

A. P. ENGLISH 3: LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

SYLLABUS

OVERVIEW

Students who enroll in the full-year course in Advanced Placement English 3: Language and Composition will study the relationship between reading and writing with emphasis on the rhetorical modes of narration, exposition, and argumentation. Four essential questions will frame the curriculum and provide the impetus for studying selected works of nonfiction and the occasional work of fiction or poetry. As they read this material, students will explore the connections between the messages and the modes, acquire ideas and information that will inspire their written responses to assignments, and rely on many of the pieces as models of particular rhetorical techniques and patterns of development. Because many of the readings are interdisciplinary and because the menu of tasks, assignments, and projects provides opportunities for responding in multiple genres, students will reinforce composition skills that will serve them well in assignments required of undergraduates and encourage them to stretch in creative directions beyond the parameters of conventional academic writing.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

1st Quarter

Essential Questions:

How do American history and my personal history influence the person I am today?

How may I draw upon these influences to create a successful future?

Reading Selections: *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck, *The Worst Hard Time* by Timothy Egan, *The Autobiography* by Benjamin Franklin, *Narrative of the Life of an American Slave* by Frederick Douglass, *A Wreath for Emmett Till* by Marilyn Nelson, “The Things They Carried” by Tim O’Brien, “Hidden Name and Complex Fate” by Ralph Ellison, “The Mortgaged Heart” by Carson McCullers, “Small Rooms in Time” by Ted Kooser, “Song of Myself” by Walt Whitman, selected poems by Stanley Kunitz, “My Yiddish” by Leonard Michaels in *The Best American Essays, 2004*, “Mother Tongue” by Amy Tan, “Straw Into Gold: The Metamorphosis of the Everyday” by Sandra Cisneros

Visuals: <http://history1900s.about.com/library/photos/> and <http://chnm.gmu.edu/fsa/> (photos of The Great Depression)

Video: “American Passages: A Literary Survey,” Section 16, “The Search for Identity”

Rationale:

With the pairing of an essential question and one or more rhetorical modes each quarter, students will begin the year by discussing and analyzing their summer reading works, *The Grapes of Wrath* and *The Worst Hard Time*. We will differentiate between the narrative modes for fiction and nonfiction while identifying the purposes for writing, the intended audiences, the writers’ tones, and their use of figurative language and other literary devices, including irony and understatement. As the quarter progresses, we will focus on the narrative mode and read excerpts from autobiographies and memoirs, as well as personal essays composed by respected American authors, statesmen, and philosophers. These readings will lay the groundwork for a series of assignments, from journal writing to the drafting of diverse personal statements, in which students explore such facets of personal writing as process analysis, cause-and-effect, and definition, and will culminate in their multi-draft project of writing the personal literacy narrative. Technical skills to be emphasized include pronoun reference, active/passive verb structures and theory, and the nuances of diction. During this quarter we will also establish the writers’ workshop environment with its features of peer editing and one-on-one conferencing.

Sample Assignments:

- Double-journal entries for language awareness
- reader-response journal entries for “Small Rooms in Time” and individual goals for achieving moral perfection
- personal essay on an epiphanal moment
- informal personal essay on various names and identities
- sonnet expressing an emotion other than love or “song of oneself”

Quarterly Project:

Students will produce literacy narratives of at least 1,000 words with multiple drafts preceding final submission. Students will reflect on their growth as readers and writers, delineating stages of development and their personal responses to various influences on their literacy journeys. Skills emphases will include

summarization, narration of anecdotes, and structuring and presentation of dialogue.

2nd Quarter

Essential Questions:

What is my relation to society—

a. as an individual?

Reading Selections: *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, “Civil Disobedience” by Henry David Thoreau, “March on Washington Speech” by Martin Luther King, Jr., “The Fire Next Time” by James Baldwin, “How It Feels To Be Colored Me” by Zora Neale Hurston, “Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions Women’s Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, July 1848” and “Address by Elizabeth Cady Stanton on Women’s Rights, September 1848” by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony
Video: “A Force More Powerful,” Segment 6—“We Were Warriors”

b. as a member of an intellectual/artistic community?

