have a fabulous, fun-filled, and focused year. This year we will focus on polishing your writing voice and writing tools to prepare you for your future endeavors. I will strive to teach you to constantly search for the subtext in what you read that you can relate to yourself and the world around you, and help you build a toolbox of skills to help you analyze the author’s style and prepare you for the AP Exam.

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**Course Overview and Projected Unit Overview**

The following is an expected overview of the units for each nine-week grading period. These are subject to change according to student needs and interests or time.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Skills and Concepts** | **Reading** | **Writing** |
| **First nine weeks** | **Unit 1:** Everything’s an Argument—an introduction to rhetoric and argument  Identifying and analyzing rhetorical context (SOAPS, SPACECAT)  Identifying and analyzing essential elements of any argument: claim, reasoning, evidence, appeals, rhetorical strategies  Associative ideas  Tone analysis, including style analysis (style gives rise to tone)—to be continued throughout the year | * Short nonfiction selections related to the topic of success * Various visual texts for association practice * Passages from various non-fiction texts, such as speeches, national addresses, Op-Ed pieces, and scholarly journals | * Rhetorical Strategy Practice: Descriptive writing exercises: he/she is scared, an ordinary action * Rhetorical Strategy practice: Exemplification * Practice exercises from *They Say, I Say* * General argument essay timed writes * Revision and final copy: general argument essay * Satire imitation: “Advice to Youth” * Grammar/syntax structures for imitation and composition (for all units in this nine weeks) AdvC   AdjC  PrPP and PaPP  Abs  Ap |
| **Unit 2:** Education—what does “education” mean in today’s society? What should be the  goals of education? Does our educational system meet these goals? | * Selections from *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* b * Sources for synthesis essay   Short nonfiction selections related to the topic of education, including:   * “Education” by R.W. Emerson * “Advice to Youth” by Mark Twain * “AP Student Gets B, Condemns Self to Life of Failure” by Mr. Johnson * “Best in Class” by Margaret Talbot   Short nonfiction mentor texts for rhetorical strategies:   * “In Search of the Good Family by Jane Howard * “Beauty” by Susan Sontag | * Rhetorical Strategy Practice: Division and classification * Rhetorical Strategy Practice: Definition * Synthesis essay (group write) * Rhetorical analysis: sentence to paragraph |
| **Second nine weeks** | **Unit 3:** Research and Synthesis and nonfiction literature circle book  Source citation: MLA and APA | * Student-selected sources for research * Student-selected nonfiction book * AP practice passages for multiple choice and essays | * Researched Argument Essay * Student-generated synthesis prompt over non-fiction literature circle book   Grammar/Syntax Structures (for all units in this nine weeks):   * Noun clause * Gerund phrase * Infinitive phrase * Compound sentences with conjunctive adverbs * Compound sentences with solo semicolons |
| **Unit 4**: Science and Technology—What role does technology play in our lives, and how does our technology affect us? What is the nature and quality of this effect? | Short nonfiction selections related to the topics of science and technology, including:   * “The Value of Science” by Richard Feynman * Address to congress regarding funding for NASA by Neil Degrasse Tyson * “Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?” from the Atlantic * “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” by Nicholas Carr * “Into the Electronic Millenium” by Sven Birkerts” * “Smarter Than You Think” by Clive Thompson * Passage over the expansion of the railroad from *Walden* by H.D. Thoreau   AP practice passages for multiple choice and essays | * Rhetorical analysis at the sentence and paragraph level * General argument timed writes |
| **Third nine**  **Weeks** | **Unit 5:** Government and the Individual—What is the ideal relationship between citizens  and the government? What rights and responsibilities should each have, and how should they best interact with one-another? | Various short readings related to the topical focus, including:   * *The Declaration of Independence* * “Inaugural Address” by John F. Kennedy * “The Gettysburg Address” by Abraham Lincoln * “Civil Disobedience” by H.D. Thoreau * “Letter from Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King, Jr.   Student-selected “Current Event” nonfiction  AP practice passages for multiple choice and essays | * Rhetorical strategy practice: Comparison and Contrast * Rhetorical analysis essay * Rhetorical analysis timed writes   Grammar/Syntax structures (for all units in this nine weeks):   * Repeat word modifiers * Analysis modifiers * Sentences with parallel structure |
| **Unit 6:** Logical Fallacies and Bad Arguments—how and why can arguments fail? How can we spot bad arguments? | * Student-selected nonfiction book for literature circles * Short nonfiction texts demonstrating various logical fallacies, including:   “Checkers Speech” by Richard Nixon  “Wheeling Speech” by Joseph McCarthy   * AP practice passages for multiple choice * Student-selected “Current Event” nonfiction | * Rhetorical analysis timed writes * General argument timed writes * Logical fallacies project with written component |
| **Unit 7:** Media and communication—what is he role of media in our society and culture? What roles should the media take in our lives? | Various short nonfiction readings related to the topical focus:   * “Politics and the English Language” by George Orwell * “The Medium is the Metaphor” by Neil Postman * “Does Texting Affect Writing?”—Michaela Cullington * Current events relating to issues of media, communication, and free speech   AP practice passages for multiple choice and essays  Student-selected “Current Event” nonfiction | AP timed writes |
| **Fourth nine Weeks** | **Unit 8:** preparing for the AP exam (AKA “Marpril Madness”) | * AP practice passages for multiple choice and essays * Student-selected “Current Event” nonfiction | 6 AP timed writes (2 of each type) |
| **Unit 9:** Satire—how can writers use humor to address political, social, and cultural problems? | * “Rules by Which a Great Empire May be Reduced to a Small One” by Benjamin Franklin * “A Modest Proposal” by Jonathan Swift * Coca Cola correspondence | Satire imitation: write your own “Modest Proposal”  Satire project |

