

**AP English Language and Composition
Course Syllabus 2014-2015**

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Course Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to teach students “to write about a variety of subjects and to demonstrate an awareness of audience and purpose” (The College Board, *AP[®] English Course Description*, May 2006, p.6). This composition course will “emphasize the expository, analytical, and argumentative writing that forms the basis of academic and professional communication” (The College Board, *AP[®] English Course Description*, May 2006, p.6). Since college writing is based on reading more than just personal experience or observation, students will be expected to carefully read primary and secondary sources, synthesizing the information in their compositions and citing their sources using the Modern Language Association (MLA) conventions. Students are expected to read critically, think analytically, and communicate clearly both in writing and speech for academic and everyday life. This course is organized according to the requirements and guidelines of the current *AP English Course Description*. This course also teaches the skills needed to complete the Advanced Placement test, the Prince William County curriculum requirements, the Virginia Standard of Learning (SOL's) in Writing and Literature, and the Prince William County Research Paper Requirement for graduation.

AP Language and Composition Essential Skills:

Upon completion of this course, all students will be able to:

- Read from a variety of historical periods and disciplines
- Identify audience, purpose, and strategies in texts
- Analyze the types of arguments that writers use
- Write formally and informally for a variety of audiences
- Write expository, analytical, and argumentative essays
- Understand their own writing process and the importance of revision
- Recognize techniques in visual as well as verbal arguments
- Synthesize ideas and information from various sources
- Know how to interpret information presented in notes and citations
- Use the conventions of standard written English

As students proceed through the course, they are expected to develop proficiency in various skills:

- A wide-ranging vocabulary used appropriately and effectively.
- Varied sentence structure which reflects subordination, coordination and parallel ideas
- Sound organizational patterns which lead to unity and coherence
- Depth and breadth of elaboration developed to support position
- Ability to develop and use controlling tone and maintaining voice
- Identify and respond to thesis, tone, purpose, audience, occasion, evidence of data and appeals

Materials:

- One 2” or larger, three-ringed English binder with dividers and an ample supply of loose leaf paper
- Blue or black ink pens for writing
- Pencils for class notes and annotating texts
- Post-its and highlighter for annotation
- Flash Drive and/or access to School Fusion
- Access to a computer with internet and printer with ink and paper and an e-mail address
- Required text for that day

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Please note: More materials may be required once the Research Paper process begins.

EXPECTATIONS AND WORKLOAD

This course equates in rigor and difficulty to a college-level course in composition. Therefore, students will be required to take more responsibility for their own critical reading and writing skills than they may have done in past English courses. The workload will be challenging but appropriate to a course at this level.

Critical Reading

To read a text critically is to be active in thinking, questioning, and analyzing while one reads. Students are required to annotate (such as tab interesting or puzzling passages as they read), and may be called upon at any time to share one of their selected passages. Students may also want to consider purchasing their own used versions of the full-length texts we will read, in order to be able to annotate in the margins.

We will have both reading quizzes and written reflections on the readings. Both may be unannounced; in other words, students must keep up with the reading and be ready for pop quizzes and reading reflections. Both quizzes and reflections may focus on factual information or ask students to analyze or synthesize aspects of the assigned readings. Students will be quizzed and tested on major readings to assess basic understanding and use of rhetorical and literary devices. *Spark Notes* or similar on-line study guides will not prepare students adequately for the quizzes and reflections.

The Writing Process and Writing Workshop

Pre-writing, drafting, peer review, revision, self- and peer-editing are all crucial parts of the writing process, and students will be expected to participate actively in this process both in and outside of class. Although some assignments will focus on personal narrative or other creative writing, students will also be expected to work diligently on developing their academic voice.

Before submitting most final drafts of major papers, students will occasionally work in small groups evaluating each other's work in peer review workshops. Students need to learn the process of editing and revision as well as giving commentary and feedback to others. One-on-one conferences with the teacher may take place for a paper assignment before the final paper is due. All rough drafts are needed for the teacher conferences. How seriously students evaluate, how specific their comments, and how helpful they are will be evaluated by the members of the group as well as the teacher.

I encourage students to seek one-on-one assistance with assignments after school by appointment. The Writing Center is also a valuable resource for students needing one-on-one assistance with a particular assignment or with writing skills more generally.

