

# Kenilworth Public Schools

## Curriculum Guide

Content Area: AP Language and Composition

Grade: 11-12

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# **AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION SYLLABUS**

## **COURSE OVERVIEW/OBJECTIVES**

AP English Language and Composition is a college-level course designed to challenge and engage the students in becoming multifaceted readers and writers. Students in this course will read a wide-range of complex prose geared towards making them think about the authors' messages and their own writing. They will utilize these texts in composing thoughtful responses; students will show an awareness of audience and purpose in their writings, and they will take part in expository, analytical, and argumentative compositions. In order to do this, they will read both primary and secondary sources carefully and synthesize the information from those readings in their own compositions using appropriate citation in MLA format.

Throughout the course, students will be writing many essays of varying lengths, and each essay will go through several revisions before submission. Through this process, students will be encouraged to find their own voices and express them confidently and intelligently through their writings.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

Essays/Papers: 40%

- Students will write several essays per marking period, the minimum being three. Each essay will go through drafting, review, and revision before being submitted.

Tests: 25%

- Students will take tests that resemble the types of assessments to be found on the AP exam, especially timed in-class writings.

Quizzes: 20%

- Students will be given various quizzes throughout the course. Some will be on the reading assignments the students will do, while others will be on vocabulary, grammar, and writing techniques.

Daily tasks/Informal writings: 15%

- These daily assignments will consist of preliminary work for larger writing assignments or analysis questions involving the reading. Furthermore, throughout the course, students will be required to complete informal writing assignments in the form of response journals and dialectical notebooks.

### **MATERIALS:**

Students will be using various texts and readers throughout the course to aid them in their study of prose and writing. These include the following:

*Everything's an Argument* by Lunsford, Ruskiewicz, and Walters

*The St. Martin's Guide to Writing* by Axelrod and Cooper

*The River Reader* by Trimmer

*Subject & Strategy: A Writer's Reader* by Eschholz and Rosa

*Practical Argument* by Kirszner and Mandell

In addition, students will read some full-length literature in order to gain insight into the writer's voice and to aid the students in their own composition and thought processes. The works include the following:

*The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

*The Crucible* by Arthur Miller

*The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald

*The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

*A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams

Finally, students will also view several documentary works to see how images themselves can state powerful messages and serve as types of texts as well. They will be taught to analyze these and other visuals in order to understand the techniques involved within. The documentaries viewed in this course are as follows:

*Super-Size Me*

*An Inconvenient Truth*

*Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price*

## **COURSE ORGANIZATION**

The course is organized around skill-building and the different facets of argumentation. In each unit, students will be required to utilize complex grammar and rich vocabulary; in fact, each class will begin with a brief vocabulary or grammar lesson designed to enhance the students' skills. Other skills that will be fostered in the students through the various reading and writing done throughout the course are utilizing a variety of sentence structures, choosing and varying organizational techniques, balancing the usage of general and specific details, utilizing proper diction based on the situation, establishing tone, and maintaining the writer's voice. Each unit will serve to build upon the previous ones, going from more simple to more complex, aiming to ensure the students are not only prepared for the AP exam, but also are becoming confident writers.

### **Marking Period 1: Introduction to Argumentation and Critical Reading**

The first semester will begin with an introduction to the course and to the AP exam itself. Students will take a diagnostic practice AP exam to gauge areas of strength and weakness, and the results will be used to promote growth throughout the school year.

The school year will begin with a discussion of the students' summer reading assignments: Stephen King's *On Writing*, Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, and various news articles and editorials. With King's work, we will discuss the various

advice King gives about writing and whether they agree or disagree with it. The goal is to get the students to begin thinking about writing rather than just writing. We will use these ideas to discuss Bradbury's work, examining his particular writing style and how he uses his style to create his narrative and messages.

As for the articles, students were required to use read about the SOAPSTone technique and use it to analyze an article per week of their choosing. We will discuss SOAPSTone and its importance to reading nonfiction and writing as well. Throughout the course, students will be required to use the SOAPSTone technique as they read and write.

### **Texts:**

#### ***Everything's An Argument: Chapters 1-4, 14:***

- In these chapters, students will be introduced to the concept of the argument and the different occasions, types, audiences, and appeals (pathos, ethos, and logos) that are involved with them. Next, students will learn about visual and multimedia arguments and the different elements and techniques involved in making them.

#### ***St. Martin's Guide to Writing: Chapters 6, 19, 20:***

- In these chapters, students will learn about writing an essay that argues a position. They will practice asserting a thesis, making arguable assertions, using clear and precise wording, qualifying the thesis, giving ample reasons and support, and responding to objections. Furthermore, students will be taught how to recognize logical fallacies and to use specific sentence strategies for argument. Students will also learn how to write a visual analysis, examining the composition, figures, scene, words, tone, and context of a visual.