**Teaching Philosophy and Strategies**

**Writing:** Writing well involves more than following a set of rules or formulae. It means understanding and using the relationship between a writer (the “speaker”) and his or her reader (the audience). This class aims to help you understand that relationship by practicing it. Writing in this class should make you more confident of your ability to write in a variety of arenas, teach you to tailor your style and voice to context, and help you discover how writing can make a difference in the “real world.”

Considering of the complexity involved in learning to write well, we will follow the writing workshop model, an approach thoroughly supported by academic research. The writing workshop involves modeling of skills by the teacher, regular practice by the student, and feedback from both peers and the instructor both inside and outside of class. It is crucially important that you take the process seriously and that you invest in your writing if you wish to improve as a writer and thinker and if you hope to pass the AP exam in May.

**Goalsetting and Reflection:** at the beginning of the process for major pieces of writing, the teacher will set out success criteria so that students understand in detail the expectations of them for the assignment. We will often set personal goals for the paper based upon your past performance in the class and/or data collected during formative assessments, both formal and informal. At the end of the process of composing a given paper, you will reflect over your progress towards the success criteria set out by the teacher at the beginning of the process and towards your personalized goals.

**Conferencing:** feedback from others is an inherently vital part of the writing process, and you will frequently give and receive feedback from other students in class and through digital platforms like Schoology. I pride myself as an educator on my conferencing abilities, and I hope that each of you will make the most of your opportunities to meet 1:1 with me to discuss your writing. I aim to confer with as many students as possible for each writing assignment, and to that end I post conference sign-up sheets on Google Docs so that I can talk 1:1 with as many of you as I can. I also conduct conferences during my regular tutorial times, and many days I can discuss your writing with you before or after school even on non-tutorial days, as long as I know at least 24 hours in advance that you will attend.

**Technique Imitation exercises:** I will regularly ask you to imitate techniques used by professional writers and to use these techniques in your own writing, including various rhetorical strategies, patterns of development, devices, structures, etc. I design these sorts of imitation exercises to give you practice with the tools that real writers use in real writing situations. I think of it like this: no-one learns to write music solely by playing scales and exercises—we learn to compose our own music by imitating the sounds that we find effective, then making them our own. It is the same with writing, and if we wish to be excellent writers, imitating the best of the best is the most effective way to get there.

**Grammar, syntax, usage, and conventions:** we learn grammar most effectively within the context of actual writing, not worksheets and drills. As such, you will learn grammar primarily through the writing process and through directed imitation and inductive exercises in which we will analyze model sentences, clauses, phrases, etc. from professional writers with an eye to noticing how they use the conventions of language. We will then transfer these ideas to your writing through imitation and focused feedback, revision, and editing. We review and learn a wide variety of clauses, phrases, and sentence structures, including: compound sentences with conjunctive adverbs, compound-complex sentences, present participial phrases, absolute phrases, noun subordinate clauses, adjective subordinate clauses, adverbial subordinate clauses, infinitive phrases, gerund phrases, appositive phrases, and parallel structures. We learn these authentically within the writing process through application in your own writing. Over the course of the year, you will gain sophistication and stylistic maturity in your writing that will set you up for success on the AP exam and beyond.

