

# Advanced Placement English Language and Composition

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**Course description:** This course is designed to challenge students to be better thinkers, writers and speakers. In addition to taking the AP test in May, students will take a thematic journey through American literature looking at all aspects of Rhetoric and Language. Students are required to write extensively, engage in lively discussions, and be prepared to read material on their own. While there will be a touching on of multiple intelligences, every student will be required to write in many different styles, be able to revise on their own, in a small group setting and with the teacher. Be aware that this is a college level course; performance expectations and workload are the same as a university course. *Do not forget this.*

**Course objectives:** *This course is constructed and designed to follow the guidelines described in the AP English course description, published by the college board ([available here](#)). In addition to being prepared for the National AP English Language and Composition examination in May, students should be able to conquer the following:*

- read extensively and master a wide range of works of literature and rhetoric, with an emphasis on works by American writers
- differentiate between the genres of fiction and non-fiction, developing a sophisticated and differentiated style of responding to works of literature and rhetoric
- understand and employ the classical appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos in any communication, recognizing the rhetorical modes, structure, and strategies used by writers
- write in a variety of genres, with an emphasis on expository, analytical and argumentative writing
- write insightful, intelligent, and critical analyses of literary passages and rhetorical works in both impromptu and formal essays
- improve meta-cognitive thinking skills so as to respond to reading through thoughtful inquiry, articulate discussion, better test performance, and incisive writing.
- develop an enriched vocabulary, which is reflected in both oral and written communication

## **Assignment variety**

Throughout this course, students will have the opportunity to express themselves in a variety of assignments both informal and formal. *There is much in-class writing designed to help students fluently express themselves on paper, giving them a firm handle on the writing process (with major emphasis on revision, and proofreading). There is also imitative writing, reader response journals, and group essays.* Listed below are some of the major skills developed in the course.

A full-fledged research paper will be thoroughly researched and written by using credible sources. Each paper will include the following: title page, outline, five typed pages with parenthetical documentation, works cited. Proper documentation will be provided via *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Any paper that does not meet this criterion for documentation will be considered plagiarized.

### **SOAPS DIDLS**

One of the strongest skills developed is the analytical skills required in college as well as the AP exam. With this in mind we focus primarily on SOAPS and DIDLS, and the précis writing model. SOAPS and DIDLS require each student to be able to identify the following:

Speaker	Diction
Occasion	Imagery
Audience	Details
Purpose	Language
Subject	Syntax
Tone	

Once students are proficient in breaking down the writing, then we have them reassemble the piece in a précis.

### **Précis**

The précis is a highly-structured four-sentence paragraph that records the essential elements of a unit of spoken or written discourse, including the name of the speaker/writer, the context of the delivery, the major assertion, the mode of development and/or support, the stated and/or apparent purpose, and the relationship established between the speaker/writer and the audience (the last element is intended to identify the tone of the work). Each of the four sentences requires specific information; students are also encouraged to integrate brief quotations to convey the author's sense of style and tone.

#### **Précis Format:**

1. Name of author [optional: a phrase describing author], genre and title of work [date and additional publishing information in parenthesis]; a rhetorically accurate verb (such as "assert," "argue," "suggest," "imply," "claim," etc.); and a THAT clause containing the major assertion (thesis statement) of the work.
2. An explanation of how the author develops and/or supports the thesis, usually in chronological order – always identifying the rhetorical mode(s) employed.
3. A statement of the author's apparent purpose follows (introduce with the infinitive "to").
4. A description of the intended audience and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience.

\*The preceding was adapted from Dr. Jo Koster and Tracy Hudson's "Rhetorical Précis," a condensation of *Rhetoric Review*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Fall 1988. 29 Aug. 2001. 23 Aug. 2004 <http://www.winthrop.edu/english/core/success/precis.htm>.

### **REHUGO Analyses**

Every nine weeks students complete a REHUGO analysis as a nine-week wrap-up. REHUGO requires each student to generate an informed, logical argument on a variety of disciplines.

