AP English 11--English Language and Composition

Primary Text: The Language of Composition
Summer Reading: Seabiscuit,
Common 11th Grade Texts: The Great Gatsby, The Crucible, and/or The Scarlet Letter
Supplementary Materials: Vocabulary for the College-Bound Student by Harold Levine
Sentence Composing for College by Don Killgallon (Heineman
Required Materials: Three-ring binder (or dedicated section of binder with ample room for handouts and graded work).
Sticky notes

*Students have the option to buy their own copies of the Common 11th Grade Texts as well as their independent non-fiction reading choices to enhance their close reading practices. All Common Texts will be available from the bookroom. An ample selection of the independent non-fiction reading choices is available for free online or from the school and public libraries.

COURSE OVERVIEW
The AP English Language and Composition course focuses intensively on the study of how writers use language to create meaning. Students read a variety of nonfiction and fiction selections based on readings representing a wide variety of prose styles and genres including essays, journalism, political writing, science writing, nature writing, autobiographies/biographies, diaries, speeches, history, criticism, novels, and drama. Besides writing, students also study the rhetoric of such visual media as photographs, advertisements, websites, and political cartoons. They learn to write expository, analytical and argumentative essays based on writers who are listed in the AP English Course Description. As suggested in the AP English Course Description, students learn "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 the Modern Language Association." The class is structured around teaching reading and writing skills that are honed by close reading and writing essays, many of which are products of significant revisions.

Performance Indicators: Upon completion of this 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.

*Performance Indicators taken from The College Board guide www.collegeboard.com

TEACHING STRATEGIES: ON GOING ASSIGNMENTS AND PRACTICE

World Perspectives: The purpose of this assignment is to increase and encourage your knowledge of world issues and events so that you can form educated opinions and write coherently about those opinions. For each World Perspectives assignment, you will select and read an article in a respected literary or news magazine such as The Economist, The New Yorker, Harpers, The Atlantic, The New York Times, or The Wall Street Journal. The articles can reflect not only current world news, but also art, literature, dance, film, politics, education, and health. We will complete World Perspectives on a weekly basis for the first six weeks of the semester and every other week for the remainder of the year. This assignment is worth 25 points, and assessment will be based on the clarity, organization, and thoughtfulness of your response. When completing your World Perspectives assignment, follow the steps below.

• Choose and read an appropriate article from an accredited news source. The response should be one page, typed and double-spaced and include the following.
• Using MLA format, identify the news source, title, and author at the top of the page.
• State the writer’s claim
• Give a clear summary of the article
• Give your evaluation of the topic. This is an assessment of the article and not merely an “I think” response. You should make a carefully articulated argument that demonstrates an attempt to understand more than one point-of-view on the issue. This section must answer the questions “So What? Who Cares?”

STAARS + TEAR (25 points each): These short writing assignments are used throughout the year to practice written rhetorical analysis. In addition, STAARS + TEAR teach students how to make logical transitions, integrate quotations, balance generalization and specific illustrative detail and vary sentence structure (not necessarily all at once) in a well-organized paragraph. STAARS + TEAR follows the format below.

S Subject (one word)
T Thematic Statement (what the writer says about the subject)
A Attitude (Tone—3 words. What the writer feels about the subject)
A Audience (To whom is the passage addressed?)
R/S Rhetorical Strategies (Choose one, cite it from the text)

TEAR (Commentary Paragraph)

Write a paragraph explaining how the rhetorical strategy you chose contributes to the meaning of the passage following this format:
PASTA+TEAR (25 points each) These short writings are used throughout the year to practice analyzing and evaluating arguments, as well as identifying claims, appeals to logos, ethos, and pathos, and possible logical fallacies. Like the STAARS + TEAR, the PASTA + TEAR teaches students how to make logical transitions, integrate quotations, balance generalization and specific illustrative detail and vary sentence structure (not necessarily all at once) in a well-organized paragraph. PASTA + TEAR follows the format below.