At least once per nine weeks, you will write a full-length composition, or “process piece.” These assignments require that you understand and apply the maxim, “meaning dictates form;” I generally will not impose length, topic, or form requirements—these arise organically from your purpose and intended audience. We will work on all stages of the writing process, discovering and examining the recursive nature of thought and the written word through writing workshop. Within these papers, you will learn strategies and techniques to work through each stage, from prewriting and invention to drafting, revising, and editing. The foundations of this exploration are mini-lessons and immediate application of the strategies to a current piece of written work. The bulk of our work in grammar and syntax takes place through this aspect of the writing process. You will participate in peer and teacher conferences, both formal and informal, throughout the stages of the process. You will learn additional revision and editing skills and techniques during these conferences, and will become part of a community of communication. Finally, you will reflect and evaluate each piece with an eye to the success of the piece in achieving your purpose and communicating effectively with your audience.

**Timed Writing:** Several times a semester, you will write in class, in a timed setting. These “timed writings” test both your analytical and argumentative skills. The intent here is to help prepare you for each of the three essays on the AP exam in May and for the SAT by practicing the key skills in the time frames that you will be allotted on the actual exams. The prompts will be, or will be similar to, prompts previously appearing on the AP Language Exam, and will address all three of the free response question types on the AP exam. Sometimes you will have the opportunity to prepare either in or out of class, and other times you will not. This is meant to assist you in understanding the expectations and demands of the AP exam.

**EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL MAJOR ESSAYS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Take pride in your writing and in all of your work.
2. I expect ALL typed assignments to follow proper MLA formatting: 12 point, Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with a correct MLA heading and header.
3. Compositions should be written in **present tense** when discussing texts.
4. **All new additions to the final copy**—revised words, sentences, phrases—that did not appear in drafts must be highlighted.
5. Refer to authors by first and last name the first time you mention them, then by last name only. NEVER refer to an author only by his or her first name only!
6. Cite your sources accurately and completely. Generally we will use MLA, though we will use APA for some work as well. There are plenty of resources available on Schoology and on the internet, and there is no excuse for missing or incorrect citations.
7. Include a **Works Cited page at the end of the essay** for any essay in which you refer to **any text.**
8. Edit your writing. Poorly-edited work suggests a lack of attention to detail and a lack of effort on your part—this is not a first impression you want to make. Use spellcheck and grammar check on your word processor. There is no reason to overlook spelling and grammar problems that you can and should address prior to turning in your work.
9. Except in limited circumstances, avoid the use of second-person pronouns—“you”—and directly addressing the audience.
10. All body paragraphs should include **extensively elaborated** details.
11. Students should highlight and label sentence structures that the teacher requires for that particular composition (i.e. PrPP—Present Participial Phrase)

**GENERIC RUBRIC FOR MAJOR GRADE PROCESS ESSAYS: CONTENT**

**Emerging Progressing Proficient Advanced**

**LINE OF REASONING: 25 points 15 (or less) pts. 18 pts. 21 pts. 24 pts**

* **Thesis**: establishes a clear, defensible central claim for the argument. Thesis may establish a line of reasoning. Crafts the thesis in the active voice with assertive language. Thesis may appear anywhere in the essay. Thesis does not overstate or hyperbolize the claims beyond what the writer can support with evidence and reasoning. May qualify the claims using modifiers, counterarguments, or alternative perspectives to acknowledge complexities and nuances of the issues.
* **Reasoning/Divisions:** Justifies the thesis with logical, coherent, and convincing reasoning with insightful consideration of the target audience. Reasons or other divisions build logically upon each other to create an argument with logical progression. Avoids fallacious reasoning.
* **Understands Rhetorical Context/Situation:** Shows insightful consideration of the target audience and purpose and makes rhetorical choices accordingly. Demonstrates an understanding of an audience’s beliefs, values, or needs. Strategically constructs the argument to achieve the purpose convincingly. Anticipates the questions and objections of the target audience. May plant naysayers to articulate these question and objections.

