

Hephzibah High School
AP English Language & Composition Syllabus
2025-2026 School Year

Instructor: Dr. Stephanie Graham, Ph.D.

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Google Voice: (762) – 233- 6395

Planning Period: 2nd Period

Canvas: Send an Inbox message

Remind Communication:

Students and parents, please join to receive class messages by sending a text to 81010 with the assigned code.

All Classes: @drgaplang

Join with your first and last name

Supplies:

Fully Charged Laptop Daily

Black & Blue Ink Pens

Pencils

Highlighters

College Ruled Paper

Course Description:

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition is intended to provide the equivalent in content and difficulty of a college-level introductory English course. Students in this course will become skilled readers of prose written in a variety of rhetorical contexts, and in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Both their writing and their reading should make students aware of the interactions among a writer's purposes, audience expectations, and subjects, as well as the way genre conventions and the resources of language contribute to effectiveness in writing.

All of these tasks, while at varying degrees of difficulty, **demand that students not work towards proficiency, but towards excellence.** In every endeavor this year, students will not be measured only by their state, national, or even international peers' performance, but by students' individual growth potential and success.

In May, students in this course will take an exam designed by the College Board and the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to validate their academic experience and to receive college credit as determined by individual institutions of higher education. A passing score of 3 or 4 on this examination usually earns college credit in the first freshman composition course. College credit is beneficial, but the most important purpose of the AP class is true college preparation, especially in composition and critical thinking.

Important Message from the College Board:

Issues that might, from particular social, historical, or cultural viewpoints, be considered controversial, including references to ethnicities, nationalities, religions, races, dialects, gender, or class, may be addressed in texts that are appropriate for the AP English Language and Composition course. Fair representation of issues and peoples may occasionally include controversial material. Since AP students have chosen a program that directly involves them in college level work, participation in this course depends on a level of maturity consistent with the age of high school students who have engaged in thoughtful analyses of a variety of texts. The best response to controversial language or ideas in a text might well be a question about the larger meaning, purpose, or overall effect of the language or idea in context. AP students should have the maturity, skill, and will to seek the larger meaning of a text or issue through thoughtful research. (page 84 of the course and exam description binder)

Course Objectives/ AP Language Standards:

Upon completing the AP English Language and Composition course, students should be able to:

- analyze and interpret samples of good writing, identifying and explaining an author's use of rhetorical strategies and techniques;
- apply effective strategies and techniques in their own writing;
- create and sustain arguments based on readings, research and/or personal experience;
- write for a variety of purposes;
- produce expository, analytical and argumentative compositions that introduce a complex central idea and develop it with appropriate evidence drawn from primary and/or secondary sources, cogent explanations and clear transitions;
- demonstrate understanding and mastery of standard written English as well as stylistic maturity in their own writings;
- demonstrate understanding of the conventions of citing primary and secondary sources;
- move effectively through the stages of the writing process, with careful attention to inquiry and research, drafting,

- revising, editing and review;
- write thoughtfully about their own process of composition;
- revise a work to make it suitable for a different audience;
- analyze image as text; and
- evaluate and incorporate reference documents into researched papers.

Students will read essays and other non-fiction works in order to analyze and assess various writing styles. Much of the homework assigned will be reading and thinking. However, preparation is critical for this class, and the completion of assignments will be checked often through reading quizzes. Many of the essays will be written in class during timed periods similar to the actual AP exam. Essay revision is encouraged in order to master the skills necessary to be successful on the AP Language exam.

Course Texts:

- *Ideas in Argument: Building Skills and Understanding for the AP Language Course* by: John R. Williamson, Mary Jo Zell, & Elizabeth Davis. 2022 by Bedford, Freeman, & Worth High School Publishers.
- *The Language of Composition: Essential Voices, Essential Skills for AP Course 4th Edition* by: Renee H. Shea, Robin Dissin Aufses, Lawrence Scanlon, Megan M. Harowitz, Katherine E. Cordes, Carlos A. Escobar, 2023 by Bedford, Freeman, & Worth High School Publishers
- Various teacher selected short stories, multimedia clips, and non-fiction articles related to thematic units of study articles from *The Atlantic*, the *New Yorker*, the *New York Times*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The Wall Street Journal* and others (handouts provided)
- Nonfiction (narratives, essays, memoirs, speeches, etc.) selected from: *50 Essays: A Portable Anthology* by Samuel Cohen, *etc.*

Most texts used throughout the year will be nonfiction and will come from a variety of formal and informal sources and genres (e.g., academic journals, advertisements, scientific arguments, letters, political cartoons, critical essays, charts and graphs, etc.). In conjunction with reading and analyzing texts of such variety, students will also be required to produce formal and informal writings of the same sort; consequently, the course helps students become skilled, rhetorical writers who compose for a variety of purposes within a variety of contexts. Students learn to write while making their own choices that pay strict attention to social context(s), target audience(s), rhetorical mode(s), and overall purpose(s).