P  Proposition  What is the subject and the assertion
A  Audience  To whom is the author writing or speaking
S  Speaker  Who is the author or speaker? How do we know he or she is credible?
T  Tone  How does the author or speaker feel about the subject?
A  Appeal  Select one appeal and explain in a TEAR paragraph how it helps create meaning.

TEAR (Commentary Paragraph)

T  TAG + 2 T’s  The thematic sentence: title, author, genre + tone and theme (claim)
E  Evidence  Evidence he uses to prove his claim. Should be 2-3 sentences; embed text.
A  Analyze  Explain how the appeal you selected helps the author create meaning.
R  Response  Your response to or evaluation of the argument (without using first person)

Reader Responses: This is a reading-intensive course and the in-class discussions will draw heavily from the assigned readings; as such, you are expected to complete the assigned reading prior to the beginning of each class period. To help you better assess and contemplate the readings, on the days you are assigned a Reader Response you will write a 1-2 page response for that day’s reading assignment. The topic of the response is up to you. You may focus on development of argument or plot, rhetorical analysis, character development, appeals to ethos, pathos, or logos, or any other topic related to the assigned reading. As you write about your topic, do the following:

1. Briefly summarize the text.
2. Analyze your chosen topic. (i.e. What different layers of meaning is the author incorporating in the text? Why or how?).  
3. Reflect on your analysis and make connections. (For example, how does this work relate—or not—to your own life? How does it relate to other readings and ideas we’ve discussed in this class? How does it reflect the author’s life? How does it relate to the surrounding historical context in which it was written? To current world events?)

You must incorporate evidence into your Reader Response by including at least TWO appropriate/applicable direct quotations in your analysis. Provide parenthetical citations for your sources using MLA format.

**Bell-Ringer Journals:** We will begin each class meting with an in-class writing assignment that you will keep in a “Bell-ringer” section of your three-ring binder for the class. Per school policy, this activity will be called our “Bell-ringer” and we will periodically collect and assess this writing and work. You will do one to two paragraphs of informal writing in response to each Bell-ringer assignment. Our Bell-ingers will vary based on the needs of the class, but they will include the following:

- Practice with assigned vocabulary in which you incorporate vocabulary into your own original, creative writing.
- Written analysis of visual images (How does the artist use the details and composition of the image to convey meaning? What does this image convey about the social or historical context in which it was created? If it appears alongside test, how are the two related and how does each enhance the other?, etc.)
- Written response to short excerpts from assigned readings.
- Generative writing on assigned readings in preparation for class discussion.
- Imitation exercises related to mini-lessons on grammar and syntax (based in part on our own observations of your writing and your needs as a class).

**Close Reading and Multiple-Choice Practice:** Every other week, we will practice close reading and multiple-choice skills using one to two passages from the AP English Language and Composition multiple-choice questions. These practice passages are not graded. We will complete them in class and spend significant time analyzing and discussion the readings and questions.

**Other Ongoing Expectations and Assessments**
- Annotation and close-reading practice
- Quizzes
- Other work to demonstrate engagement and preparedness
MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS

In-class essays: These essays will be modeled after essays written for the AP exam. Besides preparing you for the AP exam, each in-class essay will give you the opportunity to practice writing well-supported, well-written arguments in a short time frame (skills essential for success in college and success on standardized tests); each essay will also provide an opportunity for you to demonstrate your mastery of the reading and writing skills we’ve been studying in class (i.e. close reading and rhetorical analysis; making and developing clear, well-supported claims; incorporating textual evidence, synthesizing sources).

Before writing each essay, we will read and analyze essay prompts from past AP national exams. After discussing the prompt and possibilities for organizing an essay, we will analyze the AP rubric for that prompt and read and discuss sample student essays and their corresponding scores.

Based on teacher response and peer feedback to your own writing, you will have the opportunity to revise two of these essays over the course of the school year for a new grade. Such revision allows you to further hone your writing skills and can only improve your grade. The revised version may receive the same grade as the original, but (barring plagiarism and other extreme instances) it will never receive a lower grade.