**The Criteria Below Only Apply to Argument and Synthesis Essays, NOT to Rhetorical Analysis:**

* **Warrants:** the writer articulates warrants to link the evidence to the line of reasoning or the reasoning to the claim. The writer backs warrants that the target audience could call into question.
* **Addresses counter arguments** **and alternative views**: The writer considers and addresses alternate viewpoints, and uses concession and refutation effectively to deal with these counter arguments. The writer offers reasoning and evidence to support concessions or refutations.

**DEVELOPMENT: 25 points** **15 (or less) pts. 18 pts. 21 pts. 24 pts**

* **Quality of evidence:** chooses evidence strategically to convince the target audience. The selected evidence is relevant, concrete, and specific. Evidence may consist of some combination of examples, anecdotes or narratives, data, facts, information from sources,
* **Quantity of evidence:** Thoroughly and convincingly supports the line of reasoning with ample evidence. May synthesize multiple pieces of evidence within a paragraph or division.
* **Incorporation of evidence:** Smoothly and naturally incorporates the evidence into the argument. Constructs effective blended sentence with a balance of associative ideas (L2) and concrete details (L1).
* **Showing vs. telling:** the writer shows rather than tells. The writer relies on concrete language, precise and evocative verbs, imagery, and details to convey ideas.
* **Commentary:** Provides well-developed commentary that consistently and explicitly explains the relationship between the evidence and the thesis. Provides commentary that engages specific details from the sources to draw conclusions.

**The Criteria Below Only Apply to Argument and Synthesis Essays, NOT to Rhetorical Analysis:**

* **Rhetorical strategies of development:** Effectively builds the argument using rhetorical strategies that enhance the development and depth of the argument and aid the writer in convincing the target audience. Strategically employs, alone or in combination, comparison/contrast, description, narration, definition, division/classification, cause/effect, problem/solution.
* **Sources:** May integrate evidence from sources to support the student’s reasoning. May engage sources in the argument. When using sources, effectively engages the sources in the academic conversation, and uses the sources to support the line of reasoning. Does not merely summarize, describe, or restate information from the sources. Uses source primarily to show rather than tell. Responds to ideas and information from sources and contextualizes source material within the argument.

**STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION: 25 points 15 (or less) pts. 18 pts. 21 pts. 24 pts**

* **Transitions:** Uses transitional elements to guide the reader through the line of reasoning.
* **Paragraphing:** Organizes paragraphs logically and with consistency. Determines paragraph breaks according to the content and ideas of the essay.
* **Overall structure**: may use any structure pattern or a combination of structure patterns. Does not rely on a formulaic plan for the essay, and instead structures the essay with consideration for the rhetorical context, especially purpose and audience.
* **Introduction:** May present the thesis. May provide context for the topic. Introduces the subject and/or writer of the argument to the audience. May orient, engage, and/or focus the audience by presenting quotations, intriguing statements, anecdotes, questions, statistics, data, contextualized information, or a scenario.
* **Conclusion:** The conclusion of an argument brings the argument to a unified end. A conclusion may present the argument’s thesis. It may engage and/or focus the audience by explaining the significance of the argument within a broader context, making connections, calling the audience to act, suggesting a change in behavior or attitude, proposing a solution, leaving the audience with a compelling image, explaining implications, summarizing the argument, or connecting to the introduction.
* **Coherence:** The structure of the argument provides coherent progression of ideas, with ideas logically moving according to a clear plan.

**sn**

**PROSE/QUALITY OF WRITING: 25 points 15 (or less) pts. 18 pts. 21 pts. 24 pts**

* **Tone:** Strategically uses words, comparisons, and syntax to convey a specific tone or style in an argument. Tone suits the rhetorical context and is appropriate for convincing the audience and achieving the purpose.
* **Diction:** The writer selects diction purposefully. The writer’s choice of words enhances the clarity and meaning of the writing. Chooses strong and precise verbs. Relies on verbs more than adjectives and adverbs to convey tone and meaning. Selects diction with precision and attention to meaning and rhetorical context. Avoids “thesaurus syndrome.”
* **Syntax:** Writes sentences that clearly convey ideas and arguments. Strategically varies sentence structure, employing various properly structured phrases and clauses in a fashion that suits the rhetorical context/situation and helps to effectively convey the argument and enhance the voice and style. Crafts concise sentences (regardless of length and complexity) with attention to meaning and clarity. Does not include “fluff.”
* **Active Voice:** Primarily writes in the active voice and limits passive voice and “to be” verb constructions.

