ADVANCED PLACEMENT
LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

Course Description: Students in this course prepare for the liberal arts courses they will confront at university, as well as the AP Language and Composition exam given in May. The course is the equivalent of an introductory college course in which students become skilled readers of prose, as well as visual images, from a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts. All objectives, as well as the majority of texts, are taken from the AP English Course Description, which emphasizes the skills necessary for students to become flexible writers who can compose in a variety of modes and for a variety of purposes. Through intensive reading and writing, students become aware of the interaction between authorial purpose, audience, the topic, and the resources of language. In addition, students learn to “read” the underlying arguments in film, photographs, political cartoons, and advertisements. In short, students practice exposition, analysis, and persuasion on issues of intellectual, moral, and emotional stature in order to become thoughtful, articulate adults.

Texts:
The Bedford Reader, Bedford St. Martin’s
Everything’s an Argument
The English Patient
River Runs through It
The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass
The Language of Literature, McDougal Littell (district issued text)
Elements of Language, HRW (district issued text)
Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace, Williams

Supplementary texts/novels, non-fiction works, photographs, political cartoons, and films will be utilized.

Strategies:
**Journals**
Students will be required to respond to thematic prompts for each six weeks and apply the message to their own lives in a series of journals, in which they reflect on their experience, their personal perception. A polished journal entry will be handed in for a grade at the end of every six weeks. Sample assignments have been included in the course planner.

**Discussion**
Students will be required to have informal debates, in which they research, take a position, apply the rhetorical skills learned from the readings, recognize logical fallacies in their arguments as well as their opponents, and develop counterarguments. These debates will take place once every six week cycle and will be graded according to a rubric. Sample assignments have been included in the course planner.

**Take Home Essays**
Students will be required to write and revise one research argument every cycle except the sixth. The prompt will be assigned at the beginning of each cycle with due dates for the background, argument, counterargument, intro, and conclusion, and revision. All essays must adhere to MLA guidelines. Sample assignments have been included in the course planner.

**Timed essays**
Students will practice timed writing using the prompts from old AP Language exams. Each cycle includes 4-6 timed prompts, including the synthesis prompts from the College Board website and Cliff’s 3rd edition of practice exams. In addition, students practice on multiple choice passages drawn from the College Board website and Cliff’s 3rd edition of practice exams. Finally, the students take a full length exam on the second Saturday of April. Sample prompts for each cycle are included in the course planner.

**Writing Workshops and Style**
Students will be required to participate in writing workshops, which focus heavily on the art of revision. The topics range from reviewing grammatical errors, structure, organization, effective intros, conclusions, diction, and syntax. The lessons are primarily drawn from Kaplan’s SAT Writing Workbook, *Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, and Dartmouth’s Writing Center handouts. Sample workshops are included in the course planner. Workshops on style involve recognizing and applying specific schemes and
tropes, based on the devices emphasized by the readings for that cycle. Sample workshops are included in the course planner.

**Exposition and Argumentation**

Students will be required to closely read, annotate, and analyze multiple passages, non fiction works, film, a few novels, primary documents, political cartoons, advertisements, and photographs throughout the year. Strategies, such as OPTIC for visual arguments, and SOAPSTONE will be taught the first cycle and applied throughout the year.

**Vocabulary**

Students will be given approximately 200 AP vocabulary words drawn from SAT Hot Words, as well as the readings covered. Quizzes will be given once a week to ensure mastery.

**Grading**

- Take Home Essays 50%
- Debates 25%
- Timed Essays, Multiple Choice Practice, Vocabulary Quizzes 15%
- Daily work 10%

**Course Planner**

**Cycle One**

Theme: The Nature of Community: Autonomy vs. Cooperation

**Discussion**

Presentations on HUAC. Students research, analyze, and present to the class the arguments in one of the testimonies of the Hollywood Blacklist.

**Style**

*Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, Williams

Chapter One: “Understanding Style”. Exercises in class.
Chapter Two: “Correctedness”. Exercises in class.