Independent Reading Project 1: You will read a nonfiction book that you will choose from the list provided and do two analysis assignments based on that book. Your final project will be an essay that identifies a major theme or claim in the book and then analyzes a minimum of two rhetorical strategies the author uses to convey that theme or support that claim. You will turn in a rough draft of the essay, evidence of comprehensive peer review, and a revised draft. Both your rough and final drafts must be typed and in MLA format.

Independent Reading Project 2: You will read another nonfiction book that you will choose from the list provided and do two analysis assignments based on that book. Your final project will be an oral presentation with electronic visual (PowerPoint, Prezi, original video, etc.). The presentation will provide background on the author, introduction of new vocabulary you gained from the book, and a discussion of the major themes or claims of the book.

Research Project (Definition Essay and Research Paper): You will identify an issue that is both important to you and a subject of public debate and write two papers on this topic.

Definition essay: First, you will write an expository essay defining a key term often associated with the topic (i.e. “poverty,” “control,” “bioethics,” “morality,” etc.).

Research Paper: Then you will write a well-developed argumentative research paper that supports your own claim about the topic, synthesizing a minimum of five high-quality sources that you will find and evaluate as part of the research process. The essay must be
You will do two drafts of each paper, working with a small group of peers as you write and revise.

**COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES**

In this course our goal is to become a community of focused and committed individuals working together to improve our reading, writing and thinking abilities. We will ask you challenging questions and we expect you to respond thoughtfully, using evidence to support your answers. We also expect you to listen with respect and an open mind to the thoughts and ideas of others, to ask respectful yet challenging questions of your peers, and to respond in good faith to the same kinds of questions from your peers. These sorts of discussions along with the high-level reading and writing we expect you to do will help to prepare you for reading, writing, and conversing at a college level. In turn, you can expect our support for your reading, writing, and learning. We will provide you with well-developed lesson plans and clear rubrics and examples. We will respond to your ideas within class discussion, in one-on-one conferences with you, and through written feedback. And, most importantly, we encourage your questions. Please ask questions freely during class or come speak with us outside of class. We are here to support your learning in whatever ways we can.

To make ours an effective community of learners, you must attend class and you must arrive on time and prepared. Do the reading. Bring your annotations and other assignments. Take responsibility for your own learning.

**Late Work:**
You have on day for every day you are excused absent to make up work. Assignments that are one class period late lose ten percentage points. All other late work is worth up to half credit after the day it is due. Late work will not be accepted after the fifth week of the grading period.

In keeping with department policy for AP and pre-AP course work, extra credit is not offered in this class.

**AP Exam:**
As you know, if you’re in this course, you’re expected to take the AP exam in English Language and Composition. The test is $87. Please begin planning in advance to pay for it. If you feel you may need financial assistance to pay for the test, you can get involved with the AP Book Club. The club does at least one fundraiser to help defray the cost of the exam for club members. Other financial assistance is also available; see your counselor for more information.

**COURSE PLANNER**

Our school year is divided into six six-week periods. The first few weeks will serve as an introduction to the study of Language and Composition and the practice of close reading. The rest of the semester is organized by written genres. Readings reflect (but are not limited to) the
genre we are studying, and are organized by thematic questions. Readings come primarily from your textbook, *The Language of Composition*. Keep your sticky notes on hand for annotation of all assigned readings.

FALL SEMESTER
First Six Weeks
Introduction of rhetorical strategies and appeals, close reading skills/annotating, multiple choice strategies, and rhetorical analysis. Discussion and analysis of summer reading assignment, *Seabiscuit* (discuss the role of the American dream, organization as rhetorical choice, close reading practice). Introduction to Satire. Begin World Perspectives.