**Discussion:** The exchange of ideas and responsible argument between peers is vital to shaping one’s worldview. To that end, discussion plays a prominent role in this course. In this course, you will engage in guided, whole class discussions, small group discussions, and Socratic seminars about the texts and ideas we study.

**Grading for Whole-Class Discussions**

I keep a running tally of your contributions to the discussion, and this form recurring discussion grades. The discussion grade is not a mere “participation grade” in which you earn points simply for talking a great deal. Instead, the discussion grade is meant to hold you accountable for productive and thoughtful contributions to the class—the score measures quality more than quantity. Each discussion grade will cover a 3-6 week period (depending upon what we are doing in class), and will constitute an average of your best responses during the time period covered. Each of your responses will be assigned a points value: for instance, I may say I expect a minimum of 4 responses in a given week, in which case each response would be worth up to 25 points for an exemplary response, 22 points for a very good response, 19 points for a passable response, and so on. If your top 4 responses earned 25, 22, 22, and 22 points, your discussion grade for that period would be 91. Additional responses aside from a predetermined number of best responses (4 in the above example) are generally not considered as part of the grade.

***Socratic Seminar/Inner-Outer Circle Discussion***

From time to time, you will participate in Socratic Seminar discussions, also known as inner-outer circle discussions. In this approach, the class works together to come to a common understanding of the text or texts and to extend this understanding with real-world connections and inter-textual connections. You will be the sole providers of discussion items in many of these seminars: my role as teacher is one of facilitation—I will not be involved much (if at all) in the discussion—instead, a student table leader guides the conversation with questioning and focus points. These will sometimes be one-day conversations, and sometimes two-day affairs. In either case, the class will be composed of an inner and outer circle. The inner circle is responsible for participating in the discussion while the outer circle responds in writing to the ideas posed. During the second half, we will switch, with the outer circle becoming the inner and vice-versa. These discussions will sometimes be daily grades (one day typically) and sometimes major grades (usually the two-day variety). Scoring follows our normal discussion grading system detailed above.

**Reading:** Due to the requirements of the SAT and AP exams, as well as the curricular expectations from The College Board, this course focuses almost exclusively on nonfiction. We will read, analyze, and discuss a broad range of essays, news and current event articles, editorials, short stories, drama, philosophy, advertisements, magazine articles, and so on along with student-selected full-length nonfiction books. These works span from the 18th century to the modern day and represent a variety of topics and purposes.

SOAPSTone, DIDLS, TECTOM, and SPACECAT comprise the core strategies through which we learn to effectively annotate a text in a close, analytical reading. This is also sometimes referred to as “explication” of text. The point is to read *actively* and to provide a written demonstration of that thinking. For many reading assignments, you will identify the following in either your journal or a brief reading response assignment. These will also function as the basis of many discussions. Often, I will require you to use good writers and good writing as a model for your own writing: I will ask you to

notice and “borrow” the “tricks of the trade”—the tools that good writers use to convey their ideas and make their arguments. If it works for writers that we like and respect, it can work for us, too! In that sense, you should practice the habit of reading like a writer. What this means will become clear to you in the early days of the course.

Occasionally, you will be given reading quizzes. These may be multiple choice (often “AP style” multiple choice) or short answer, and gauge your ability to identify and respond to elements in a text and determine how they work together within the given rhetorical context. Sometimes you will be assessed with AP multiple-choice practice passages from previous years’ exams or other AP-level preparation materials, such as Applied Practice guides. I may or may not announce quizzes in advance, so keep up with your reading!

**SUPPLIES:**

* Loose-leaf paper—college ruled
* #2 Pencils with erasers
* Black or blue pens (NO metallic or pastel ink)
* Highlighters (at least 3 different colors)
* Ear buds
* Suggested additional materials:
  + a 1/2 inch or 1 inch binder
  + Multi-colored index cards
  + Pocket folders (with or without brads)