

Welcome to AP Language and Composition!

AP Language and Composition is an introductory college level course focusing on analysis and argumentation. You will be asked to think broadly, deeply, and critically and to write cogently. The goal of this course is to produce critically literate and informed citizens. This course will require extensive in and out- of- class reading and writing and will strengthen your ability to analyze a variety of texts. The class will focus on analyzing the composition and rhetorical situation of American nonfiction and prose. The works studied will range from novels to historical documents to essays to speeches to various visual texts.

You will critically engage with each text to answer these fundamental questions:

- What is being said?
- To whom is it being said?
- How is it being said?
- Why is it being said?
- Is it effectively said?

You will also use these questions as a framework in the creation of your own compositions. You will explore different modes of writing (narrative, expository, analytical and argumentative) as you work to refine your writing voice. We will take an in- depth look at the writing process and will work in collaboration to enhance and revise your writing throughout the year. You will be expected to engage in high -quality research and to cite all work not your own using MLA citations.

Through this course, you will:

- develop critical reading skills
- understand Aristotle's Rhetorical triangle and fallacies of argument
- analyze other author's rhetorical choices and the effect of those choices on the author's works
- learn how to support and organize your own papers and arguments
- write expository, analytical, and argumentative papers
- learn how to effectively draft and revise papers
- improve your understanding of texts through discussion and writing
- increase your vocabulary and knowledge of sentence structure and composition

IN- CLASS WRITINGS

You will complete multiple practice prompts from previous AP exams. These prompts will be completed in a timed setting to best reflect the rigors of the exam. The following class period, we will discuss strategies for writing responses and reflect on what went well and what did not. This practice will support you in becoming a reflective writer and aid you in setting personal goals for improving your writing. We will discuss released responses to see the strengths and weaknesses of those papers. I will use these writings as formative assessments to gauge where you are in terms of mastery of topics and writing processes.

AP PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE

You will also complete several practice multiple- choice exams. These will be discussed and used as a formative assessment to see where you are at in understanding close reading and analysis as well as the terminology likely to be seen on the exam.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Obviously, writing is an integral part of this course as it is a college level composition class. You will be asked to write several major compositions throughout the year. We will read and discuss a multitude of mentor texts before you are assigned each paper. You will learn how to outline and draft your writing and will engage in peer and self- editing processes.

You will also conference with me individually so I can assess your progress as you go and assist you in setting and reaching personal writing goals. We will address cogency and organization, sentence structure, rhetorical strategies and devices, as well as voice and audience in these conferences.

CLASS DISCUSSIONS

The interaction and exchange of ideas will be a hallmark of this course and will be achieved through class discussions. Discussion is intended to enhance everyone's awareness of the texts and allow for you to build on each other's understanding in order to deepen your own. You will be expected to come to class each day prepared to discuss all readings. Informal class discussion will take place daily, but you will participate in many formal Socratic Seminars.

For each Socratic Seminar, you will be responsible for coming to class with annotated texts and questions to pose to the class. You will be instructed to bring questions regarding both the content of the works as well as their composition (syntax, vocabulary, organization, voice, tone, etc). You will be in charge of keeping the discussion going. On several occasions, you will be asked to self- assess your performance in the Socratic Seminar. I will be grading your performance as well.

VOCABULARY

Throughout the school year, we will work on improving vocabulary through direct vocabulary instruction. Most Mondays you will be given ten words to define for homework. We will work with these words through the remainder of the week so that you become familiar with how to use them correctly in a sentence. A quiz will be given on Fridays to assess your understanding of these words. These quizzes will ask you to fill in a sentence with the correct word. However, I will also give you two words from the previous unit and you will have to write your own sentences using those words.

SUMMER READING

Over the summer, you were assigned to read *A Raisin in the Sun* and *Nickel and Dimed*. We will use these texts as an entry point into critically examining the issues and tensions that exist in American society and use these as a basis in understanding the principles of rhetoric.

