

AP[®] English Language & Composition

Course Overview

AP[®] English Language & Composition is designed to expose students to effective writing and rhetoric through the study of representative works such as essays, excerpts, speeches, and short stories. Specific attention will be paid to writing strategy, purpose, audience, and documentation. The process of research imparts the skills of arguing from authority, marshaling evidence, or presenting scholarly perspectives on research topics. Through discussion, reading, research, and writing, the student will learn to analyze selective works and to infer the author's work in its appropriate historical context.

Course reading and writing exercises will prepare students in the strategic approach to the process of writing, noting a clearer explication of the student's individual style and structure. Featured authors included Alexander Pope, Walt Whitman, Jimmy Carter, Nelson Mandela, Amy Tan, Stephen King, Jonathan Swift, Thomas Jefferson, George Orwell, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., and others.

Reading and Writing Assignments

Reading Assignments run continuously throughout the course, with an additional preparatory summer reading assignment. An important element for understanding discussions, lectures, and writing assignments is a dedication by students to critically read all assignments on time. Short cuts to reading, such as viewing a movie, reading explanatory notes, or other vices in replacement of accomplishing the actual reading assignments, will set the student up for failure. Students are required to complete all reading assignments in this course.

Writing Assignments will coincide with all readings. Students will write a variety of assignments, critical and creative. Students are expected to proofread, revise, and edit all work before submitting the final draft for grading. Occasionally, class time will be used for peer editing. Papers are due and accepted before/on the "due date." Papers will not be graded after the given "due date" regardless of excused or unexcused absence. Any papers received after the due date will be given 50% of the given credit for the assignment with no critique or evaluation of the work. All writing assignments must be the original work of the students.

Course Planner

Students will be expected to complete a summer reading assignment in order to begin the course on task. The summer reading assignments will be posted at the Guidance Office of Gifted Education at Steubenville High School.

Summer Reading Assignment will be comprised from the following list:

Shooting an Elephant by George Orwell
Two Views of the River by Mark Twain
Examined Life by Malcolm Gladwell
I Have A Dream by Martin Luther King, Jr.
Harrison Bergeron by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.
Everyday Use by Alice Walker
Campus Racism by Nikki Giovanni
Revelation by Flannery O'Connor

Trimmer, Joseph F. and Maxine Hairston. *The Riverside Reader Eighth Edition*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005.

Mother Tongue by Amy Tan
Why I Write: Making No Become Yes by Elie Wiesel
A door...you are willing to shut by Stephen King
Killing Chickens by Meredith Hall
The Rhetorical Situation of the Scientific Paper and the Appearance of Objectivity by Matthew Allen

Bloom, Lynn Z. *THE ESSAY CONNECTION 8th Edition*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007.

Hamlet by William Shakespeare

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. Dover Thrift Editions. Mineola, N. Y.: Dover Publications, 1993.

First Nine Weeks

The course opens with assessment of summer reading assignment, which consists of selections posted in advance of the course. Focus on audience, students will be instructed to analyze diction, structure, readability level, and literary devices used in each selection. Students will practice writing in informal settings to facilitate awareness of themselves as

writers and analyzing their own selections for diction, structure, readability level, and literary devices used. Additional supplemental reading may be used to support instruction.

Writing Assignment # 1:

After discussing the summer reading selections and practicing writing in informal settings, students will develop an essay exercising rhetorical devices discussed from the selections. A critique of the student's own selection will accompany the essay, noting the readability level and intended audience.

Writing Assignment # 2:

After reading *FDR and Truman* by David McCullough, *Two Views of the River* by Mark Twain, and *A Tale of Two Divorces* by Anne Roiphe, students will select two passages from each the works, analyze the author's purpose, and compare/contrast the three selections.

Students will meet for peer editing sessions at assigned dates. Students will edit, revise, and submit the final draft of their essays on a designated date.

Writing Assignment # 3:

After reading *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare and *Shakespeare in the Bush* by Laura Bohannon, students will discuss content, literary devices, structure, diction, and author intent. Students will develop a thesis, devise an argument, and construct an essay defending their views. Review of the Modern Language Association style of documentation will assist the students in avoiding plagiarism.

Second Nine Weeks

Students will read several selections focusing on cause and effect. In addition, students will be encouraged to reflect upon vocabulary that enhances a selection.

Writing Assignment # 4:

After reading *Some Big Ideas Wash Up One Bulb at a Time* by Andrew C. Revkin students will compose reflective essay, noting the author's use of vocabulary, and analyze the cause and effect of the reading selection. Students should pay close attention to images that the author creates by use of vocabulary/diction.

Writing Assignment # 5:

After reading *How Reading Changed My Life* by Anna Quindlen, students will interview several people asking them to discuss those things that have influenced their lives. Students will compile the information and support any comments with documentation. After composing the rough draft, students will engage in peer editing groups to get feedback and to offer feedback. Students will edit, revise, and submit a draft of their essays at a designated date. I will ask students to make an appointment for a writing conference, which their essays will be discussed and critiqued individually. A second date will be assigned for the student to edit, revise, and submit the final draft for evaluation.

