

E.J. King High School

Course Name and Number

LAC614: AP English Lang & & Comp (2012-2013)

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Course Description

About the Program:

AP English Language and Composition is designed for students willing to accept an intellectual challenge and is intended to engage higher order analytic and synthetic thinking and writing skills. Wide readings of recognized importance and styles from different time periods will provide students the opportunity to explore and appreciate trends in linguistic styles. In addition to reading primarily nonfiction materials, students may read poetry and fiction to determine the impact of a writer's "linguistic and rhetorical choices." Students will write in informal and formal contexts to become competent in their personal writing and proficient in expository, analytical, and argumentative assignments. Evaluation and use of primary and secondary sources in addition to learning multiple methods to cite sources will be learned in this course. Timed responses mirroring the demands of the AP exam will be a frequent form of evaluation. Though the system has an open enrollment policy, students should understand this is a college class taught in a high school classroom and is designed to culminate in the AP Language and Composition Exam. Those who are enrolled in AP Language and Composition may expect a more intense workload; the breadth, pace, and depth of material covered exceeds the standard English class. This course is the equivalent of an introductory college level composition class with college level

requirements. It is intended to be both rigorous and challenging. Students are expected to take the AP exam at the end of the course.

Major Concepts/Content: Students will experience, interpret, and evaluate primarily nonfiction readings of recognized importance and styles from different time periods covering multiple disciplines. In addition, the critical examination of the contextual relationship among graphics and visual images to text and as stand-alone messages will be mastered. Readings will be challenging, complex, and rich; collegial discussions amongst the students will deepen their understanding of the use, structure, and impact of language embodied in a work.

Course Objectives: Students will:

- Actively participate in group discussions and critique prose styles selected from a range of disciplines and rhetorical contexts written during various time periods.
- Apply the writing process to interpret experience, evaluate, and emulate examples of high quality writing leading to the development of “stylistic maturity.”
- Write expository, analytical, and argumentative assignments and manipulate compositions to account for varying audiences, contexts, and goals.
- Use language effectively and cogently in both the personal and academic realms.
- Critically examine the contextual relationship among graphics and visual images to text and as stand-alone messages.
- Assess and incorporate primary and secondary sources into research projects and cite all sources appropriately.
- Learn the critical skill of synthesizing information from their readings to produce a fresh perspective.

Course Philosophy: The class is an interactive learning community in which both student and instructor become deeply engaged in the reading, discussion, production, and analysis of prose from a variety of sources and time periods. Because this is an introductory college level course, students will read broadly from primarily nonfiction material. They will also exchange ideas and understandings with their peers, learn the critical skill of synthesizing information from their readings to produce a fresh perspective, and incorporate this skill in their writing. Both their writing and reading should make students aware of the interactions among a writer’s purposes, audience expectations, and subjects as well as the way “generic conventions and the resources of language contribute to effectiveness in writing.” Risk taking and questioning are encouraged. (<http://dodea.edu/Curriculum/Course-Details.cfm?courseid=B1CE1067-920B-9FF6-823A1601FC138EF7>)

Text

Many books and handouts will be issued out as needed. We will also be going online for many activities to make extensive use of the DoDEA provided databases.

Teacher Name

Not for Web Publication

Contact Information

252-3059.

Fax: (DSN) 252-3622 Commercial: 0956-26-6276

Phone: Commercial: 0956-24-7600 (At tone, dial 252-3059)

Location

Kendiorski Hall room 210

AP Language is scheduled for 7th period.

Philosophy

The best teacher is the one who makes himself progressively less necessary. I intend to help students learn and love the material well enough that they don't need me. I hope to make this an engaging and successful experience for all students to claim as their own.

Materials

In addition to bringing assigned books/handouts, students will need to supply 3 holed paper (wide or college ruled), pens with easy to read ink (preferably non-erasable), and a homework folder (simply a folder that can be designated to hold homework). Students are expected to keep a portfolio of their work for evaluation purposes and as a record of the assignments they have completed. Failure to have a complete portfolio will seriously affect your grade. Keep all assignments in a *safe* place.

Grading Policy

DoDEA Grading Scale:

90-100 = A

80-89 = B

70-79 = C

60-69 = D

59 or below = F

From the beginning, I will be using the Advanced Placement Essay Scoring Rubric on many essays to familiarize you and your students with what is expected.

Note: In AP, it takes tremendous work and serious thought to get above a 5 (75%). Remember, this is a **college level** class, and I will be grading you with collegiate expectations. Many students who have always received A's and B's are shocked to work harder than they have in the past and receive a C or a D. Although AP grades are weighted once the AP exam is taken in the spring, your GPA may suffer; be prepared.

Essay Scoring Rubric (numbers in parenthesis correspond to grade percentage).