THE AP EXAM

The AP exam for Language and Composition will be held on Wednesday May 16th at 8 am. The cost for the test is \$95.

The AP English Language and Composition Exam is approximately 3 hours and 15 minutes long and has two parts — multiple- choice questions and free response questions. The multiple- choice section is worth 45% and the free response section is worth 55% of the final exam grade.

The multiple- choice question consists of 52-55 questions and is one hour long. The questions will be based on several passages that you will be asked to read. These questions test your knowledge of rhetorical terminology and your ability to identify it in others' work.

The free response section consists of three prompts and lasts 2 hours and 15 minutes, which includes a 15-minute reading period. The three prompts ask you to compose three different types of essays. The first will ask you to create an argument synthesizing information from at

least three sources of information out of six provided sources. This prompt will measure your ability to synthesize- that is cogently use outside information to prove your point. The goal is not to summarize the sources, but use them to support your own argument. You will need to know how to integrate information from other sources and to properly cite them in-text. The second prompt asks you to rhetorically analyze a passage, looking critically at how the writer conveys their point and how it effective it was. Lastly, you will be asked to consider a stance taken by another author and to compose an essay that defends, challenges, or qualifies that author's position.

All responses will be graded on the clarity of the response and the ability to clearly and effectively argue and support your points.

Your respective scores for the multiple choice and essay portions of the exam will then be computed into a score of 1-5. A score of 5 indicates a high ability to succeed with college level work.

CLASS RULES

1. Come to class each day with all required materials.
2. Be in assigned seat at the bell and stay in seat during class.
3. Be in proper dress code at all times.
4. No food or eating in class. If you have a drink, it must have a lid.
5. All cell phones, tablets, laptops, iPods, etc should be off and out of sight unless we are using it as part of class. Unapproved use of device in class means you will lose the device for the day and be given a detention.
6. Keep your hands to yourself. Do not touch other students or their belongings.
7. Leave anything that could distract you or your classmates in your backpack or locker.

EXPECTATIONS

1. Students will show respect to other students and teacher at all times.
2. Students will show a consistently high level of responsibility and age appropriate behavior.
3. Students will come each day ready to learn and grow as speakers, readers, writers and listeners.

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. A one subject notebook or loose leaf paper
2. Three ring binder or two pocket folder
3. Blue or black pens/ pencils and highlighters
4. Post-It Notes

HOMEWORK

All homework and assignments should completed in full prior to entering class. If you are struggling with an assignment, please do not hesitate to ask for help. Coming to class and then saying you did not understand the assignment will not excuse you from completing the assignment nor will you receive credit. This is especially true of a higher- level course that is preparing you for college level work. You can email me anytime with questions at rnourse@ncsmail.org. I also have "office hours" before school. Students who repeatedly fail to turn in homework will be issued homework violations.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

The bulk of your weekly homework will be assigned reading and various writing activities. In regard to all reading assignments, I expect all students to have read the assignment completely and with full understanding. This may require you to read a particular piece more than once. You are responsible for making sure you understand what you have read. You should annotate

each text you read. We will discuss what annotation is and how to do it during our opening unit. Your reading will be gauged by frequent reading check quizzes so make sure you come to class prepared every day.

****NOTE ON SPARKNOTES/ SHMOOP/ GRADESAVER/ WIKIPEDIA****

These websites should never replace your actual reading of a text. In fact, these sites can be a hindrance because they provide the analysis for you, which means you do not learn how to read and analyze texts on your own. They can narrow your understanding of a text by providing only that contributors' analysis when other interpretations could be plausible. *Additionally, taking ideas from these sites and using them in any papers you are assigned to write is a form of plagiarism.* See the consequences of plagiarism on page 15 of the Student Handbook.

LATE WORK

For every day a major assignment is late you will lose 10% off that grade, however, deductions will not exceed 50%. Thus, you are expected to complete ALL assignments, but you will not get more than a 50% for work that is a week late. Failure to complete any homework assignment is a zero.