Effective argument relies on a variety of evidence, evidence that derives from REHUGO --

**R**eadings  
**E**ntertainment  
**H**istory  
**U**niversal truths  
**G**overnment  
**O**bservation

### Format for REHUGO Analyses

<b>R</b>	Books, Plays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Title</u> and author</li> <li>b. Major characters -- discuss the significance of each</li> <li>c. Three theme statements (not motifs), with examples from the book, demonstrating how the author develops that theme</li> </ul>
	Essays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. "Title" and author</li> <li>b. State author's argument</li> <li>c. Identify and evaluate 2 pieces of evidence (note type of evidence)</li> <li>d. Identify 2 rhetorical strategies and discuss the effect of each</li> </ul>
<b>E</b>	Movies, TV Shows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Title</u> and director(s)</li> <li>b. Key characters/setting</li> <li>c. Comment on the significance of the movie or show (note memorable lines, if any)</li> </ul>
	Concerts, Photographs, Art, Theater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify artist</li> <li>b. Comment on the audience and intended effect on audience</li> <li>c. Comment on the societal and cultural implications of the music, photograph, painting, or play</li> </ul>
<b>H</b>	Philosophical Movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify and explain the movement</li> <li>b. Identify key proponents and their works</li> <li>c. Comment on relevance today</li> </ul>
	Historical Documents, Events, Speeches, or People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify the event, person, or document -- be specific</li> <li>b. Provide details such as background or surrounding events</li> <li>c. Comment on relevance today (if speech or document analyze effectiveness)</li> </ul>
<b>U</b>	Universal Truths (Aphorisms) -- NOT clichés	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify the author or speaker (Avoid "Anonymous")</li> <li>b. Explain the meaning</li> <li>c. Comment on relevance today</li> </ul>
<b>G</b>	Current Events	<p>For each current event --</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Read 2 <u>op ed</u> articles on a significant contemporary national or global issue; the articles must present opposing viewpoints on that issue (e.g., one article in favor of the Patriot Act and one article against )</li> <li>b. Attach the 2 articles to your analysis</li> <li>c. Identify each author's argument</li> <li>d. Identify and evaluate 2 pieces of evidence that support the writer's argument (note the type of evidence)</li> <li>e. Identify 2 rhetorical strategies and discuss the effect of each</li> <li>f. State your position clearly -- in a manner that acknowledges the opposing position (e.g., "While there may be circumstances when the public welfare requires that civil liberties be restricted, the Patriot Act, in giving the government broad police powers, contravenes the principles of a democratic society, overlooking that our very existence derives from the proposition that individuals possess certain inalienable rights which no government may ever deny." It's just an example, folks. Feel free to take a different position)</li> </ul>
<b>O</b>	Cultural, Technological, Societal Trends	<p>For published cartoon, graph, chart, or other visual --</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Attach the cartoon, graph, chart or other visual to your analysis</li> <li>b. Identify the cultural, technological, or societal trend being commented on in the cartoon</li> <li>c. Evaluate the effectiveness of the visual</li> <li>d. Comment on and evaluate the implications of the trend</li> </ul> <p>For <u>magazine articles and op-ed articles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Attach the 2 articles to your analysis</li> <li>b. Identify each author's argument</li> <li>c. Identify and evaluate 2 pieces of evidence that support the writer's argument (note the type of evidence)</li> <li>d. Identify 2 rhetorical strategies and discuss the effect of each</li> <li>e. Comment on and evaluate the implications of the trend</li> </ul>

\*adapted from a concept designed by Michelle Garbis at Majorjy Stoneman Douglas High School available at: <http://www.teachnlearn.org/>

### **Other Writing/Alternative Assessment**

Below are several samples of other assessments done for the analysis of outside readings.

#### **Catcher in the Rye character sketch**

As part of our wrap-up for *Catcher in the Rye*, you are to write a character sketch about any character from the book. For this project you are to choose one person and try to figure out why they are the way they are. You do this by answering some very simple questions about the character and then putting them together like a puzzle.

Eight methods are used through which most authors characterize people. They are as follows:

1. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION
2. WHAT THE CHARACTER SAYS
3. WHAT THE CHARACTER DOES
4. WHAT THE CHARACTER THINKS
5. WHAT OTHERS SAY TO OR ABOUT THE CHARACTER
6. WHAT OTHERS DO TO THE CHARACTER
7. THE SETTING IN WHICH THE CHARACTER IS FOUND
8. WHAT THE CHARACTER IS LIKE

In your report you must use quotations or pieces of writing copied from the source to support your observations. Remember to put quotation marks around any words you copy.

Be sure to use information which is true to the story. You may make inferences or draw logical conclusions, only if they are based on facts or details from the story. For instance, a story may not state that a character is seventy years old, but you can make logical assumptions about his or her age through other information: wrinkled face, white hair, stooped over, has been driving for fifty-five years, etc.

**Write a six-paragraph character sketch following the directions below.**

**Paragraph one:** You should begin your report by naming the character you have chosen. Also include the book title and the author's name. Then state your feelings about what kind of individual your character is. What do you think are three outstanding characteristics of this individual? These three characteristics may be either good traits or the person's faults. Do not support the three characteristics at this time.

