

# Advanced Placement English Language and Composition

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**My website: <https://dubuque.instructure.com/courses/7211>**

**Availability: 7-7:40 a.m. and 2:20-2:45 p.m. daily**

“It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.”

–Aristotle

We are committed to providing your student with a well-rounded/diverse educational experience, involving a wide variety of topics and relevant social issues encountered in our pluralistic society. In our classrooms, all opinions are valued and critical thinking is expected. The focus of instruction is centered on both the Dubuque Community School District and Iowa State Standards. Parents and/or guardians are welcome/encouraged to read, view, and discuss material with their student.

**Course Description:** Advanced Placement Language and Composition will engage students in becoming skilled readers of rich prose written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts in a year-long class. Through application, students will become skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes, thus satisfying the composition graduation requirement. Ultimately, this course will help the student prepare to take the AP Language and Composition Exam and college reading and writing classes. Summer reading and writing will be required of students who enroll in AP Language and Composition. ENG351 is one Literature graduation credit; ENG352 is one Writing graduation credit.

**Alignment to the Iowa Core Curriculum:** Instruction, learning, and assessment are built primarily on the 11-12th grade-band expectations of the Iowa Core Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening Strands.

- Standard 1: **Reading Strand – Literature.** Students will effectively comprehend, analyze, evaluate, and create using a diverse range of appropriately complex print materials.
- Standard 2: **Reading Strand – Informational Text.** Students will effectively comprehend, analyze, evaluate, and create using a diverse range of appropriately complex print materials.
- Standard 3: **Writing.** Students will routinely write to learn and to communicate for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- Standard 4: **Speaking and Listening.** Students will participate effectively in a range of rich, structured conversations, collaborations, and presentations.
- Standard 5: **Language.** Students will apply knowledge of the English language and its conventions when reading, writing, speaking and listening.

**Course Objectives: Reading and Writing Skills:** The AP English Language and Composition course is designed to help you become a skilled reader of prose written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts and to become a skilled writer who can compose for a variety of purposes.

To achieve these goals, you will learn about the interactions among:

- a writer’s purposes,
- audience expectations,
- subjects,
- and the way literary devices and the resources of language contribute to effective writing.

Because this course is intended to parallel a first-year college composition course, you will encounter many styles of writing. Your writing assignments will also include a variety of forms-narrative, exploratory, expository, and argumentative-and a variety of subjects from personal experiences to public policies, from imaginative literature to popular culture. But, because the main object is for you to write effectively and confidently in college and beyond, emphasis is placed on the following:

- expository, analytical, and argumentative writing that forms the basis of academic and professional communications; and
- personal and reflective writing that fosters the ability to write in any context.

### **Course Objectives: Stylistic Development**

The AP Language and Composition course assumes that you already understand and use standard English grammar. We will review grammatical conventions at the start of the class; however, it is your responsibility to consult *The College Writer's Reference*. The intense concentration on language use in this course should enhance your ability to use grammatical conventions both appropriately and with sophistication as well as to develop stylistic maturity in your prose.

Stylistic development is nurtured by emphasizing the following:

- a balance of generalization and specific illustrative details;
- a wide-ranging vocabulary used appropriately and effectively;
- a variety of sentence structures, including appropriate use of subordination and coordination;
- a logical organization, enhanced by specific technique to increase coherence, such as repetition, transitions, and emphasis; and
- effective use of rhetoric, including controlling tone, establishing and maintaining voice and achieving appropriate emphasis through diction and sentence structure.

(Source: *APCD*. College Entrance Examinations Board. 2006.)

### **Genres and Themes We Explore**

We will study a variety of genres and authors including autobiographers, biographers, diarists, historians, journalists, essayists, political writers and more. A quick look through *The Language of Composition* and *The Bedford Reader* will give you an overview of the authors and their essays. Our discussions and essay assignments will focus on the stylistic effects achieved by writers' linguistic choices. Units may include the following themes with an emphasis on American Literature (but we will also explore British and World Literature as well): Narrative/Memoir, Shakespeare, Nature, Revolutionary War, Civil War, Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and Women's Literature, Roaring 20s and the Great Depression, Modern Day Issues, WWII and the Civil Rights Movement, Argumentation/Persuasion, Cultural Contexts, Satire. After the AP exam, we may focus on travel writing, poetry, short stories, or more nonfiction. We will explore research topics and techniques and write a college-level research paper using MLA documentation.