Continued readings for the semester:

The Mullet Girls by Jill McCorkle
Campus Racism by Nikki Giovanni
Shop like a Man by Paco Underhill
Shades of Black by Mary Mebane
Of Altruism, Heroism, and Evolution's Gifts by Natalie Angier
Homer's Bones by John Fleischman

Midterm Exam

Third Nine Weeks

At the beginning of this second semester, a round table discussion will take place, giving each student a chance to express his/her views concerning the reading selections and writing assignments covered so far in the course.

After reading the following selections, students will discuss reasons to write and focus their writing activities for a specific purpose.

Living Without / With Words by B. K. Loren
A door...you are willing to shut by Stephen King
The Inheritance of Tools by Scott Russell Sanders

Writing Assignment # 6:

After reading and discussing the rhetorical applications in *The Human Cost of an Illiterate Society* by Jonathan Kozol, students will construct a cause and effect essay that deals with a similar issue in today's society. Students must be prepared to orally discuss this assignment in class, answering questions that arise.

After reading the following selections, students will focus on identifying descriptive elements in creative writing.

Killing Chickens by Meredith Hall

How Much of the Body is Replaceable? By Linda Villarosa

That Lean and Hungry Look by Suzanne Britt

Writing Assignment # 7:

After viewing the cartoon *Inflation* by Istvan Banyai, students will compose a critical analysis paper discussing the descriptive factors used for the author's intent.

In a focused discussion on the importance of appealing to emotion and ethics in writing, students will read the following selections, noting the emotional appeal and the ethical stance in each work.

A Modest Proposal by Jonathan Swift

Steal This MP3 File: What Is Theft? By G. Anthony Gorry

Losing: An American Tradition by Charles M. Young

Writing Assignment # 8:

During the discussion of *A Modest Proposal* by Jonathan Swift, *Steal This MP3 File: What Is Theft?* By G. Anthony Gorry, and *Losing: An American Tradition* by Charles M. Young, students will be instructed to consider the rhetorical strategies used to develop the intended emotional appeal and ethical stance. Equipped with these strategies, students will compose an essay using similar strategies to create their intended purpose. This essay is to be creative, informative, as well as entertaining.

Fourth Nine Weeks

The last nine weeks of the course will focus the effective development of speeches. Students will read a variety of awards / speeches and reflective upon purpose, audience, images, emotional appeal, and other rhetorical devices that give credit to each.

Nobel Peace Prize awards and speeches will be read in class. Students will be assigned to research historical information surrounding each award /speech in advance to the classroom reading. Students will keep these notes for references upon need during the development of the writing assignments.

In a focused discussion on the importance of considering audience and context, students will read *I Have a Dream* speech by Martin Luther King, Jr. and view the Time Inc. photo archive collection of Martin Luther King, Jr. Students will be introduced to strategies for analyzing prose and visual texts in relation to audience.

A Noiseless Patient Spider (poem) by Walt Whitman
Citizen of a Troubled World by Jimmy Carter
The United Nations in the 21st Century by Kofi Annan
Humanitarianism by James Orbinski, M.D., and Médecins Sans Frontières
(Doctors Without Borders)
The Revolution of Spirit by Aung San Suu Kyi
Inner Peace and Human Rights by The 14th Dalai Lama (Tenzin Gyatso)
The Movement of the Peace People by Betty Williams
I Have a Dream speech by Martin Luther King, Jr.

Writing Assignment # 9:

With research notes on the historical information surrounding each award / speech read in class, students will develop a critical analysis of the speeches impact on its audience and the effect it has on today's society. The paper will need to focus on the construction of speech as well as the specific content. All directly quoted, summarized, and paraphrased information must use parenthetical citations, following the Modern Language Association style for documentation.

A peer editing session, with focused criteria for editing, will be set up during class. Students will use suggestions from the peer editing session to enhance their own writing. After the peer editing session, students will proofread, edit, revise, and construct second draft. I will ask students to make an appointment for a writing conference, which their essays will be discussed and critiqued individually. A second date will be assigned for the student to edit, revise, and submit the final draft for evaluation.

Final Exam

Course Materials

Bloom, Lynn Z. *THE ESSAY CONNECTION 8th Edition*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007.

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. Dover Thrift Editions. Mineola, N. Y.: Dover Publications, 1993.

Trimmer, Joseph F. and Maxine Hairston. *The Riverside Reader Eighth Edition*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005.

Time.com. *Martin Luther King in His Own Words*. Time Archive Collection: Martin Luther King, Jr.

Photographs by Flip Schulke/Corbis. 2000.

Course Policies

Papers are due and accepted before/on the “due date.” Papers will not be graded after the given “due date” regardless of excused or unexcused absence. Any papers received after the due date will be given 50% of the given credit for the assignment with no critique or evaluation of the work. Students are responsible for all material covered in class; quizzes are unannounced. All papers must be typed.

Student Evaluation

Grading Policy

93 – 100 = A

84 – 92 = B

70 – 83 = C

60 – 69 = D

0 – 59 = F

Late work = 50 %

Plagiarized work will result in a failing grade.