Reading Selections: *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, *Scoundrel Time* by Lillian Hellman, “Against Cool” by Rick Moody in *The Best American Essays*, 2004, “Why Read the Classics?” in *The Uses of Literature* by Italo Calvino, “Variations on a Generation” by Ann Charters, in *The Portable Beat Reader*, excerpt from *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac in *The Portable Beat Reader*, “Constantly Risking Absurdity” by Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech by William Faulkner
Videos: *The Crucible* and *Inherit the Wind*

c. as a member of a democracy in a global society?

Reading Selections: from *The Iroquois Constitution* by Dekanawedah, from *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life* by Walter Isaacson, selections from *Longitudes and Attitudes* by Thomas Friedman, *The American Crisis*, Part 1 by Thomas Paine, “The United Nations in the 21st Century” by Kofi Annan, “Thoughts in the Presence of Fear” by Wendell Berry, “The Information Wars” by Mary Graham, “A Contribution to Statistics” and “The End and the Beginning” (poems) by Wislawa Szymborska

Rationale:

During the second quarter students will widen their perspectives to examine the interconnections of the individual and society. As they trace this conflict through *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Crucible* and evaluate the examples and arguments presented by Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson, students will understand the historical and linguistic bases of this pervasive motif in the American psyche. Selections by twentieth and twenty-first-century writers will provide the broader tapestry of understanding the relation of the individual to the global society. Studying this literature will afford students the opportunity to hone their analytical skills in such areas as comparison/contrast, definition, description and classification. The culminating project will be a comparison/contrast piece in which students compare two examples of our essential question from disparate time periods. Skills emphases will include organizing information and building transitions; locating relevant information in electronic, on-line, and print sources; note-taking for the purposes of quoting and paraphrasing; and correct documentation and citing of secondary sources.

Sample Assignments:

- personal definition of a classic (after Calvino) and nomination of three works (informal essay)
- comparison and contrast of guilty characters in *The Crucible* (formal essay with citations)
- comparison and contrast of visual and written genres (text and three video versions of *Inherit the Wind*)
- description of an awe-inspiring scene (after *On the Road*) with emphasis on variety of sentence lengths (informal journal entry or essay)
- personal declaration of individualism or paean to the sense of community (speech/monologue)
- cataloguing exercise (after Syzmborska)—editorial or poem
- annotated bibliography of relevant secondary sources for the quarterly project

Quarterly Project:

Having read a variety of works that deal with the persecution of one or more individuals by an unyielding society, students will investigate comparative examples in history and literature. They may choose to compare a character from one work of fiction

to a character in another work of fiction; to compare a historical figure from one century with a historical figure from a different century; or to compare a historical figure to a character from fiction. They will work in multiple drafts, peer editing and conferencing with me throughout their writing processes, and submit final manuscripts ranging in length from 1200 to 1500 words and containing references to at least six secondary sources.

3rd Quarter

Essential Question:

How am I connected to the natural world?

Reading Selections: *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau, “Nature” by Ralph Waldo Emerson, excerpts from *Moby-Dick* by Herman Melville, excerpts from *In the Heart of the Sea* by Nathaniel Philbrick, “The Bear” by William Faulkner, “The Half-Skinned Steer” by Annie Proulx, *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer, from *Arctic Dreams* by Barry Lopez, *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson, selections from *New and Selected Poems* by Mary Oliver, excerpt from *The Pine Barrens* by John McPhee, “Evolution as Fact and Theory” by Stephen J. Gould
Video: “An Inconvenient Truth”

Rationale:

In the third quarter students will explore the complex relationships that existed and continue to exist between human beings and the natural world. As they survey these relationships in such classics as *Walden*, in contemporary American poetry, and in the visual text of “An Inconvenient Truth,” students will also study the process and techniques inherent in successful argumentation. Instruction in clarifying and establishing positions, the informational and emotional components of arguments, strategies for developing arguments, the task of anticipating the oppositional argument, and formulating the action step will assist students in mastering the set of complex skills that constitute persuasive rhetoric. After multiple opportunities to practice these skills in writing and speaking activities, students will prepare argumentative research papers in which they persuade their readers to take action regarding their selected positions on current controversial issues involving the environment. Skills emphases will include connotative and denotative diction, incorporation of sarcasm and irony, the well-timed

rhetorical question, and the power of emotional appeals and the pitfall of logical fallacies.

Sample Assignments:

- natural vignettes framed as journal entries that may take the forms of prose or poetry
- viewer response journal and personal reactions to “An Inconvenient Truth”
- playing “devil’s advocate”—writing a complaint against nature (after Bryson’s *A Walk in the Woods*)
- arguments for and against the views about nature expressed in contemporary poems, structured as modified persuasive essays
- formal debate on a contemporary, local environmental issue, i.e. the dredging of the Delaware River to allow for additional development along the waterfront
- editorial based on the debate issue or on another contemporary issue involving the relationship of human beings and nature

Quarterly Project:

Based on their reading and participation in persuasive speech activities, students will select a contemporary environmental issue with the goal of exploring the “pro’s” and “con’s” of the controversy surrounding it. They will engage in research, drawing extensively on databases containing articles from current periodicals, as well as from selected websites that they evaluate for credibility and quality of information. In analyzing the arguments students will quote and paraphrase material from these secondary sources, in addition to referencing several of the readings from the nine-week unit.

Having conducted thoughtful research, students will choose a position and develop thoughtful supportive arguments. They will incorporate information from their research and class reading, documenting this information and compiling their sources in a “Works Cited” list. Besides anticipating and responding to the opposing argument, the writers will suggest an action plan to be followed by their engaged readers.

This multi-draft argumentative research essay will range in length from 1,500 to 2,000 words and will incorporate at least eight secondary sources.

4th Quarter

Essential Question:

4. How will economic considerations and the technological environment shape my life?

Reading Selections: “Code Blue: The Process” by Jasmine Innerarity and “Code Blue: The Story” by Abraham Verghese, “Designer Genes” by Bill Mc Kibben, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, “The Sea of Information” by Andrea Barrett in *The Best American Essays*, 2005; “The Devil and Tom Walker” by Washington Irving, excerpts from *Fast Food Nation* by Eric Schlosser, from *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* by Barbara Ehrenreich, *Gone To New York: Adventures in the City* by Ian Frazier and Jessica Kincaid, excerpt from *Enrique’s Journey* by Sonia Nazario excerpts from *Sister Carrie* and *An American Tragedy* by Theodore Dreiser, excerpt from *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values* by Robert M. Pirsig
Video: “Fast Food Nation”

Rationale:

In the fourth quarter students will investigate the role of wealth and the growth of technology on the American intellect as they read classic and contemporary texts that verify our national obsession with money and technological progress, as well as present prominent attitudes towards the benefits and detriments produced by this fascination. Our composition component will require students to complete a series of tasks that encourage synthesis of ideas and information from multiple sources and reinforce the processes of extracting and referring to this material through proper documentation. Skill emphases will include the organization and linkage of disparate segments of the multi-genre research project and the review, reteaching, and reinforcement of specific topics related to grammar, diction, and usage. For their final projects students will produce multi-genre research studies on self-selected topics related to the essential question.