#### **Major Work: *The Crucible***

- After being introduced to the different types of arguments and techniques, students will read Miller's work. They will then choose an argument made in the play (the validity of witches, redemption/forgiveness, morality, courage), and write an essay analysing the argument.

## **Readers:**

For the various essays and literature students will be reading throughout the course, they will be required to use the SOAPSTone technique and examine the ways the authors use language and style to convey their ideas. Students will keep a dialectical notebook for each reading assignment, pulling out specific quotes and evidence to illustrate their ideas and understanding of concepts. Some of these readings will be simply discussed and analyzed, while others will result in informal writings. Furthermore, students will use response journals to comment on the readings and the ideas that they stimulate.

### ***The River Reader:***

- "I Have a Dream" – Martin Luther King Jr.
- "A Chinaman's Chance: Reflections on the American Dream" – Eric Liu
- "The Right of Animals" – Bridgid Brophy
- "What's Wrong With Animal Rights?" – Vicki Hearne

### ***Subject and Strategy:***

- "The Declaration of Independence"
- Argument Trio: On Blogging
- Argument Roundtable: Alpha Wives

### **Documentary: *Super-Size Me***

### **Major Writings:**

Students will complete a number of writing assignments throughout the first marking period. Besides the essay on *The Crucible*, one essay will follow the reading of the animal rights and blogging essays and will require students to choose one of the two topics to create their own argument on the subject. Another essay will be a visual analysis using one of the visuals provided in chapter 20 of *The St. Martin's Guide to Writing*. These major writing assignments will proceed through the stages of the writing process from proposal to thesis to drafting. The drafts will receive feedback from the teacher and peers before a final draft is submitted. The final essay of the marking period will be a timed essay

that evaluates the argument made in the documentary Super-Size Me. This essay will be scored in the same way it would be on the AP exam.

In addition, students will take part in several shorter, informal writing assignments to practice the various skills learned. These assignments are found in *Everything's An Argument*, *Subject and Strategy*, and *The River Reader*.

## **Marking Period 2: Rhetorical Analysis and Writing Arguments**

The second marking period will aim to build upon the skills obtained in the first. They will be introduced to the idea of close reading and composing different types of arguments that exist.

### ***Everything's an Argument: Chapters 6-9, 13***

- In these chapters, students are introduced to the different skills and techniques needed to examine various arguments. They will also be introduced to Rogerian and Toulmin arguments, as well as arguments of fact and definition. Finally, they will learn about style in arguments, focusing on word choice, sentence structure, and other techniques utilized to create strong writing and an individual voice.

### ***St. Martin's Guide to Writing: Chapters 12, 13, 15, 16***

- These chapters focus not only on various reading strategies used to evaluate arguments and recognize techniques that writers use to make their points; they also will instruct the students in how to use these techniques in their own writing to make their arguments more effective. Students will be able to recognize patterns of opposition, logic, believability, credibility, and emotional manipulation. Furthermore, students will be trained in cueing the reader to the different ideas in their writing, using cohesive devices and transitions, detailing their points, and creating a dominant impression with their language.

### ***Major Work: The Awakening and/or The Scarlet Letter***

- Students will read Chopin's work and analyse the ways that she uses language to make her points about femininity and motherhood and/or read

Hawthorne's work to analyse the way he uses language to create an argument about sin and the inequality between society's expectations of men and women. Following our reading and discussion of the novel, students will write a rhetorical analysis of the work. This essay will be outlined, drafted, and responded to by both teacher and peers before being submitted as a final draft.

### ***The River Reader:***

- "The Myth of the Latin Woman: I Just Met a Girl Named Maria" – Judith Ortiz Coffer
- "Shooting an Elephant" – George Orwell
- "A Word's Meaning Can Often Depend on Who Says It" – Gloria Naylor
- "Pain" – Diane Ackerman
- "On Morality" – Joan Didion
- "The Lesson" – Toni Cade Bambara

### ***Subject and Strategy:***

- "Discovering the Power of My Words" – Russell Baker
- "Writing for an Audience" – Linda S. Flower

### ***Documentary: An Inconvenient Truth***

### **Major Writings:**

After reading Naylor's essay, students will write a paper arguing that the way in which a word is spoken gives it its true meaning. Also, after reading Orwell's piece, students will write a personal essay in which they describe an incident when they attempted to avoid being seen as foolish or silly. Both of these will proceed through drafting and teacher and peer review before submission. Finally, students will write two timed essays. One will be based on Ortiz-Coffer's work in which they must create an argument about why stereotypes form. The second will be an analysis of the techniques utilized in *An Inconvenient Truth*. These will be scored using the AP scale.



### **Marking Period 3: Synthesis, Logic and Reasoning**

The third marking period will introduce the synthesis essay and research and will provide many different opportunities for students to build upon the skills they have acquired so far. As we will be approaching the AP exam, students will have many opportunities to take part in various exercises similar to those found on the exam itself.