8-9 (90-95) These are well-organized and well-written essays. With apt and specific references to the passage, they will analyze the prompt in depth and with appropriate support. While not without flaws, these papers will demonstrate an understanding of the text and a consistent control over the elements of effective composition. These writers read with perception and express their ideas with clarity and skill.

6-7 (80-85) They are less incisive, developed, or aptly supported than papers in the highest ranges. They deal accurately with the prompt, but they are less effective or thorough than the 8-9 essays. These essays demonstrate the writer's ability to express ideas clearly but with less maturity and control than the better papers. Generally, essays scored a 7 present a more developed analysis and a more consistent command of the elements of effective exposition than essays scored a 6.

5 (75) Customarily, these essays are superficial. The writing is adequate to convey the writer's thoughts, but these essays are typically ordinary, not as well conceived, organized or developed as upper-level papers. Often, they reveal simplistic thinking and/or immature writing.

3-4 (65-70) These lower-half essays may reflect an incomplete understanding of the passage and fail to respond adequately to part or parts of the question. The discussion may be inaccurate or unclear, and misguided or undeveloped; these essays may paraphrase rather than analyze. The treatment is likely to be meager and unconvincing. Generally, the writing demonstrates weak control of such elements as diction, organization, syntax, or grammar. These essays typically contain recurrent stylistic flaws and lack persuasive evidence from the text. Any essay that does not address the prompt can receive no higher than a 4.

1-2 (55-60) These essays compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 3-4 range. They seriously misread the passage or fail to respond to the question. Frequently, they are unacceptably brief. Often poorly written on several counts, these essays may contain many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Although some attempt may have been made to answer the question, the writer's views typically are presented with little clarity, organization, coherence, or supporting evidence.

Assessment

Grades will be weighted according to the difficulty and importance of the assignment and based on a straight point system. For example, a post in a discussion board may be worth 25 points, a major essay or test may be worth 300 or more points, and a reaction paper to a major essay or test may be worth 100 points. My goal is to help students become both active and reflective learners.

Students may redo up to two of their writing assignments per quarter to average with their original score on that assignment, **but** it requires two hours of after school HW club OR attendance in seminar for two days to redo work, get extra help and make up. Furthermore, they should be made up within three class periods (generally one week) after the assignment was due or 7 days before the end of the quarter, whichever comes first.

The first semester grade (final grade of record for the semester) will be computed with each quarter making up 50%. **Because the third quarter is so difficult and the fourth**

quarter is basically recovery, the second semester grade will be computed with the third quarter making up 30% of the grade and the fourth quarter making up 20% of the semester grade.

I do reserve the right to modify my system to better educate and assess the students.

Homework

Homework in my classes is intended to reinforce skills learned in the classroom and/or to prepare for the following class. Homework will generally be in two forms: reading assignments (often followed by quizzes) and writing that will be collected and reviewed/graded. Homework is graded and is a large portion of the student's grade since quizzes measure what the student has understood through homework. Success in homework leads to success in the classroom.

Late Work Policy

Establishing a strong work ethic and personal responsibility is a priority. The manner in which students complete their work now will be mimicked in college. With that in mind, **LATE WORK WILL NOT BE GRADED; IT WILL RECEIVE A "ZERO."** That being said, I will drop the lowest two grades at the end of each quarter as our grading program can calculate with the click of a button. I do encourage students to hand in work that is late – so I may assess their progress, but the grade will remain a “zero.” It is not fair to students who complete their homework on time for me to accept work one day, one week, or one month after it was expected. The purpose of grading assessments is to gauge whether or not a student comprehends and is completing the work. I cannot assess what is not handed in. I also grade all students' work in mass to judge not only their individual work, but also the class' work as a whole. That way I can assess the class too. To ask for an item to be graded late puts a significant burden on everyone involved.

Late work that is the result of an **excused absence** is due the day the student returns to school. Work that was assigned while a student is absent will be expected in my absent work bin on the date written on the absent work form (usually I expect work completed in the same amount of days a student was absent; absent 2 days and work was assigned = missed homework/work is due 2 days after student returns to school). Because of this, it is very helpful if students maintain contact with their classmates and know what happened in class during their absence.

Tutoring/Extra Help

Tutoring is available in the Information Center on every “B” day schedule. 8th period is a seminar period in which students can receive help from the entire teaching staff; it is a school-wide program. I encourage every student who requires extra help/time with assignments to take full advantage of this wonderful program. Students may also make up tests and quizzes during seminar; this is the only time students may do so, not during class time. E.J. King HS also offers a Homework Club that gives our students a supportive and quiet place to do their work. In certain cases, I will make myself available after school.

Classroom Management

Posted:

You may do whatever you like as long as it does not cause a problem for me or anyone else in the world. If you cause a problem, I will ask you to fix it. If you cannot, or will not, fix the problem, I will do something. What I do will depend on the special person or special situation.