Sample Assignments:

- exploring the Faustian motif in American literature and art –synthesis essay
- reader-response journal entries to selections about the role of wealth in American culture
- web quest, “slam dunk” or web dilemma about an issue involving wealth in America or the role of technology in our lives

- personal essay—page 210 of writer’s 300-page autobiography
- panel presentations on contemporary issues related to wealth/poverty and the technological revolution
- final presentation of multi-genre research

Quarterly Project:

During our initial survey of topics and themes in this quarter’s reading, students will select a strand to pursue for independent study. Given a menu of options in each of three categories (“formal” written response, informal or creative response, and oral sharing), students will apply their knowledge of research resources and familiarity with the various genres they’ve studied throughout the year to create a three-part final project. A new challenge for this assignment will be to develop an effective organizing principle for the separate components. Students will meet with me throughout the planning stages, establish goals for each of the interim deadlines, and share their knowledge and understanding with the class through an oral, interactive presentation.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

Our school utilizes PowerGrade and PowerSchool as online databases for recording and presentation of students’ progress. Scores are easily reflected in a point system in which the individual score for a given assignment is posted with the quarterly average updated and available at each posting. Four quarters, weighted at 20% each of the total yearly grade and midterm and final examinations, weighted at 10% each of the total yearly grade, comprise the students’ final grades.

Students in the A. P. 3: Language and Composition class are assessed through multiple types of measurements each quarter. Since writing is a process, stages and drafts of longer assignments receive credit as well as the final manuscripts. Given the need for students to interpret and comprehend the reading selections, in addition to respond to them in writing, periodic quizzes and short-answer assessments will contribute to the evaluative profile. Also, because the most recent course description for A. P. English: Language and Composition acknowledges the importance of the oral as well as the written component, students will earn credit for presentations and other significant oral contributions.

Components may be weighted as follows:

Preparation, homework, class work, and class participation: 20%

Formal study of grammar and vocabulary, with assessments:	20%
Oral presentations and collaborative projects:	10%
Composition assignments:	50%

In a typical quarter students may accrue a percentage of 1,000 or more points.

Composition assignments may be weighted as follows:

Quarterly project	200 points
Significant essay requiring multiple drafts	100 points
Editorial or creative response	50 points
Series of journal entries	25 points

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will demonstrate the ability to

1. identify the audience as an important component in the communication process and write for particular audiences.
2. recognize the connections among the speaker, tone, and mood in a text.
3. write in an individual voice.
4. differentiate among genres of fiction and nonfiction texts and recognize the purposes of these genres in conveying prose messages.
5. acknowledge the need to write for various purposes and occasions, as well as to tailor messages to these purposes and occasions.
6. reinforce their understanding of expository writing relative to the five-

paragraph essay. Specifically, they will learn that the message dictates the form instead of the form dictating the message.

7. recognize the necessary intersection of fiction and nonfiction in genres such as the memoir and “personal history.”
8. structure time changes in narrative writing and to employ the “en medias res” technique to vary the chronological sequence pattern of development.
9. engage their readers by incorporating strong sensory detail into their narratives.
10. employ the rhetorical question to enhance effectiveness of persuasion.
11. write an expository essay based upon the concept of definition.
12. compare and contrast examples to achieve synthesis in expository writing.
13. structure thesis statements that identify topics, limit the scope of discussion, and project a stance or attitude toward the material.
14. discern nuances in meanings of words and to employ connotative language in various speaking and writing situations.
15. recognize degrees of Standard Written English. They will also identify jargon and colloquialisms to analyze their purpose and placement in texts.
16. vary their diction as writers in accordance with the guidelines of particular assignments.
17. detect irony and satire in written texts and infuse these elements into their own writing.
18. evaluate examples and arguments as writers, readers, and peer editors, with the ultimate goal of accurate self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses in the bodies of manuscripts.
19. discern the “pro” and “con” counterparts of controversial issues and draft

position statements that clearly express one of these stances.