Formal and Informal Essays

Students will write at least two formal essays per quarter relating to the reading, writing and rhetorical skills covered during that unit of study. These essays will focus on discussion and analysis of rhetorical techniques and literary devices. All papers must use MLA citations. The Prince William County research paper requirement will also be completed during this class during the first semester. Additionally, students will respond to released AP writing prompts to be evaluated according to the AP essay rubric (scoring 1-9).

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Research Paper

Students will complete the mandatory Prince William County Schools required research paper which is a process-based, researched, argumentative essay. Students will complete all steps of the process including topic selection, preliminary thesis and outline, proper MLA citation format, source cards, note cards, final thesis and outline, rough draft, parenthetical citations, works cited page, revised rough draft and submission of completed paper.

Vocabulary

Students will periodically be assigned a list of SAT and AP vocabulary words. Homework and in-class activities will be assigned to help students master, retain and effectively use these new words. A quiz will be given on the assigned vocabulary list.

Daily Activities

Students will complete guided activities to reinforce analysis of text structure focusing on grammar, tone, syntax, structure, figurative language, symbolism, audience, and purpose. These items may take the form of bell ringers, mini-lessons or small group activities and will include the following (but are not limited to): Voice Lessons, Sentence Structure and Syntax Exercises, Allusion Identification, Logical Fallacies, A.P. Multiple Choice Practice, S.A.T. Practice Questions, Rhetorical Device Practice/Word Studies.

Classroom Rules

- Respect is of the utmost importance, especially in a language arts classroom where we are perfecting our abilities to express ourselves and understand each other. This entails respecting the teacher, your classmates, and yourself. **Any behavior that interferes with my ability to teach or a student's ability to learn is unacceptable.**
- Be in your seat and prepared to start class before the last tardy bell rings. I will dismiss the class once everyone is sitting quietly.
- **Students will maintain personal and academic integrity.** Any act of academic dishonesty (i.e. plagiarism, cheating, copying, or falsification of any kind) is grounds for failure of an assignment. Any time you put your name on a piece of work, in any class, you are telling the teacher that the work represents your efforts and your understanding.

Make-up Work Policy

If you are legally absent from class for any reason (including field trips), it is YOUR responsibility to arrange for make-up work.

- a. **All make-up work must be completed and submitted within the number of classes you were absent plus one extra class.** (See student planner makeup work policy.) This is Prince William County policy.
- b. You must schedule a time to come after or before school to make up missed work. Be sure to schedule this time **prior to the day** you plan on making up work.
- c. **Failure to make up work in the school established time frame will result in a zero (0) for that assignment.**

Homework Policy

- All work must be typed unless otherwise specified.
- All homework is due at the **start** of class.
- Make-up tests and quizzes must be taken before or after school only.

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- Long-range projects (research papers, oral presentations, etc.) are due on the assigned date. If you are absent on the due date, you must present the completed work on the day you return to class. If you are not prepared on the day your return, you will receive a zero for the assignment.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that any typed assignment (i.e., research papers and essays) are handed in on time. **Printer problems will not excuse late work nor will CDs or flash drives be accepted** in place of the typed assignment. If students need to print assignments at school, the library is available for their use; however, they must print their assignment before the start of class.

School Fusion:

The class School Fusion page is updated as needed; this should be the first place you look when you are absent. The best resource for missed notes will be a classmate. It's a good idea to find and exchange phone numbers or e-mail addresses with someone from class for this purpose.

Extra Credit:

Extra credit is used for the purpose of improving one's grade – not be take the place of missed assignments. I will not accept extra credit from a student who failed to turn in assignments or has failed to make up work. Extra credit **may** be offered throughout the school year.

Grading Policy

Grades will be calculated by computing an arithmetic mean from the total points earned. Major tests, projects/presentations, and writing assignments will be weighted more heavily than classwork, homework, and participation.

The grading scale for timed writings is as follows:

9	98
8	95
7	91
6	86
5	80
4	72
3	68
2	65
1	60

Code of Behavior:

Each student received a copy of the *Code of Behavior* at the start of the school year and is to share the information with parents/guardians. Students are responsible for appropriate conduct as summarized in the *Code of Behavior*. Any inappropriate conduct will result in a call to the parent/guardian. Disciplinary action will be taken as outlined in the *Code of Behavior*.