If you are absent (and it is excused) you will be given the number of days you were gone to complete the work without penalty. I will let you know about major due dates at least one week in advance and you will be expected to have your assignment complete at the beginning of class on that day. If you are absent the day a major assignment is due, there are a variety of ways to turn in the assignment and ensure you do not lose any points.

- Email me the assignment
- Send the assignment with a class mate
- Have a parent or guardian drop off assignment in my school mailbox.

CLASS WEBSITE

I have a class webpage at www.rachelnourse.weebly.com where you will be able to find our class calendar and additional resources. The calendar has our tentative schedule so that you can see what you will be learning in the weeks ahead. Please note that things may change if we lose class time or our lessons progress at a different pace than anticipated. I will update the calendar at the start of each week to accurately reflect where we are in the course curriculum.

EMAIL

Email is the best way to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have outside of class time. My email is rnourse@ncsmail.org. I check my email frequently and respond as quickly as I can.

POWERSCHOOL

I will update Power School with your grades as often as possible. I will try to put minor assignment grades and quizzes in the grade book within a day or two. Major papers and projects will take longer to grade. I will try to get grades for these assignments back to you within two weeks.

GRADING SYSTEM

Assignments for this class will be separated into the following categories and weighted accordingly in the gradebook.

- Tests/ Projects: 30%
- Papers: 30%
- Quizzes: 20%
- Class Assignments/ HW: 20%

GRADING PHILOSOPHY

A: Exceptional Work: A student has gone above and beyond the assignment in terms of effort and insight.

B: Above Average Work: Solid effort. Insight is obvious in the assignment.

C: Average Work: A student has completed the required components.

D: Below Average Work: A student has not met the requirements for the assignment, but some effort was evident.

F: Unsatisfactory Work: A student has not met the requirements of the assignment and/or little effort is evident.

MAJOR PAPERS

All major papers are to be typed and follow MLA guidelines. That means that your papers will be double -spaced, written in 12- point font and have approximately 1-inch margins. You will need to head your paper as follows:

Last Name Page Number	
Your Name	
Teacher's Name	
Class Name	
Date	Title of Paper
Start each paragraph of your paper indented one time. Do NOT put extra spaces between paragraphs. Please double space all papers.	

MLA requires you to include a Works Cited page that references any outside sources you used in your paper. Failure to attribute sources is plagiarism.

DISCIPLINE

Students are expected to act in a manner befitting their age and reflecting positively on our school. I will adhere to the policies outlined in the Disciplinary Handbook. As juniors in an advanced class, you are more than capable of acting like adults and I will expect no less from you. You are expected to behave appropriately during all class activities and to show responsibility and respect to your classmates, yourself and your teacher. Any actions that are counter to this will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with the disciplinary code.

PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated in any form. This course is designed to teach you to express your own ideas and that is what I want to hear. I do not want to hear what some academic scholar or other student thinks of a text we are reading. I will be extremely disappointed to find anyone plagiarizing material or cheating in any other form. Please refer to page 15 of the Student Handbook for a full description of plagiarism.

The consequence for plagiarism or cheating is disciplinary action from the administration as well as the student needing to rewrite the paper for no more than half credit.

Before you turn in any major assignment, you will handwrite St. Paul's Ethics Statement at the bottom of the last page. By writing and signing this statement, you acknowledge that you know what plagiarism is and that you have not committed plagiarism in your paper.

COURSE TIMELINE

The course will be structured around thematic units with essential questions as the guiding force.

Unit 1: Summer Reading: What are Argument and Rhetoric?

Unit 2: What are the Core Values in America?

Unit 3: What is America's Role in the World?

Unit 3: *The Things They Carried*

Unit 4: What is Justice in America?

Unit 5: *The Great Gatsby*

Unit 6: Argumentative Research Paper

Unit 7: How do Individuals Affect the Environment?

Unit 8: What Purpose Does Satire have in Society?