Example: "In the novel, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Huck is an adventurous, witty and clever boy." This is an example of one sentence in the first paragraph.

**Paragraph two:** Write a description of the person. The description should include what the character is like and how he looks and acts. Also, include information of the character's speech if it is in any way unusual. Also, state the conflicts the character faces in the story.

**Paragraph three:** Show how the character demonstrated the first trait you mentioned in paragraph one by citing a variety of incidents from the plot in your own words. Keep in mind that you should utilize as many of the eight methods of characterization as possible. Also, you must provide at least two quotes which demonstrated this trait. (Example of topic sentence: Huckleberry Finn makes the reader laugh through his witty and funny remarks and actions.)

**Paragraph four:** Repeat the instructions for paragraph three to demonstrate the second of the characteristics you named in paragraph one. (Example of topic sentence: Huck demonstrates his love for adventure in many ways.)

**Paragraph five:** Repeat the instructions for paragraph three to demonstrate the third of the characteristics you named in paragraph one. (Example of topic sentence: being clever, Huck gets himself out of many difficult situations.)

**Paragraph six:** In this final paragraph you should reveal the outcome of the story and your character's part in it. In this paragraph, you should also state your personal reaction to the story as a whole, and make a recommendation of the book.

### The Great Gatsby Scrapbook Project

Have you ever kept a scrapbook? If you have, or have looked at one created by a friend or relative, you have noticed that it is a highly personal collection containing anything from snapshots, newspaper articles or photos about oneself and others, to poems and other writing. Working in groups of four, you will be assembling a scrapbook for Nick. Nick, as you have noticed from your reading, is often Fitzgerald's voice -- and Fitzgerald was quite critical of America in the 1920s. Your scrapbook will also be highly observant and critical. It will consist of the following:

The Cover: Label your scrapbook with your names (and class periods) and identify it as Nick's scrapbook. You may decorate the cover any way you feel is appropriate (given the themes and style of the book).

Entry 1: Assemble an "artifacts" collage representing people, places, things, events, or symbols from the novel.

- Each item should have a caption explaining your choice, such as "Gatsby's car."
- Each item should have a quote from the text to support its selection/importance to Nick, together with the page reference.
- Make certain the items you include indicate a reading of the ENTIRE book.

Entry 2: Nick found a diary entry from Myrtle or Tom (your choice) reflecting the character's impression of the trip to New York in Chapter II. Write that entry from the character's perspective, of course.

Entry 3: Include the invitation to Gatsby's party that the chauffeur delivered to Nick. Nick indicates that it was "a surprisingly formal note" (45). Your invitation may reflect your impression of a "note."

Entry 4: Assemble a historical collage with accompanying "newspaper headlines" about the Roaring Twenties. If those headlines are from actual newspapers (e.g., many can be obtained through Proquest or [\\$](http://www.newspaperarchive.com/DesktopDefault.aspx)), be certain to note your source(s) and include them in your Works Cited.

Entry 5: Select one of the events in your historical collage and write an editorial that Nick may have found. The editorial should be an original writing, but please document your sources (both internal citations and in your Works Cited for the scrapbook). Maximum length: 500 words. Idea: conclude your editorial with an ironic dire prediction as to future (21st century) implications. (Example: If we continue to encourage everyone to purchase an automobile, our roads will soon become clogged, the number of fatalities due to traffic accidents will soar, and our cities will become smog factories.)

Entry 6: Even though Nick is not (as I am sure you have discovered) entirely free from bias, he attempts to be objective. In this entry, an objective Nick compiles a two-column list identifying acts of honesty/sincerity and dishonesty/hypocrisy that he observed during his trip to the East.

Entry 7: Write Gatsby's obituary. Look in *The Miami Herald* or *The Sun Sentinel* for examples of obituary style.

Entry 8: Write an interior monologue for Nick, reflecting his thoughts on the train ride home, specifically all the reasons he had for giving up on the East and moving back West and all that he had learned from his experiences that summer. Your interior monologue might take the form of a diary entry, a letter, or Kincaid's "Girl." The format is entirely up to you; keep in mind that you will be presenting this entry orally to the class.

Final Entry: The Works Cited for your scrapbook.