#### ***Everything's An Argument: Chapters 5, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23***

- Students will read about fallacies of arguments and ways to avoid falling into those traps. Next, students will be introduced to the formulation of academic arguments which require the usage of sources. Students will learn about the proper integration of sources into their writing and will learn how to properly cite and credit authors using MLA format.

#### ***St. Martin's Guide to Writing: Chapters 5, 7, 8***

- In these chapters, students will explore three more types of essays: ones that attempt to find common ground between two opposing sides, ones that propose a solution to a problem or problems, and ones that justify an evaluation. Research and synthesis will be focused on with these writings.

#### ***Major Work: The Great Gatsby***

- Students will read Fitzgerald's novel, analysing the ways in which he uses different types of language to have character's make their points and create their arguments. They will then write a synthesis essay which requires them to choose from multiple sources in order to make an argument about wealth, change, and corruption. This paper will be written as a process, with opportunities for drafting and feedback, before submission.

#### ***The River Reader:***

- "The Order of Things" – Malcolm Gladwell
- "The Technology of Medicine" – Lewis Thomas
- "Cranks, Eccentrics, and Individuals" – Louis Kronenberger

- "Five Myths About Immigration" – David Cole
- "The Penalty of Death" – H.L. Mencken
- "Execution" – Anna Quindlen
- "Harrison Bergeron" – Kurt Vonnegut Jr.

***Subject and Strategy:***

- "A Modest Proposal" – Jonathan Swift
- "On Not Winning the Nobel Prize" - Doris Lessing

**Documentary: *Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price***

**Major Writings:**

- Following the reading of Gladwell's essay, students will choose a consumer product to classify and rank, synthesizing different sources to justify their evaluation. Following the reading of the pieces by Mencken, Quindlen, and Vonnegut, students will write an essay about the death penalty which attempts to find common ground between the differing opinions. Swift's essay will be the basis for a timed writing about the most effective way to bring about social change and whether or not Swift's methods would be successful today.

**Marking Period 4: Prep for the Exam, the Research Paper**

The fourth marking period will open up with focused preparation for the AP exam. Students will take part in several practice exercises involving the multiple choice sections, and they will also practice several timed writings based on the different type of essay prompts. An emphasis will be placed on rhetorical analysis, argumentation, and synthesis.

Following the AP exam, students will begin work on their major research paper. The paper will be connected to the students' reading of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Each student will have a choice of topic, ranging from technological parallels to psychology to influence. They will thoroughly research their topics using several different sources and compose an extended research

paper which includes commentary about Shelley's use of language and ideas and how they relate to their topics. The paper will be formatted according to MLA standards.

***Everything's an Argument: Chapters 18, 20***

***St. Martin's Guide to Writing: Chapters 23-27***

- The chapters in both texts focus on the research paper: evaluating sources, avoiding plagiarism, planning and composing the paper, and citing and documenting in MLA style.

***The River Reader:***

- "Mother Tongue" – Amy Tan
- "Arranging a Marriage in India" – Serena Nanda
- "A Tale of Two Divorces" – Anne Roiphe
- "In Search of the Good Family" – Jane Howard
- "Images of Family: A Visual Essay"

***Subject and Strategy:***

- "Simplicity" – William Zinsser
- "The Maker's Eye: Revising Your Own Manuscripts" – Donald M. Murray
- "How to Say Nothing in 500 Words" – Paul Roberts
- "The Case for Short Words" – Richard Lederer

***Practical Argument:***

- "Allegory of the Cave" – Plato
- "The Prince" – Niccolo Machiavelli
- "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions" – Elizabeth Cady Stanton
- "Letter From Birmingham Jail" – Martin Luther King Jr.

**Major Writings:**

Students will practice mostly timed writings leading up to the AP exam. Using the selections about family from *The River Reader*, students will write a timed synthesis essay that defends, challenges, or qualifies the claim that a strong family is essential in order to have a full, complete life. Students will also practice rhetorical analyses based on the pieces by King Jr., Stanton, and Lederer. Following the AP exam, students will choose one of their timed writings to edit, revise, and submit as a completed draft. They will also choose a topic of personal interest, create a specific, well-thought out argument, and compose an essay arguing their claim.

**Final Exam:**

Students will take a two-hour final exam which is worth 10% of their final averages. This exam will include reading and writing tasks similar to those they have been completing all year.

**Course Texts:**

Axelrod, Rise B., and Charles Raymond Cooper. *The St. Martin's Guide to Writing*.

Tenth ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013. Print.

Eschholz, Paul A., and Alfred F. Rosa. *Subject & Strategy: A Writer's Reader*.

Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011. Print.

Kirszner, Laurie G., and Stephen R. Mandell. *Practical Argument: A Text and*

*Anthology*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011. Print.

Lunsford, Andrea A., John J. Ruszkiewicz, and Keith Walters. *Everything's an*

*Argument: With Readings*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013. Print.

Trimmer, Joseph F. *The River Reader*. Eleventh ed. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning,

2011. Print.