**Exposition and Argumentation**
Chapter One: Everything is an Argument
Chapter Two: Everything is an Argument
“Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”, Jonathan Edwards
“Of Plymouth Plantation”, William Bradford
“Upon the Burning of Our House, July 10, 1666”, Anne Bradstreet

The Crucible
Selections from Scarlet Letter

AP Language Free response: Scott Russell-Sander’s argument on “dwelling in a web of [communal] relationships”
AP Language Free response: Queen Elizabeth’s Address to the Troops
Various Political Cartoons attacking the HUAC activities

Writing Workshop
Sample

Essay: The propaganda prompt from Janet Maslin’s NY Times review of The Crucible, in which she asserts, that the film “now speaks to subtler forms of dishonesty and opportunism than it did before…and becomes free to suggest anything from the impact of religious fundamentalism on politics to the hysterical excess of tabloid television [with] its central concern, the murderous power of lies”. Students research and write an argument on how an event in the last twenty years perfectly captures Maslin’s assertion. Five to seven pages with MLA format, text citations, and works cited.

The first cycle rubric emphasizes structure and organization.
1. emphasis on most relevant evidence
2. smoothly integrated quotes
3. topic sentences
4. transitions
5. clinchers
6. MLA text citations, work cited, MLA paper format
Revision: meet with teacher to discuss individual strengths and weaknesses in order to revise this essay.

Timed Writings
Analytical on Kite Runner (Summer Reading)
“Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”
Range finder: read samples from College Board, look at rubrics, work with partner to revise and perfect a midrange essay on rhetorical analysis, the argument, and the synthesis essay.

Vocabulary

Sample List

AP Vocabulary Cycle One

1. ABASE to humiliate; degrade
2. ABATE to lessen; diminish
3. ABET to aid; encourage
4. ABHOR to hate
5. ABOMINATE to abhor
6. ABROGATE to abolish
7. ABSCOND to flee secretly
8. ABSOLVE to pardon
9. ABSTRUSE hard to understand; recondite
10. ACCRUE to accumulate
11. AGGRANDIZE to enlarge
12. AGILITY quickness; nimbleness
13. AGNOSTIC one who believes God is unknowable
14. AGRARIAN pertaining to farming
15. ALACRITY liveliness

2

1. ALLAY to reduce the intensity of; to calm
2. ALLEGORY narrative using figurative language
3. ALLOCATE to set aside; to apportion
4. ALLUDE to refer to indirectly
5. ALTERCATION angry dispute
6. ALTRUISM unselfish devotion
7. AMELIORATE to improve
8. AMIABLE pleasant; kind
9. AMNESTY pardon
10. ACERBITY bitterness, severity
11. ACRIMONY acerbity
12. ADAMANT immovable; unyielding
13. ADJUDICATE to decide (a case)
14. ADJUNCT assistant
15. ADMONISH to warn

3

1. ADROIT skillful
2. ADULATION praise
3. ADVOCATE to recommend
4. AESTHETIC pertaining to beauty
5. AFFABLE friendly; courteous
6. AFFINITY attraction
7. AFFLUENCE wealth
8. AFFRONTE insult
9. ANACHRONISM something out of its proper time
10. ANARCHY absence of government
11. ANATHEMA ban; curse
12. ANIMOSITY hatred
13. ANOMALY irregularity; straying from the norm
14. ANTIPATHY dislike
15. ANTIPODES opposite side of the earth

4

1. ANTITHESIS direct opposite
2. APATHY indifference; lack of interest
3. APHORISM brief statement; proverb
4. APLOMB self-confidence
5. APPALL to terrify; to shock
6. ARCHAIC no longer in use
7. ARDUOUS difficult
8. ARREARS (in arrears) in debt
9. ARTICULATE (adj.) distinct; (V) to express clearly
10. ARTIFICE trickery
11. ASCENDANT rising
12. ASPERSION slanderous remark
13. ASSAY to analyze chemically; to test
14. ASSIDUITY care; diligence
15. ASSUAGE to make less severe; to calm
5

1. ASTUTE shrewd
2. ATHEIST one who denies existence of God
3. ATROPHY to waste away
4. ATTEST to confirm
5. AUDACIOUS bold
6. AUGMENT to increase
7. AUGUR to predict
8. AUGUST majestic; imposing
9. AUSPICE protection
10. AUSPICIOUS favorable
11. AUSTERITY severity
12. AUTOCRATIC arrogant
13. AUTONOMY self-government
14. AVARICE greed
15. BADGER to harass; to nag

Journal
Sample
Write a narrative about an experience in which you either caved into or stood up to peer pressure.

