

AP English Language Course Syllabus 2019-2020 School Year

This Year's Theme: Isolation and Exploration

Course Schedule (subject to change): 6 Units

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| 1. September-October | Expository Essay
Writing Critiques |
| 2. October-November | Creative Nonfiction
Narrative Essay
College Application and Scholarship Essays |
| 3. December | Argumentative Essay |
| 4. January | Synthesis Essay |
| 5. February-March | Rhetorical Analysis Essay |
| 6. April-May | Review
Test Strategies
Style |

Required Resource Purchase:

1. *Back to the Lake: A Reader and a Guide* by Thomas Cooley, 3rd edition. Amazon carries it (used is fine, but we will be annotating in this book, so consider whether the marks of others will be confusing).
2. *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer. Again, used is fine, but we will be annotating.
3. *Student Resource Notebook* by the Institute for Excellence in Writing, IEW <http://www.iew.com/shop/products/student-resource-notebook> You can purchase the printed spiral notebook or the PDF, but this resource will need to be in print form so it can be used in class.
4. Lined 8 ½ by 11" journal or spiral notebook
5. \$20 for the Blaze University notebook of reference material as well as handouts and practice exams. You will be issued this notebook and other materials.
6. Pencils and blue or black writing pens (*no pens of other colors please*)
7. Yellow and orange highlighters
8. College-ruled notebook paper
9. 3-Ring Binder with tab dividers
- 10.1 stack of regular-size Post-it Notes in yellow or orange

Notes about Resources:

Throughout the school year you will need to access homework checklists and emails online and print out assignments on a regular basis. Therefore, it is important that you have reliable internet access and a reliable printer.

Also, all resources will need to be brought to every class with the exception of *Into the Wild*, which will only need to be brought to class for a limited time. *You will need to be ready at all times* to pull out any particular book, highlighter, Post-It Notes, etc. Also, because resources will be used during class (and electronics usually won't), the resources will need to be in printed forms.

A final note about electronic devices: We may occasionally use laptops, cell phones, and such in class, but you will receive advance notice to bring those items.

Course Description:

Through the engagement of a variety of texts, this course equips students to become careful readers, critical thinkers, and sophisticated writers while emphasizing analytical reading, informed reasoning, effective writing, and sound argumentation. These skills will prepare students for college level reading, writing, and thinking, as well as give them extensive practice and knowledge of the sort of elements that will be tested on the AP English Language and Composition exam.

Learning Objectives:

In this course you will learn to distinguish and employ audience, purpose, subject, tone, and exigence. You will become skilled with composing various sophisticated essays worthy of a college classroom, employing effective writing strategies that work for all kinds of practical and academic writing. What's more, you will gain the necessary tools to analyze nonfiction texts, synthesize seamlessly, and write a thoughtful, substantial argumentative and inventive paper.

Over the course of the six units, you will develop your skills in using organizational patterns, structure, transitions, rhetorical devices, credible sources, claims, sound evidence, diction, syntax, style, and more.

Students will have the opportunity to take the AP English Language Exam in May at another facility for an additional fee. There will be more information to come about the test.

(Taken from the College Board AP website) This course requires students to

- ✓ write in several forms (e.g., narrative, expository, analytical, and argumentative essays) about a variety of subjects (e.g., public policies, popular culture, personal experiences).
- ✓ write essays that proceed through several stages or drafts with the revision incorporating, as appropriate, feedback from teachers and peers.
- ✓ write in informal contexts (e.g., imitation exercises, journal keeping, collaborative writing, and in-class responses) designed to help them become increasingly aware of themselves as writers and/or aware of the techniques employed by the writers they read.
- ✓ produce one or more projects such as the researched argument
- ✓ demonstrate research skills and, in particular, the ability to evaluate, use, and cite primary and secondary sources.

- ✓ produce one or more expository writing assignments. Topics should be based on readings representing a wide variety of prose styles and genres and might include such topics as public policies, popular culture, and personal experiences.
- ✓ produce one or more analytical writing assignments. Topics should be based on readings representing a wide variety of prose styles and genres and might include such topics as public policies, popular culture, and personal experiences.
- ✓ produce one or more argumentative writing assignments. Topics should be based on readings representing a wide variety of prose styles and genres and might include such topics as public policies, popular culture, and personal experiences.
- ✓ This course requires nonfiction readings (e.g., essays, journalism, political writing, science writing, nature writing, autobiographies/biographies, diaries, history, criticism) that are selected to give students opportunities to explain an author's use of rhetorical strategies or techniques.
- ✓ The course requires students to analyze how visual images relate to written texts and/or how visual images serve as alternative forms of texts.

Paper Guidelines:

1. We use MLA style for formatting and documentation. Typed papers are to be in a standard Times New Roman size 12 font; handwritten papers will not be accepted (except for in-class assignments).
2. In-class papers must be written in black or blue ink. No red or colored ink beyond blue or black.
3. Use standard 8 ½" by 11" white paper.
4. All essays must be double-spaced.
5. Number pages using the header page # function (½ inch from the top and flush with the right margin). Put your last name before the page number.
6. Always include a title. Do not bold, italicize, underline, or place your essay title in quotation marks; exception: use italics or quotation marks when referring to other works in your title. Write the title in Title Case, not in all capital letters.
8. You can sparingly (only when absolutely necessary) use exclamation marks for emphasis. Try to use no more than one exclamation mark per essay.
9. Use the serial, or Oxford, comma (comma placed after next to last list item and before the "and"); for example: item 1, item 2, and item 3.
10. Papers that belong together from one assignment must be stapled. Please do not staple multiple assignments together.
11. On your first page in the upper left corner put your full name: first last AP English, Date in month day, year format (e.g., May 21, 2019).