Reading:
*Seabiscuit* (Summer Reading)
“We Can Afford to Give Parents a Break” by Jody Heyman
*Los Angeles Notebook* by Joan Didion
JFK’s Inaugural address
George W. Bush’s speech at Ground Zero
“Moon Landing” by E.B. White
“The Political Candidate” by Mark Twain
“Me Talk Pretty One Day” by David Sedaris
“The Devil and Tom Walker” by Nathaniel Hawthorne
Various visual advertisements and political cartoons

Writing: World Perspectives; STAARS+TEAR; In-class essay (rhetorical analysis); daily writings and assignments.

Second Six Weeks
Focus on argument; continue World Perspectives, practice with multiple-choice and skill-based assignments to practice the identification and purpose of various rhetorical strategies and devices. Essential Question: “What are the roles of education in America?”

Readings:
Independent Non-fiction Reading
Introduction to Argument:
-“Not by Math Alone” Speech by Sandra Day O’Connor and Roy Romer
-“The Declaration of Independence”
Begin readings that address the question “What are the roles of education in America?”
-“Superman and Me” by Sherman Alexie
-“The American Scholar” by Ralph Waldo Emerson
-“I Know Why The Caged Bird Cannot Read” by Francine Prose
-“Best in Class” by Margaret Talbot
-“A Talk to Teachers” by James Baldwin
-“Eleven” by Sandra Sisneros (focus on fiction as argument)
Writing: Initial and Revised draft of rhetorical analysis essay based on Independent Reading Project; In-Class Argument Essay on a topic related to education; World Perspectives; daily writings and assignments.

Third Six Weeks
The Great Gatsby; continue World Perspectives, practice with rhetorical analysis and multiple-choice. Essential Question: “How do economy and social class affect the American Dream?”

Writing: Revision of argument essay; In-class argument essay. In-class analysis essay on The Great Gatsby; World Perspectives; daily writings and assignments.

Readings:
From Labour by Thomas Carlyle
From Serving in Florida by Barbara Ehrenreich
“Harvest Song” by Jean Toomer (poetry)
The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald and related background readings on Fitzgerald, the 1920s and the Jazz Age
“I Stand Here Ironing” by Tillie Olson (fiction)
“The Great GAPsby” political cartoon by Jeff Parker

Winter Reading: Begin 2nd Independent Reading Project

SPRING SEMESTER
Fourth Six Weeks
Focus on synthesizing multiple sources into one cohesive argument; continue World Perspectives, practice with rhetorical analysis, and multiple-choice. Essential question: “How does community affect the American Dream?”

Readings:
The Crucible by Arthur Miller
“Letter from Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King Jr.
“Where I Lived and What I Lived For” by Henry David Thoreau
“In Search of the Good Family” by Jane Howard
“The New Community” by Amitai Etzioni
“The Singer Solution to World Poverty” by Peter Singer

Writing: In-Class Synthesis essay; Definition essay (Part I of Research Project); World Perspectives; daily writings and assignments.

Presentation: Formal presentation based on Independent Reading Project.

Fifth Six Weeks
Focus on Research Paper; continue practice with rhetorical analysis and multiple-choice. Essential Question: “How does gender affect the America Dream?”

Readings:
“Professions for Women” by Virginia Wolf
Letters from John and Abigail Adams
“The Myth of the Latin Woman: I Just Met a Girl Named Maria” by Judith Ortiz Cofer
“Being a Man” by Paul Theroux
Extensive reading related to individual research projects

Writing: In-class Synthesis Essay; Argumentative Research Paper (Initial and Final drafts) due; World Perspectives; daily writings and assignments.

Sixth Six Weeks
This final quarter is a review of the skills students have learned throughout the year:
Practice essays taken from past AP prompts; continued practice with close reading, multiple choice skills, and rhetorical analysis; narrative/reflective essay looking back on work done throughout the year.

Readings:
Representative readings include:
“Politics and the English Language” by George Orwell
From Decolonising the Mind by Ngugi wa Thiong’o
From Show and Tell by Scott McCloud
From Nature by Ralph Waldo Emerson

Writing: In-class Argument, Synthesis, and Rhetorical Analysis essays. Narrative essay recalling and reflecting on your learning process and accomplishments over the course of the semester with both rough and final drafts based on peer feedback.