Cycle Two
Theme: The Nature of Society: Rights, Roles and Responsibility

Discussion
In teams of four, students do research and partake in a debate about King’s and Malcolm X’s position on civil disobedience. Each team will be assigned a position and must research specific events in history, which supports their position. The exercise will culminate with a timed essay in which the student must include a counterargument.

Style

*Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, Williams
Chapter Three: “Actions”. Exercises in class.
Recognition and use of parallel structure, antithesis, anastrophe, anaphora, epistrophe, chiasmus, metonymy, analogy, rhetorical question

Exposition and Argumentation

Life and Times of Frederick Douglass
Patrick Henry- speech in Virginia Convention
Various broadsides of the American revolution
“Civil Disobedience”, Thoreau
“Letter to Birmingham”, King
“Ballot or the Bullet”, Malcolm X
“I Am Here to Shed Light on American Slavery”
Frederick Douglass prompt
“What to the slave is the Fourth of July?”
“Structuring Arguments”, Chapter 8: Everything is an Argument
“Fallacies”, Chapter 12: Everything is an Argument

Writing Workshop

Take home essay: Chapter analysis of Life and Times of Frederick Douglass. Each student is assigned a chapter from the autobiography upon to write an analytical essay on the devices used to support his purpose. Five to seven pages with MLA format, text citations, and works cited.

Second cycle rubric includes criteria on structure, organization, introduction and conclusion which place the argument in context and engage the reader, predominately active verbs (diction), and syntax.

Revision: meet with teacher to discuss individual strengths and weaknesses in order to master the criteria on the rubric for revision.

Journal: Write a narrative about either learning to write or learning to read.

Vocabulary: AP words 41-80.

Cycle Three
Theme: The Nature of the Individual: Alienation in a World of Change
Discussion
Sample
In teams of four, students debate, using evidence from the text, whether Margot Macomber purposefully killed her husband, Francis Macomber.

Style
*Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace, Williams*
Chapter Four: “Characters”. Exercises in class.
Chapter Five: Coherence and Cohesion. Exercises in class.
Recognition and use of stream of consciousness, understatement, asyndeton, symbol, polysyndeton, metaphor, irony, and paradox.

Exposition and Argumentation

“A Clean Well-Lighted Place”
“The Cold Happy Life of Francis Macomber”
“The Snows of Killimangaro”
“Rose for Emily”
“Barn Burning”
Film: “Tous les Matins du Monde”
A&E Bio of Hemingway
Jamaica Kincaid,” Upon Seeing England”
2006 AP essay- “The Meaning of Democracy”
Chief Seattle Speech
Hemingway’s Nobel Prize speech
Chapter Fourteen: Figurative Language and Argument, *Everything’s an Argument*
Chapter Five: Arguments based on Values, *Everything’s an Argument*

Writing Workshop
Analytical paper on one short story or the film “Tous Les Matins du Monde”, which analyzes the devices used to convey the spiritual angst of an existential approach.
Five to seven pages with MLA format, text citations, and works cited.

Third cycle rubric includes criteria on structure, organization, introduction and conclusion which place the argument in context and engage the reader, predominately active verbs (diction), concrete nouns, syntax, and coherence.
Revision: meet with teacher to discuss individual strengths and weaknesses in order to master the criteria on the rubric for revision.

**Journal:**
Writing, at its best, is a lonely life…For he does his work alone
And if he is a good enough writer he must face eternity, or the lack of it each day.
For a true writer each book must be a new beginning where he tries again for something that is beyond attainment. He should always try for something that has never been done or that others have tried and failed. Then sometimes, with great luck, he will succeed.

Please read and apply Hemingway’s assertion in his Nobel Speech to your own life. How do you deal with disappointment? What kind of moments help to restore your spirit and give you hope?

**Vocabulary:** AP words 81-120.

**Cycle Four**
Theme: The Nature of the Spirit: Romantic Vision

**Style**
*Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, Williams
Chapter Six: “Emphasis”. Exercises in class.
Chapter Seven: “Concision”. Exercises in class.
Recognition and use of symbol, metaphor, and personal anecdote.