20. integrate these appeals into their persuasive essays: logos, ethos, and pathos.
21. anticipate and respond to the arguments of the opposing point-of-view.
22. manipulate information from databases and web-based sources, in addition to gathering material from print sources and interviews, in order to support arguments.
23. evaluate secondary-source materials to ascertain their relevance.
24. balance the frequency of quoting and successful paraphrasing in their research-based written assignments.
25. cite a variety of secondary sources in accurate MLA format.
26. evaluate the major deductions of their research-based writing to achieve synthesis.
27. recognize the importance of building a varied vocabulary and focus on the richness of the word tapestry as a revision goal.
28. detect irony and humor in texts, to discuss its purpose in expressing the message, and infuses these elements into their own writing.
29. familiarize themselves with the concept of readability for the purpose of varying sentence structure, as well as the lengths of sentences and paragraphs within their written texts.
30. recognize and correct grammatical issues specific to the writing of advanced eleventh-grade students, specifically, the progression of verb tenses, clarification of pronoun reference, and revision of dangling participles and misplaced modifiers.
31. function effectively as peer editors by asking questions that elicit clarification and encourage student writers to return to the writing process.

32. engage in dialogue about their writing with their instructors, particularly by developing the capacity to ask questions about their early drafts.
33. record ideas in journals that vary in purpose and format from reader-response to double-entry to creative response.
34. accept the writing process as a means of learning and formulating questions, as well as a means of answering questions.
35. engage in written metacognition, as well as the verbal feedback process, to self-assess their progress in writing.
36. imitate writers of various time periods by writing in particular genres and styles.

TEXTS FOR STUDENTS:

Bloom, Lynn Z. *The Essay Connection: Readings for Writers*, 8th Edition. USA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007.

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. NY: Signet Classics, 2005.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995.

Franklin, Benjamin. *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin: Penn Reading Project Edition*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005.

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, Sixth Edition. NY: The Modern Language Association of America, 2006.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter*. New York: Bantam Books, 1986.

Miller, Arthur. *The Crucible*. NY: Penguin Group (USA), Inc., 1976.

Shostak, Jerome. *Vocabulary Workshop*, Level G. USA: Sadlier-Oxford, 2005.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden* and "Civil Disobedience." NY: Signet Classics, 1999.

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS:

Bryson, Bill. *A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail*. USA: Broadway, 1999.

Calvino, Italo, *The Uses of Literature*. New York: Harvest, 1987.

Charters, Ann, Editor. *The Portable Beat Reader*. New York: Penguin, 1992.

Egan, Timothy. *The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl*.

Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*.

Friedman, Thomas. *Longitudes and Attitudes*. New York: Anchor Books, 2003.

Isaacson, Walter. *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2003.

Kooser, Ted. *Delights and Shadows*. Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, 2004.

Krakauer, Jon. *Into the Wild*. New York: Anchor Books, 1997.

Kunitz, Stanley. *Passing Through: The Collected Poems*. NY: W. W. Norton and Company, 1997.

McPhee, John. *The Pine Barrens*. In *The John McPhee Reader*. William L. owarth, Editor. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1982.

Melville, Herman. *Moby-Dick*. New York: Bantam-Dell, 2003.

Menand, Louis, Editor. *The Best American Essays, 2004*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.

- Murray, Donald M. *A Writer Teaches Writing*, Revised Second Edition. USA: Thomson Heinle, 2004.
- Nazario, Sonia. *Enrique's Journey*. New York: Random House, 2006.
- Nelson, Marilyn. *A Wreath for Emmett Till*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005.
- Orlean, Susan, Editor. *The Best American Essays, 2005*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2005.
- Philbrick, Nathaniel. *In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex*. New York: Viking, 2000.
- Pirsig, Robert M. *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values*.
- Proulx, Annie. *Close Range: Wyoming Stories*. New York: Scribner, 2000.
- O'Brien, Tim. *The Things They Carried*. New York: Penguin Books, 1990.
- Oliver, Mary. *New and Selected Poems*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1992.
- Siegal, Allan M. and William G. Connolly. *The New York Times Manual of Style and Usage*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 1999.
- Slater, Lauren, Editor. *The Best American Essays, 2006*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006.
- Steinbeck, John. *The Grapes of Wrath*. New York: Penguin, 2006.