Contact Information:

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns:

- *Email:* oconnobm@pwcs.edu
- *Telephone:* Battlefield's main number 571.261.4400. Telephone calls cannot always be returned immediately, but will be done as soon as possible.

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Course Texts:

The following textbooks will be provided:

- Kennedy, X. J., et al., eds. *The Bedford Reader*. 9th ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006.
- Prentice Hall Literature: Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes, the American Experience*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, Inc., 2002.

Supplemental Texts: (Students should NOT purchase these texts)

- ✓ Arp, Thomas R., and Greg Johnson. *Perrine's Literature: Structure, Sounds and Sense (9th edition)*. New York: Harcourt.
- ✓ Cohen, Samuel. *50 Essays: A Portable Anthology*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- ✓ Dean, Nancy. *Voice Lessons*. New York: Maupin House.
- ✓ Kennedy, X.J., Dorothy M. Kennedy, and Jane E. Aaron. *The Bedford Reader*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- ✓ Roskelly, Hephzibah, and David Jolliffe. *Everyday Use: Rhetoric at Work in Reading and Writing*. New York: Longman.
- ✓ Shostak, Jerome. *Sadlier-Oxford, Vocabulary Workshop, Level F*. New York: William H. Sadlier.
- ✓ Strunk, William Jr., and E. B. White. *Elements of Style*. New York: Longman.
- ✓ Yagelski, Robert P., and Robert Keith Miller. *The Informed Argument*. New York: Heinlien.
- ✓ Zinsser, William K. *On Writing Well: An Informal Guide to Writing Nonfiction*. New York: Harper and Row.

The following texts are required.*

If you are unable to purchase a copy/copies of any of these texts, let me know as the school has a number of copies available for students to borrow. Some are also available online.

***Required reading list subject to change.** Some texts will be studied in small group literary circles, and thus students may not study all texts on the list.

- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* by Frederick Douglass
- *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- *The Color of Water* by James McBride
- *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller
- *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien (excerpts)
- *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain (if time permits)
- *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger (if time permits)

For each reading assignment students must identify the following: Thesis or Claim; Tone or Attitude; Purpose; Audience and Occasion; Evidence or Data; Appeals: Logos, Ethos, Pathos; Assumptions or Warrants; Style (how the author communicates his message: rhetorical mode, rhetorical devices always including diction and syntax)

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Course Overview

Introduction to AP

- Introduction to class guidelines, policies, and practices
- Annotation and SOAPSTone
- Introduction to sentence variety
- Introduction to Rhetorical Triangle and Devices
- Appeals (pathos, logos, ethos)
- Toulmin Arguments
 - How to Structure and Argument
 - Claims
 - Data
 - Warrants
 - Qualifiers
 - Rebuttals

Sample Introductory Readings:

- "Who or What is an American" by Lewis Lapham
- "Speech in the Virginia Convention" by Patrick Henry
- Introductory Assignment for *Walden & Into the Wild*

Quarter 1:

- Fiction:
 - *The Narrative of Frederick Douglass*
- Nonfiction:
 - Various pieces from *The Bedford Reader*
 - Articles specific to research paper topic
 - "Self-Reliance," by Ralph Waldo Emerson
- Research Paper
 - The Method
 - Thesis Statement
 - Evidence and Appeals
 - Reasoning
 - The Process
 - Topic search
 - Thesis statements
 - Library research-note taking, summarizing, paraphrasing & quotations, MLA review
 - Outline
 - Drafts/peer editing-rubrics review
 - Final paper

Quarter 2:

- Fiction:
 - *The Things They Carried*
- Nonfiction:

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- "Homeless," by Anna Quindlen
- "The Way We Lie," by Stephanie Ericcson
- "Neat People vs. Sloppy People," by Suzanne Britt
- "How to Poison the Earth," by Linnea Saukko
- "Live Free and Starve," by Chitra Divakaruni
- "Drugs," by Gore Vidal
- "Why I Stopped Being a Vegetarian," by Laura Fraser
- "A Vegetarian Philosophy," by Peter Singer

Quarter 3:

- Fiction:
 - *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
 - *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller
- Nonfiction:
 - *The Color of Water* by James McBride

Quarter 4:

- Fiction:
 - *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain
 - "Harrison Bergeron" by Kurt Vonnegut
- Nonfiction:
 - "Shooting an Elephant," by George Orwell
 - "A Modest Proposal," by Swift
 - "Cookies or Heroin," by Marie Winn
 - "Revoking U.S. Independence," by John Cleese
 - Articles from *The Onion*

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Plagiarism Policy and Procedure

Battlefield High School students should model the highest standards of integrity and honesty. Plagiarism, as a form of academic dishonesty and ultimately cheating, is unacceptable. Students at Battlefield will be held accountable for any intentional or unintentional act of plagiarism.