**Exposition and Argumentation**

“Self –Reliance”, Emerson
“The Over-Soul”, Emerson
“Solitude”, Thoreau
Excerpts from *Songs of Myself*, Whitman
“Beauty: When the Other dancer is the Self”, Alice Walker
“Starfish”, *The Star Thrower*, Loren Eiseley
*A River Runs Through It*, Norman Maclean
Film: *A River Runs Through It*
Writing Workshop

Take Home Essay: Students research, draw from their readings, and personal experience to define “a romantic vision”. Four to six pages with MLA format, text citations, and works cited.

Fourth Cycle rubric includes criteria on structure, organization, introduction and conclusion which place the argument in context and engage the reader, predominately active verbs (diction), concrete nouns, syntax, coherence, and concision.

Revision: meet with teacher to discuss individual strengths and weaknesses in order to master the criteria on the rubric for revision.

Vocabulary: AP words 121-140.

Cycle Five
Theme: The Nature of Truth: Moral Imagination in a Global Society

Style
*Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, Williams
Chapter Eight: “Shape”. Exercises in class on sentence variety.

Exposition and Argument
“Hiroshima”, John Hersey
“The Publication of Hersey’s Hiroshima in the New Yorker”, Steve Rothman
Various survivor’s testimonials
Photos by Hiromi Tsuchida
Excerpts from Secretary of War, Henry Stimson
*The English Patient*
“I love Global Capitalism” Aaron Lucas
“A World Not Neatly Divided” Amartya Sen
“A New Ethics for a New World” Paul R. Ehrlich
“Veil of Fears” Stanley Rurtz
AP Language Exam: “Nobel Prize” Toni Morrison
AP Language Exam: William Hazlitt
AP Language Exam: The Coca Cola prompt
AP Language Exam: “Photography”, Susan Sontag
AP Language Exam: “Language as a Key to Identity”, James Baldwin
Chapter 20: “Intellectual Property, Academic Integrity, and Avoiding Plagiarism”,
Everything’s An Argument
Chapter 21: “Evaluating and Using Sources”, Everything’s an Argument
Chapter 22: “Documenting Sources”, Everything’s an Argument

Writing Workshop
Take Home Essay: Research argument taking a position on the rhetorical question of Father Siemes, who witnessed the effects of nuclear war and wrote a testimony:
“The crux of the matter is whether total war in its present form is justifiable, even when it serves a just purpose. Does it not have material and spiritual evil as its consequences, which far exceed whatever the good that might result?” (War Times Journal)
Students must research and include at last three survivor testimonials, primary documents from Truman’s diary and letters, Secretary of Navy, Ralph Bard, Secretary of War, Henry Stimson, and documents from Doug Long’s extensive website. Paper must include introduction, background, argument, and counterargument, conclusion. Eight to twelve pages with MLA format, citations, and works cited.

Fifth Cycle rubric includes criteria on structure, organization, introduction and conclusion which place the argument in context and engage the reader, predominately active verbs (diction), concrete nouns, syntax, coherence, concision, sentence variety.

Revision: meet with teacher to discuss individual strengths and weaknesses in order to master the criteria on the rubric for revision.

Vocabulary: AP words, 141-180.
Cycle Six
Theme: The Nature of Irony: Satire in an Imperfect World

Style
_Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace_, Williams
Chapter Ten: “The Ethics of Style”
Recognition and use of parody, hyperbole, mock seriousness, sarcasm, absurdity

Exposition and Argumentation

“A Modest Proposal” Jonathan Swift
Excerpts from _Catch 22_
Episodes from _The Simpsons_
Various articles from _The Onion_
AP Language Released Exam, 2001

Writing Workshop
Students come to school on the third Saturday in April and take the 2001 released exam. I then sit for two days, mark the test, then confer with students on particular problems and go back over the multiple choice questions, as well as the essays, in class. This approach gives them confidence and allows them to build stamina for the actual exam.

Vocabulary: AP words 181-200.

Teacher Resources

Douglass, Frederick. _Narrative Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written_