**Materials:** We may use any of the following excerpts or read the entirety of:

*Nonfiction works: The Language of Composition* by Renee Shea

*The Bedford Reader* by X. J. Kennedy

*Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold

*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou

*Into Thin Air* by Jon Krakauer

*Nickel and Dimed* by Barbara Ehrenreich

*Devil in the White City* by Eric Larsen

*Fast-Food Nation* by Eric Schlosser

Various short stories, nonfiction essays, and poetry

Opinion-Editorials (Op-Ed essays) from various news sources around the country

*Fiction: All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque

*The Martian Chronicles* by Ray Bradbury

*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte

*To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

*The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien

*The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald

*The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck

*Excerpts from the following works: Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe

*The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair

*Beloved* by Toni Morrison

*Drama: A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare

*References: The College Writer's Reference* by Toby Fulwiler

Various websites include Purdue OWL, AP College Board, and Diana Hacker

**Activities:** A variety of teaching techniques and strategies will be used to address various learning styles: lecture, small and large group discussion, writing prompts, role-playing, debates, individual student projects or reports, and educational recordings, videos, films, & music. We will also focus on AP style Impromptus and Multiple Choice questions for a variety of readings. Research techniques and research paper writing will be a strong focus as well.

**Evaluation:** The following methods will be used to determine student achievement:

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|--------------------------------------|--|
| A. Discussions/Socratic Seminars     | B. Reading check quizzes and inferential thinking quizzes  |
| C. Journal responses to the readings | D. Graded small and large group discussion                 |
| E. Multiple choice & grammar quizzes | F. At least one major essay or writing assignment per unit |
| G. Writer's Notebook                 | H. Index card responses                                    |

**Expectations:** I expect respectful, cooperative, and appropriate classroom behavior at all times. Furthermore, you are to be punctual, prepared, and productive in class. Come with pen, pencil, paper, and books. No food or drink in the classroom other than water. If you need to print off a draft of your essay, do it before-not at the beginning or during-class. The WritePlace is open at 7:00 daily and you can print your essay there. **I expect all drafts and finished essays on their due dates. Late work will be penalized. No work will be accepted more than a week late.** Cell phone usage in the classroom is not permitted unless we are doing a class project that requires phone usage. :)

**Tardies and dismissal:** You are to be in your seat when the bell rings. Tardies will be recorded. Excessive tardies can result in disciplinary procedures according to the Handbook. Finally, please stay seated until you are excused due to the crowded room conditions.

**Materials:** See list below. Failure to bring your materials to class will result in a call home and disciplinary procedures. Please note that since you are juniors and seniors I shouldn't have to call home.

**Make-up work:** This is your responsibility in case of an absence. Due dates will vary based on the length of absence. Homework is due within two days of a short absence and three days after a long absence. Consult the class calendar for homework or ask me if you are unsure of assignment details. No work will be accepted more than a week late unless you speak to me about extenuating circumstances.

**Plagiarism:** Sweet and simple—do not plagiarize! It's stealing someone else's ideas if you don't credit the source appropriately! If caught, you will be asked to redo the assignment with only 50% credit. Colleges expel students who plagiarize. No kidding! This is a big deal.

**Tests or quizzes:** Tests will be taken on test days as announced. If you are absent, you will take the test either within two days of your return if the absence was short, or within three days if the absence was long. Again, consult with me for a test make-up date. Make-up work and tests can be taken in the LRC, the WritePlace, or the SSL. Like make-up work, tests and quizzes are your responsibility, not mine. No tests will be given if more than a week late from the original test date.

**Grades:** Assignments will be weighted according to their importance. Longer tests and essays will obviously carry more weight than shorter and easier assignments. Quizzes and short assignments will also factor in with class participation. **Late assignments will receive 50% reduced credit**

**Absenteeism: Attendance is necessary in this class!**

**Grading Scale:** 90-100%=A 80-89%=B 70-79%=C 60-69%=D 59 and below=F

In AP classes, a B translates into a 4.0 on the Senior GPA scale.

**Bring to class daily:**

A 70-page notebook solely dedicated to AP Comp (No 3-in-1 type notebooks) for journal writing

1-1/2" Binder for AP packets and loose-leaf paper

Pen and pencil

Current text

An inexpensive flashdrive (\$5-10) if you have connectivity issues with your home computer

Book cover for *The Language of Composition* text

Bring your curiosity!



**Read, Write, Think, Explore  
the World, and pay attention  
to words...Words Matter!**