## **Course Outline**

**First Nine Weeks:** "The American Dream and American Values: A Multitude of Perspectives"

Focus:

- The canons of rhetoric, rhetorical modes and strategies
- Rhetorical analysis -- examining SOAPS, TONE & DIDLS in the context of a writer's argument and purpose
- Understanding and applying rubrics to evaluate and improve writing (includes peer review, revision, and editing)
- Grammar review and effective text integration
- Vocabulary (Units 1-4); vocabulary from readings; vocabulary needed for rhetorical analysis
- Genres in non-fiction: letters, autobiography (including memoirs), essays, and speeches
- Genres in fiction: novel and play

**Reading:**

Major Works

- *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (summer reading)
- "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" (non fiction/summer Reading)
- "On Civil Disobedience" (non fiction/summer reading)
- *The Great Gatsby* (novel)

Selections (may include, but not be limited to):

- Martin Luther King "I Have a Dream" (summer reading)
- Barbra Ehrenreich, "Welcome to Cancerland"
- Sherman Alexie, "Indian Education"
- Brent Staples, "Black Men and Public Space"
- Jamaica Kincaid, "Girl"
- Zora Neale Hurston, "How It Feels to Be Colored Me"
- Richard Rodriguez, "Aria: A Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood"
- Abraham Lincoln, "The Gettysburg Address"
- E.B. White, "Once More to the Lake"
- George Orwell "Shooting an Elephant"
- Judy Brady, "I Want a Wife"

Contemporary op-ed. pieces (e.g., *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *The Economist*, *The Nation*, *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker*, *Time*)

**Writing:**

Write approximately one essay per week. Some of these will take the form of AP Passage Responses (much writing and revision to be done in-class, but at-home writing will also be required). First quarter essays include:

- An in-class essay synthesizing summer reading, op-ed. articles, and visuals
- Letter to editor in response to op-ed article
- Metaphor essay (in style of E. B. White's "Democracy") followed by rhetorical mode paragraphs
- Autobiographical essays (in style of Kincaid and Hurston)

Dialectical journals (summer reading assignment)

Summary paper (summer reading assignment)

Rhetorical Device Glossary

Précis on assigned reading

REHUGO Analyses

**Activities:**

The Great Gatsby Scrapbook Project and Presentation (includes visuals, journals, letters)

Student design of AP type multiple choice questions

Vocabulary and grammar tests

Tests on assigned reading (e.g., summer reading, *The Great Gatsby*)

Practice multiple choice PSAT and AP type exams

**Second Nine Weeks: "Private Rights and Public Welfare"**

**Focus:**

- Rhetorical analysis (Emphasis: classical argument, argument models, the relationship of SOAPS, TONE and DIDLS to appeals to logos, ethos, and pathos) (Continue: Critical Reading Strategies)
- Analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating various perspectives (in text, the media, and other visuals)
- Applying rubrics to evaluate and improve writing (includes peer review, revision, and editing)
- Vocabulary (Units 5-9); vocabulary from readings; vocabulary needed for rhetorical analysis
- Genres in non-fiction: letter, essays, sermon, and speeches
- Genres in fiction: short story, and novel

**Reading:**

**Major Works**

- *The Crucible* (play)
- *Death of Salesman* (play)
- *Catcher in the Rye*

**Selections (may include, but not be limited to):**

- Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"
- Max Shulman, "Love is a Fallacy"
- Shirley Jackson, "The Lottery"
- Excerpts from Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Self-Reliance"
- Henry David Thoreau, "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience"
- Martin Luther King, "I Have a Dream"
- William F. Buckley, Jr. "Why Don't We Complain?"
- Andy Rooney, "In and Of Ourselves We Trust"
- Bruce Catton, "Grant and Lee: A Study in Contrasts"
- Dave Barry, "Batting Clean-Up and Striking Out"
- Patrick Henry, "Speech before the Virginia Convention"

Contemporary op-ed. pieces (e.g., *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *The Economist*, *The Nation*, *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker*, *Time*)

**Writing:**

Write approximately one essay per week. Some of these will take the form of AP Passage Responses (much writing and revision to be done in-class, but at-home writing will also be required).

Second quarter essays include:

- Documented argumentative essay on an issue of cultural, historical, social, or political significance
- Rhetorical Device Glossary
- Précis on assigned reading
- REHUGO Analyses

Activities:

Moniker Poster Presentation (includes documented argumentative essay)  
Socratic Seminar on *The Crucible*, *On the Waterfront*, and *Good Night, and Good Luck*.  
Vocabulary and rhetorical devices tests  
Tests on assigned reading (e.g. *The Crucible*)  
Practice multiple-choice SAT and AP type exams

**Third Nine Weeks:** "Shaping Your American Dream: The Responsibility of the Individual to Society in the Context of National and Global Concerns"

Focus:

Writing an effective argument (including the synthesis essay)  
Presenting an effective oral argument  
Applying rubrics to evaluate and improve writing (includes peer review, revision, and editing)  
Vocabulary (Units 10-12); vocabulary from readings; vocabulary needed for argument  
Genres in non-fiction: editorials, documents, essays and speeches  
Genres in fiction: novel (including, meta-fiction)

Reading:

Major Works:

- *The Things They Carried* (novel)
- Another book from an approved author list (see below)

John Irving	Margaret Atwood	David Guterson	James McBride
Toni Morrison	Kat Chopin	Alice Walker	
Truman Capote	Cormac McCarthy	Dee Brown	
Willa Cather	Kaye Gibbons	Wally Lamb	

Selections (may include, but not be limited to):

- Mike Rose "I Just Wanna be Average"
- Malcolm X "Learning to Read"
- Jonathan Swift, "A Modest Proposal"
- Noam Chomsky, "A Modest Proposal"
- David Sedaris "Me Talk Pretty One Day"
- Barbra Ascher, "On Compassion"
- Nancy Mairs "On Being a Cripple"
- Andrew Sullivan "What are Homosexuals for?"
- Stephanie Ericsson, "The Ways We Lie"
- Langston Hughes, "Salvation"

Contemporary op-ed. pieces (e.g., *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *The Economist*, *The Nation*, *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker*, *Time*)

### Writing:

Write approximately 1-2 essays per week. Some of these will take the form of AP Passage Responses (much writing and revision to be done in-class, but at-home writing will also be required). Third quarter essays include:

Student's "Modest Proposal"

Rhetorical Device Glossary (conclude early in quarter)

Précis Project (writings by selected author)

Analyses of speeches, editorials, and other persuasive writing

REHUGO Analyses

### Activities:

Group "mini" debates

Vocabulary and grammar tests

Test on assigned reading (e.g., *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*)

Practice multiple choice AP type exams

**Fourth Nine Weeks:** "Re-evaluating the American Dream and American Values for the 21st Century"

### Focus:

Writing an effective argument and rhetorical analysis of argument (Emphasis: synthesis essays and review for AP exam)

Applying rubrics to evaluate and improve writing (includes peer review, revision, and editing)

Vocabulary (Units 13-15); vocabulary from readings; final review of vocabulary needed for AP exam

Genres in non-fiction: letters, editorials, essays, speeches, and book of student choice (from designated list)

Genres in fiction: novel

### Reading:

#### Major Works

- Tuesdays with Morrie
- Student's choice of "The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead" by David Callahan, "The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization" by Thomas L. Friedman, "Mountains Beyond Mountains : The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World by Tracy Kidder, Can't Buy My Love: How Advertising Changes the Way We Think and Feel" by Jean Kilbourne, "Freakonomics : A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything" by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, "Globalization and Its Discontents" by Joseph E. Stiglitz, "Democracy Matters: Winning the Fight Against Imperialism" by Cornel West.

Selections (may include, but not be limited to):

- President Lyndon Johnson, "Decision Not to Seek Re-election"
- Jonathan Kozol, "The Human Cost of an Illiterate Society"
- Letter from President Lyndon Johnson to Ho Chi Minh and Ho Chi Minh's response
- President Richard M. Nixon, "Checker's Speech"
- Excerpts from *The Jungle* and *Fast Food Nation*
- Contemporary op-ed. pieces (think *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *The Economist*, *The Nation*, *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker*, *Time*)

### Writing:

Write approximately 1-2 essays per week. Some of these will take the form of AP Passage Responses (much writing and revision to be done in class, but at-home writing will also be required).

Fourth quarter essays include:

- In-class essay involving *The Things They Carried*
- In-class synthesis essays
- Documented argumentative essay involving excerpts from *The Jungle* and *Fast Food Nation* (minimum of five credible sources) [or alternative]
- Editorials and other persuasive writing
- REHUGO Analyses

### Activities:

Student design and "presentation" of synthesis questions

Practice multiple choice AP type exams

Vocabulary and grammar tests

Test on assigned reading

### Required Texts

Cohen, Samuel. *50 Essays: A Portable Anthology*. New York: Bedford/St Martin's, 2004.

King, Stephen. *On Writing* New York: Pocket, 2002.

Miller, Robert K. *The Informed Argument: A Multidisciplinary Reader and Guide* New York: Henile, 2003.

Lunsford, Andrea, John Ruskiewicz, and Keith Walters. *Everything's an Argument*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004.

Strunk, William, Jr., and E.B. White. *Elements of Style* 4<sup>th</sup> edition New York: Longman, 1999.