Strategies for Success (Student Responsibilities):

This course has six important rules. If you follow these rules, your odds of learning the material and earning a good grade in this class will improve greatly (these rules will also help you succeed in other classes).

1. Show Up (And Be Punctual)

Students should attend every scheduled class in its entirety. If you must miss more than three classes per semester, a doctor's note will be needed in order to prevent absences from affecting your grade. Please text me prior to class if there will be an absence.

Every student has three "free" unexcused absences. A fourth unexcused absence will result in a drastic cut in the student's final class grade. This rule will help you prepare for college, where the attendance policy will likely be even stricter.

Missing class will make the lessons and homework difficult because each class will be full of vital information. As homeschoolers, we only get the opportunity to meet once a week, so we have to fit a lot into one class period. For this reason, it is imperative that you do everything possible to attend class.

Class starts promptly on time. For this reason, please make every effort to be punctual, even 5 minutes early if possible, which will help you get settled, find homework, ask questions, visit with peers, etc. On the other hand, if you arrive even 3 minutes late for example, you may miss crucial information that could make an assignment difficult. Tests also tend to start right at the beginning of class.

Students who are on time or early, will get an extra point that day. Extra points will be rewarded in some fashion at periodic intervals.

If you miss class it is your responsibility to get the lesson notes from another student and to find out from the teacher which assignments and tests need to be made up and when.

2. Do the Work

You should choose to do your very best work in preparing for each class session and completing all assignments. Please pay close attention to the details required for each assignment. Read instructions carefully. This class will require a high-level of attention to detail. Again, this skill will transfer to greater success in other areas of life.

3. Participate Actively

Choose to stay focused and involved in every class, offering your best comments, questions, and answers. Active discussion is expected of all students and can affect grades. (See the participation section under “Grading System.”)

4. Electronic Devices

At the beginning of the year, we will have a keep-your-phone policy on a trial basis. However, if students struggle to not touch their phones during class, we will convert to a turn-in-your-phone-upon-arrival policy. If absolutely necessary, phones may be used during the brief mid-class break, however I strongly discourage it and expect that it will not happen on a regular basis. Cell phones should not be touched during class time.

5. Be Honest

Always act with integrity. Compromising your high standards is never worth it.

6. Be Respectful

Always treat everyone with respect and courtesy. This includes showing self-respect by acting in a way that deserves respect from others, including not ridiculing other students and not talking back to the teacher. Our body language, word choice, and tone should all demonstrate respect.

Grading System:

75% of the grade

Writing Scores

25% of the grade

Tests

A = 100%-90%

B= 89%-80%

C=79%-70%

D=69% or less

Writing Scores:

Not every piece of writing will receive a letter grade. Some writing assignments will simply get a completion grade. But most major essays, among some other pieces of writing, will receive a grade.

According to our “Always Essay” policy, all essays and any other graded pieces of writing will receive one of only two possible grades: an “A” for accepted or an “N” for not finished yet. (This policy is partly credited to The Institute for the Excellence in Writing, IEW.) Our policy is called the “Always Essay” because the student *always* has the opportunity to rewrite and turn the paper in again to get the grade elevated to an “A” before the end of each semester. Please take advantage of this policy—there is never a reason to settle for anything less than an “A”.

An “A” grade is worth 100%. An “N” grade is worth 50%.

One final note about grading. “A” papers are not perfect papers. They are papers that reflect the student’s effort and ability to continue to work at improvement and exhibit growth. The “A” paper will also reflect current expectations at the corresponding point in the school year. For example, if we as a class have not covered how to cite in MLA format yet, the student would not be expected to execute that skill well, but if we have learned various ways of using transitions, the student would be expected to demonstrate that skill in order to achieve an “A”.

You have until the end of each semester to turn in any missing assignments. However, the class will get increasingly more difficult if late assignments pile up, especially because many writing concepts tend to build on one another. Also, at grading time, missing assignments will drastically lower your grade.

Participation:

Students who actively engage in multiple ways including many comments and questions in class will receive one extra credit percentage applied to their overall grade per semester.

Tests:

Periodic tests and quizzes will be given at least once a month, maybe more, and usually on vocabulary and writing concepts taught in class.

Extra Credit:

In addition to the opportunity to earn extra credit through participation, there will be three different poems available for memorization each semester, each of which will count for one extra credit assignment. Extra credit will be given in the form of two percentage points added to the overall grade. In order to receive credit, students must arrange a time outside of class to recite the poem perfectly from memory.

First Semester Selections: “Rebecca, Who Slammed Doors for Fun and Perished Miserably” by Hilaire Belloc, “Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore” by William Brighty Rands, and “The Height of the Ridiculous” by Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Second Semester Selections: “God Save the Flag” by Oliver Wendell Holmes, “What I Live For” by an unknown author, and “Project” by Mary Fabyan Windeatt.

All selections can be found online or in *Linguistic Development Through Poetry Memorization* by IEW.