Definition of Plagiarism

Many people think of plagiarism as copying another's work, or borrowing someone else's original ideas. Terms like "copying" and "borrowing" can disguise the seriousness of the offense:

According to *Merriam-Webster OnLine Dictionary*, to "plagiarize" means:

- 1) to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- 2) to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- 3) to commit literary theft
- 4) to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source

In other words, plagiarism is an act of *fraud*. It involves both **stealing** someone else's work and **lying** about it afterwards.

But can words and ideas really be stolen?

According to U.S. law, the answer is yes. In the United States and many other countries, the expression of original ideas is considered *intellectual property*, and is protected by *copyright laws*, just like original inventions. Almost all forms of expression fall under copyright protection as long as they are recorded in some media (such as a book or a computer file) Attention! **Changing the words of an original source is not sufficient to prevent plagiarism.** If you have retained the essential idea of an original source, and have not cited it, then no matter how drastically you may have altered the information., it is still plagiarism.

Copyright Law- "Work created in the United States after March 1, 1989, is automatically protected by copyright; therefore, anything plagiarized from those works violates copyright laws. The owner of the copyright or the author can sue for violation of that copyright [...] Presenting someone else's work as one's own, also constitutes fraud" (Qtd from *Texas Library Journal* Winter 2004, 134).

Consequences

Instructors may assume that students understand plagiarism and academic dishonesty as certified by their signature on the "Battlefield Honor Code" attached to each written submission. The seriousness of intentional plagiarism warrants both an academic penalty and also disciplinary action. Outside of the instructional setting, plagiarism is considered a civil violation liable to be punished by a court of law.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

Unintentional - Unintentional instances will be dealt with in the classroom.

- Inability to document sources correctly
- Incomplete works cited
- Incorrect or inaccurate documentation
- Partial citations

Intentional -

- Copying another's work
- Buying papers from any source
- "Copy and Pasting"
- Providing fake references
- Failure to cite text in which only one two terms are changed
- Submitting previous work as new

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Possible Consequences

Unintentional Offense- when a student has plagiarized a part of a paper, the teacher will go over with that student what has constituted the plagiarism, and then the student may have the following options:

- A. Correct the identified issues.
- B. A zero will be given if the student refuses to meet with the teacher and/or correct the identified errors.

Intentional Offense - This will be determined by the instructor and the student's Administrative Principal

- A. A zero will be given if the student has intentionally plagiarized.
- B. The student will not be given an opportunity to re-write the paper.
- C. Students may have to sign an Honor Code statement for every subsequent assignment for the remainder of the school year.
- D. A conference will be called for the instructor, guidance counselor, AP, and parents to discuss the infraction.
- E. Students may lose eligibility for scholastic awards.
- F. Students may be given alternative assignments to reduce opportunities to plagiarize.
- G. Students may be fined and/or sued according to copyright infringement law.

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Signatures (Students and Parents)

I have read the course overview and student responsibilities. I understand and agree to the student responsibilities, and I will strive to master all of the learning objectives. I would like to add the following comment.

Student Name (Print)

Student Signature

Date:

Student E-Mail (required for course updates and communications) Print CLEARLY!

I have read the course overview and student responsibilities. I understand that meeting the objectives of this class, fulfilling the student responsibilities, and following the class policies will enable my son/daughter to be successful in this class.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date:

Parent E-Mail:

Student Honor Pledge

I have read the information on "Plagiarism Procedure and Policy" in the *Code of Behavior* and I will do all work on my own and will abide by the standards set forth by the district. I understand that any violation with regards to cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty is unacceptable and a punishable offense.

Student Name

Signature

Date

Parent as Witness

By signing the *Academic Honor Code*, the parent acknowledges the definition and consequences of plagiarism that can be administered to the student.

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Signature Signature

Date