

University Preparatory School  
AP Language & Composition  
Course Syllabus

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**TEXTS:** Shea, Renee H, et al. *The Language of Composition*, 6th ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013; Graff, Gerald. *They Say, I Say*, 2nd ed. Many of the short stories and poems we read are handouts, which are available online for downloading and printing. Students are responsible for replacing lost handouts and printing assignment material when absent.

**Course Curriculum:** As an AP class, it is intended to be the equivalent of a college freshman composition course. At the end of the second semester, students may opt to take the AP Language & Composition test for possible college credit. The score on the AP test DOES NOT impact the grade for the course. The curriculum for this course deals primarily with the techniques of argumentation, including how to build a case around sufficient and appropriate evidence, as well as prose analysis. These focuses align with the close reading, analysis, argument, and synthesis on the AP Language Exam.

**SEMESTER TWO: Synthesis, Rhetorical Analysis, AP Review**

Second semester picks right up where we left off in December--however, now we will hone our composition process to be more efficient to work within the restricted time environment of the AP Test--in other words, we'll work on responding to timed prompts in a more rapid fashion. We will also move into close-reading and analyzing professional arguments for how context and purpose influence the crafting of the argument--particularly the author's selection of tone, and various rhetorical choices. For practice, we will follow an opinion columnist for several weeks, identifying and critiquing the techniques and arguments we see published each week.

In this semester, we do spend a lot of time practicing for the AP Test, both Multiple Choice and Timed Essays, using previous test samples for reference. Additionally, we will often practice writing within time constraints, developing techniques to condense the writing process to fit within the allotted time of the testing environment. We will also regularly practice multiple choice exam questions in order to further hone our ability to close read within a restricted time frame.

**GRADING POLICY**

The course gradebook has been divided into two categories. Please review the scale below. Aeries will usually be updated at least weekly; therefore it is recommended you check Aeries at least a few times a month to stay fully informed.

- **80% Summative**
- **20% Formative**

**Formative Assessments:** "Assessment FOR Learning": Provides students with ongoing descriptive feedback telling them what they need to do to improve their work. It provides teachers with the feedback needed to inform instructional practice. Formative assessment occurs throughout a learning segment. Depending upon the instructional purpose, examples may include: daily work, graphic organizers, quizzes, rough drafts of written work, homework, questioning, observation of student doing work & feedback conversation with student, and benchmark/interim tests. For the purposes of this class, formative work will be graded. Full credit may be withheld until student addresses feedback left by instructor.

**Summative Assessments:** "Assessment OF Learning": Occurs when a teacher evaluates the final efforts and/or final product that proves learning. The purpose is to determine the level of proficiency related to course outcomes or standards. Feedback may come in the form of a letter grade, pass/fail, or label ("exceeds standard"). Examples of learning products used to verify learning at the end of a learning segment may include: final copy of written work, final presentation, final exam or other teacher-made tests, final project,

unit and/or chapter tests.

**Writing Revisions:** Because I believe everyone can grow as a writer, regardless of prior experience, I allow for revisions in AP Language & Composition. I believe that when given proper coaching, you will stretch your writing further than you previously thought was within your grasp. It might take a few tries, sure. But who cares, in the long run? Progress and belief in the process is what matters most. So how do you revise a paper? What's important is that you approach each draft with a very specific focus. In order to get this focus, I have a few required steps one must take in order to revise summative writing:

1. Schedule a Writing Conference during Office Hours
2. Make the Revisions Discussed in Conference
3. Email/Share Document via Google Docs for Rescoring

**LATE WORK IS NOT ACCEPTED** (for full credit)

Late work (summative and formative) is worth 60% of the original value. You can submit your work using the form located in Google Classroom. Class work missed during an absence will be made up once the student returns. All summative formal writing assignments are submitted through Google Classroom or emailed to Mr. Bird (in case of technical issues) by 8:30 am on the due date regardless of absence.

**Mobile Phones/Devices:** While not prohibited outright, students are expected to understand the difference between appropriate and inappropriate use of mobile devices. These devices should never be visible during testing or formal writing. During most class sessions we will be utilizing a phone caddy. If a student's phone is a repeated problem it will be sent to the office for later pickup, as per the student handbook.

**Materials/Organization:** Students have access to a classroom calendar that helps them track upcoming due dates with sufficient heads-up. Much of this course-work will be conducted online. However, we will regularly complete tasks the old-fashioned way, with paper, as well. So while you are not *required* to keep a dedicated binder for this course, you will *constantly* need access to paper and writing materials.

**Academic Honesty:** Academic dishonesty is the willful and intentional fraud and deception for the purpose of improving a grade or obtaining course credit, and includes all student behavior intended to gain or provide unearned academic advantage by fraudulent and/or deceptive means. Examples: Copying someone else's paper; giving someone your paper so they can copy your work; cutting and pasting from an online source without giving proper credit. Be sure to read the school policy on academic honesty outlined in the Student/Parent Handbook. Students must have a turnitin.com account where they will submit all major essays and assignments. Any paper that is flagged will require a formal meeting with the student's parents and administration. As a result, students will sign a contract that will go in their permanent file.

\*\*Students will have many opportunities to pre-write, brainstorm, rewrite, and revise their work. Because they have so many opportunities, we believe our policy on plagiarism to be fair. If students ever feel underprepared for an assignment, I encourage them to come and talk to me, and an extension may be granted.

All Summative Writing will be turned in through Google Classroom, and the Originality Reports will be enabled for students. This is a new tool for students to check their work for originality before submitting to the instructor. For more information click [here](#).

**Attendance/Behavior:** Attendance is extremely important in my class due to the large volume of reading we cover and the way each class builds right upon the lesson in the last. Obviously, any absence will be a disadvantage to the student while multiple absences will be destructive to a student's ability to succeed. In regards to behavior, I expect my students to behave like young adults. They should be on time to class, listen politely while others speak, treat everyone with respect, and try to be a positive presence on campus. Students who lack maturity in the classroom will only receive a single warning--afterward parents will be contacted.

**Push Notification Reminders:** I offer push notification reminders to all students through Remind. I do not intend to send more than a few texts a month. However, you should not rely on the notifications; I expect you to use your detailed class calendar for this--these

text notifications will focus primarily on providing reminders for major summative assignments and junior class-specific announcements. Instructions for subscribing are available on the class website. Remind also provides an alternate means of communicating with me outside email.

**Google Classroom:** In this AP Language & Composition course, we will most often complete classwork/homework in the Google Classroom environment. If you have inconsistent access to a computer with an internet connection, please notify Mr. Bird; alternate (non tech-reliant) arrangements can be made, but must be made ahead of time.

**Contacting the teacher:** Email is the best way to communicate with me. You might not be accustomed to checking email regularly, so this expectation may be an adjustment for some students--but an expectation it is nonetheless. Email is a **standard** communication in most work environments; now is the time to develop good email etiquette and skills. If your inbox is too disorganized to be used effectively, please come to me for help; I can teach you how to tame that inbox and make it more useful. When emailing me, please include your name and period number in the subject heading (example: Han Solo - Period 1). I will always try to respond within 24-48 hours.

I am also available to students during my office hours Zero Period from 8:00-8:25 each day, and you can also message me through the REMIND app. Please DO NOT WAIT until a quarter ends to voice your concerns about grades. Feel free to contact me with any questions, or to set up an *alternate* meeting time if you need additional help.

***LET'S HAVE A GREAT YEAR! GO PANTHERS!***