Content Outline

Fall Semester

In order to capitalize on what students already know, to encourage curiosity about language, and to create the atmosphere that we are all writers, I like to begin with a mix of grammar skills, patterns of essay development, and vocabulary skills.

Grammar review/instruction: Among other things, we will study how to avoid the passive voice, the sound of sentences which includes the structure of the loose and periodic sentence, parallel structure, an introduction to diction, the effective use of simile and metaphor. We will especially note how founders of American government and philosophy used these techniques.

Writing review/instruction: I like to provide practice in prewriting to demonstrate and reinforce its importance. During the early weeks, I try to train the students to be peer editors. Many papers will be written both inside and outside of class.

Paragraph development: To instruct the patterns of paragraph development, I provide the student with a sample of an annotated paragraph developed by a specific method. I follow that example with one or two essays which are, of course, more sophisticated in development, but still specifically developed by that method.

Exposition: We will study short essays and explore the methods used to get their points across.

Class exercise: Establishing a pattern that connects reading and writing is a must. Therefore, after we have explored a particular method, we imitate that pattern with teacher-suggested topics. These paragraphs are read by peers and, as often as possible, by me. As we begin the readings, I require the students to answer the same questions for each piece. At first, the task seems difficult, but gradually it becomes a matter of habit. As the students gain facility, the questions become more sophisticated. Here are some beginning questions, which students answer in their journals:

- Who is the writer or speaker? Make a comment about the “voice of the essayist.”
- Who is the intended audience?
- What is the writer’s purpose?
- Select phrases or sentences that are particularly effective.
- Why is the author’s choice of form/development effective?
- Write a brief reaction to the piece. Think *connection*.

After studying attitude/tone/voice and style, the students include these factors in their discussions.

The argumentative and persuasive essay: Working with this form of essay is the obvious next step once we have concluded these lessons on methods of exposition. While I have called attention to thesis statements in what we have read, I have not given specific instruction on its formation. At this time, we will have a general discussion of the essay as argument and persuasion, the purpose of pro and con support for an assertion, the thesis (and antithesis), effective introduction and conclusion, and the use of transitions.

Timed writings: The weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas I use to begin to indoctrinate the students into the dreaded timed writings. Usually I teach denotation-connotation and review “show me, don’t tell me” technique and then use actual AP questions from past exams.

Out-of-class assignments: As homework and on the days that we are not writing in class, I prefer to work with the more traditional, more difficult essays developed through argument and persuasion. Some of these are:
 “The Declaration of Independence” Thomas Jefferson
 “Letters from a Birmingham Jail” M. L. King, Jr.
 “A Modest Proposal” Jonathan Swift

All of these provide numerous opportunities for analysis not only of message and meaning, but also of rhetorical techniques. To underscore the importance of these pieces, I use various AP questions that refer to a text.

Reading comprehension: Most students aren’t “natural-born readers.” At least twice a week beginning early in the term I use the first five minutes or so of class to give them practice with reading comprehension. I have selected short passages, even short poems that are followed by no more than seven questions. I time the students and ask them to mark text. The next day we review the answers. This very brief activity allows the students to become acquainted with different periods and forms. It also sends a subtle message about the student’s own responsibility to read more diligently.

Fiction: Obviously, this course design is heavily non-fiction because our students have not experienced much non-fiction. But they do hunger for fiction, and they need it too to become brainwashed with the sounds and techniques of good literature. However, fiction reading will largely be done on their own. I wish we had more time.

Spring Semester

Text: From the beginning of the second semester until the exam, we can practice

mastery of what we have learned about writing as we read essays centered around a theme; for example, communication and the media. I try to cover as many essays as possible.

AP questions and sample essays: During this time, I use as many samples of AP Exam questions as possible, employing the belief that “if you can think it, you can write it.” These questions help them to understand the concept of the rubric. The sample essays help the students see what is possible beyond the peer group. As the students become more aware of time constraints, I use readings that are longer and more difficult (again, samples from AP Exams). These passages contain several questions that also offer possibilities for discussion. I hope to have at least one Saturday where we can get together outside of class and take three hours and twenty minutes to go through an entire AP exam so they can realize exactly how it will feel.

After the AP Exam: After the exam, we will relax a bit and study poetry, Shakespeare through video, and maybe do a bit of theatre ourselves! If the students have a hunger for something we haven’t covered during test preparations, there is a strong chance I’ll entertain their request if it fits into the realm of English education.

**Most of the above content outline was copied from *Marianne Kjos* at Miami Sunset Senior High School. Her original syllabus was found at: http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/repository/ap01.syllab_7819.pdf, but the link is dead and the syllabus now resides lost somewhere in cyberspace. In any case, it is my hope that by modeling a nationally recognized teacher, we will be able to compete internationally.

Additional Information

I reserve the right to modify this syllabus to meet the educational needs of an individual, a class, or a course.

Standards

Our standards can be found at <http://dodea.edu/Curriculum/ELA/standards1.cfm>