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Advanced Placement
English Language & Composition Curriculum

Course Description: AP English Language/Composition offers students a year of intense training in reading and writing that not only prepares them for the AP Language/Composition examination, but also for successful university study, lifelong learning, and writing as a skill. The class focuses on rhetorical analysis of fiction and nonfiction, including primary sources in non-literary disciplines and a sampling of American Literature from the Puritan period to the present. Students learn to identify an author's purpose and strategies by examining the ways people use language. This course is about critical thinking – not the test! Think of the test as a *BONUS*. Students compose both personal essays and literary analyses of three to five pages in length and participate in response and revision. We practice for the AP test in May, scored 45% for a one-hour multiple choice reading exam and 55% for a two-hour essay exam.

Academic Expectations: Students entering AP English language/Composition are expected to be intelligent, articulate, and mature. The requirements of the class are rigorous, comparable to a college level English class. Students earning less than a grade of "C" after the first six weeks of class should transfer to another college prep English class. Those students reaching academic expectations will earn five grade points for an "A", four for a "B", and three for a "C". Students who pass the AP exam in May usually are granted college credit and the privilege of bypassing an English requirement. (Check with the college or university.) AP students are also expected to display the **maturity** and **ethical standards** demanded of college students. Simply being in the class does not imply entitlement to a high grade. It also means that any cheating or plagiarism will lower your grade, and be marked on your transcripts. Specifically, students must:

Spend an hour a night, minimum, on outside work (Homework vs Study time).

Attend class regularly. If a student is involved in activities that cause absence from class, that student will find it difficult to maintain an appropriate grade. More than five absences per year is excessive. Per District Policy, family vacations are **NOT** excused and, therefore, you will **not** be allowed to make up work from the absence.

Be willing to accept instruction and write according to specific guidelines. This class teaches students to write in a disciplined, focused, expository style that the students will use on college essay exams and in professional writing. While students will write no poetry or fiction in this class, they will be expected to display their creativity in analysis and thoughtful answers to writing prompts.

Assignments: We will learn how to be critical readers and effective writers by identifying, examining and manipulating the tools used by authors. Homework and class work consists of: close readings, discussion, timed readings, timed writings, partner response, self-evaluations, journaling, free writing, quizzes and exams. Approximately half of your grade will come from papers, interviews and research done outside of class.

Reading List: *The Devil's Highway*, *Elements of Style*, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Fast Food Nation*.

Grades: Grades are determined by a percentage of the total points possible. A=90-100%; B=80-89%; C=70-79%; D=60-69%; F=less than 60%. Because this class is already weighted, I do not round grades.

Grading Categories and Weights:

Timed Writes – 35%
Homework/Class work - 25%
Test/Quiz/Projects – 35%
Participation/Preparation – 5%

Late Work: Full credit is possible only for work turned in on time. Late work will be accepted with severe penalty. Should a student be absent on the day a paper is due, he or she should make arrangements to have the paper delivered by alternative means. Emailing an assignment to the teacher is an excellent solution for an absence. Computer glitches are challenges to overcome, not excuses to make because excuses will not be accepted.

Makeup Work: Students are allowed to complete assignments and tests, which can be reasonably provided during an illness or **valid** absence. Students are responsible for making arrangements with the instructor and for completing the work within the agreed-upon time.

Extra Credit: Students performing at the expected level and turning in all the assignments should have no need for extra credit; therefore, none is offered. Remember: this is a college level course.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is defined as using others' ideas or words without their permission. This includes other students' intellectual property. Copying more than five words from a text or the Internet, even if you change the order of the words, is considered plagiarism. This is a demanding, college-level class. If you find that you need to cheat in order to keep up, you'll find that you've already failed, both the course, and yourself.

Movie Clips: Throughout the year, I will periodically show movie clips that include examples of argumentation and literary devices. Those movies include: Dead Poet's Society, Ferris Beuller's Day Off, Remember the Titans, Crazy Stupid Love, The Scarlet Letter, The Great Gatsby, and Fast Food Nation.

Students and Parents: Outlined here is an expansion and detailed explanation, with examples, of the CAPISTRANO UNIFIED ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY that is in the *Tesoro Student Handbook*. The purpose is to provide specifics and further details regarding the current policy. Not all consequences are listed here but are in the handbook. I urge

students and parents to ask about the policy if they have questions and to contact me if further clarification is needed.

Depending on the incident, I may speak to the student first or notify the parent first. This protocol is tailored to the circumstances, which may include the number of students involved, timing, assignment, and type of infraction.

Student Academic Integrity Policy

Cheating, plagiarism, or helping another person to cheat violates Tesoro High School's *Academic Integrity Policy*.

- A first offense **WILL** be referred to the assistant principal for disciplinary action.
- Such actions may also result in a **ZERO** for the assignment, parent notification, and other possible classroom consequences.
- Students may **NOT** be able to make-up or redo the assignment.
- **ALL** parties involved are subject to the same consequences.
- When there is a time gap between the production of an original document that is later used to help a student cheat, a grade can be changed retroactively.

Violations:

- Today's technology allows easy access to previously published material or to another student's work, so it may be tempting to cut and paste - especially if you wait until the last minute. You may be approached to provide your work **or your password** to another student. NEVER share your Google Password with anyone! NEVER share information about a test that you took, that one of your peers is due to take in the future. If you do, you are engaging in behavior that may help another student cheat, which is also a violation of the academic integrity policy.
- **Cheating on a Test, Quiz, Project, Homework, Classwork or Major Assignment:** "This is defined as intentional giving or using assistance relating to an exam, test, quiz, project, or major assignment without the expressed permission of the teacher, including working in pairs or groups, or misuse of any form of technology" (from the CUSD High School Policies Handbook).
- Talking and cell phone use during or immediately following tests will be considered cheating.

In order to deter plagiarism, students will be required to submit their work to **Turnitin.com** for review. **PLAGIARISM**, which is copying work or ideas from another source and submitting it as original work **or** aiding another person to plagiarize.

ex. If I say no legacy is as rich as honesty without attributing that to the Torah or Proverbs, I am guilty of plagiarism. Be a person of integrity!

"Teachers are often required to indicate violations of academic integrity on college applications and recommendation forms. Teachers may also **REFUSE** to write letters of

recommendation for students who violate this policy” (from the CUSD High School Policies Handbook).

- Please ask questions about plagiarism and this policy at any time.