Classroom Expectations and Procedures:

1. **Attendance:** Attendance will be taken daily during each period. All students who report to class 15 minutes after the bell rings will be marked absent. Another teacher cannot grant you permission to miss this class for any reason. Students are expected to arrive to class on time.
2. **We report to class on time.** Make it a habit to report to class prior to the bell ringing. Be early and you will never be late.
3. **We are prepared.** Students should report to class with all necessary supplies. They should also sit in their assigned seat without reservation. Bell ringers should be completed at the beginning of class. All assignments should be submitted on time.
4. **We are respectful to all.** Students should show respect to themselves by respecting authority, as well as their peers while in class. Disrespect in any form will not be tolerated.
5. **We have a positive attitude.** This classroom has a positive atmosphere. Shift your thinking to see the good in every situation.
6. **We communicate.** It is your responsibility to communicate with me to make up any assignments or if you have an emergency to arise. Methods of communication are found on page 1 of this document.
7. **Consequences:** The RCSS Code of Conduct will be implemented in its entirety.

8. **Make Up Work:** If you are absent, it is your responsibility to complete your make up work in Canvas within 5 days of your absence. Majority of the assignments will be given in Canvas. Check in to ensure you have received all missing assignments from Dr. Graham once you return from being absent.
9. **Relearn/Reassess Plan:** As minor assignments are graded; the teacher will assess if reteaching is needed (more than 20% of students fail assignments). Reteaching will include, but is not limited to, one of the following: Progressive Learning lessons, learning stations, and reteaching through teacher led instruction. Reminders for missing assignments will be given to students via verbal communication, Remind, and Canvas messages.
10. **Tutoring:** If students need tutoring, they may schedule an appointment with Dr. Graham to meet afterschool to receive additional assistance if needed.
11. **Cell Phones & Smart Devices:** The use of cell phones, electronic communication devices and/or accessories is prohibited for all students at all times during the instructional day, which is defined as the time the student arrives on campus until the end of the school day and/or the time the student leaves campus according to the RCSS cell phone and electronic devices policy. **Cell phones should not be used during class. They must be silenced and stored out of sight to minimize distractions and maintain a focused learning environment.**
12. **Food and Drinks:** In order to keep a clean environment, food and drinks are not allowed in the classroom at any times. Students should place all items inside of their bookbag or on the front table if they have these items.
13. **Hall Passes:** Students are encouraged to use the restroom, retrieve belongings, and take care of any their personal business prior to entering our class. Passes are only written for emergencies or on a case by case basis. Dr. Graham will not write passes for students to visit other teachers during class time. Please plan accordingly. Accommodations will be made for students with health challenges and the proper documentation.
14. **Be positive, have fun, and trust the process!**

Homework Policy & Grading Scale

Students are expected to complete assignments by the end of the class period. If additional time is needed, students will be permitted to complete the remainder of the assignment for homework and submit at the beginning of the class period the next day.

Richmond County Grading Scale	Grading Distribution	Exams
90-100 A	60 % Minor Assignments	Fall Semester Exams: Students will be required to take a semester exam in December. Exemptions will be permitted for those who receive a grade of 90 or above. AP Language & Composition Exam: Students will be required to take the AP Language & Composition Exam in May. A passing score of 3 or 4 on this examination usually earns college credit in the first freshman composition course.
80-89 B	40 % Major Assignments	
75-79 C	Grades will be posted	
70-74 D	weekly in Infinite Campus	
69 & below F	with assignment feedback.	
Grades will be posted weekly in Infinite Campus.	Students are expected to complete ALL coursework in a timely manner. Dr. Graham has total discretion of the assignments she will grade.	

Plagiarism: A form of academic malpractice in which a student steals or passes off the ideas and words of another as his/her own, for example: using lengthy quoted passages from the work(s) of others without crediting the source each time another's ideas and/or words are used. An improper use of quotation marks and/or missing citation of sources constitutes plagiarism.

More details from the handbook Sources and Citations at Dartmouth College at its Institute of Writing and Rhetoric:

- If you quote from a source, you must specifically mark the quoted material and immediately cite the source. Place the quoted text in quotation marks or format it as a block quotation. Your citation should appear at the point of quotation, either in parentheses or in a footnote or endnote. Listing the source in a bibliography does not, by itself, constitute proper citation; you must cite at the point of use.
- If you quote a distinctive phrase, or even a single distinctive word, place it in quotation marks and cite the source.
- If you paraphrase an idea or special information from a source—that is, if you restate the idea, but alter the exact wording—you must cite that source.

(from section 1A. “What is Plagiarism?” <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/sources/sources-citation.html>)

- **Plagiarism is not allowed in any form. If plagiarism, cheating, or the use of AI software is detected, the student will receive a severe point deduction on the given assignment. Students are expected to complete all assignments in their own words.**

Late Work Policy: Students are expected to submit assignments on time. Multiple incidents of late work may result in teacher-student-parent conferences to examine and correct the student’s work habits through an academic contract. **Five points will be deducted daily for late assignments.** Completing work in a timely manner during the learning unit is essential for academic success.

Make Up Work Policy: Students are expected to make-up assignments and assessments that were missed due to absence from school. Students are responsible for asking teachers for the make-up work upon returning to class. Make-up work should be completed by the student within the time specified by the teacher. Teachers should provide reasonable timelines for completing make-up work. Generally, such work should be completed within 5 days of returning to school. A student should not be required to take a quiz or test on their first day back to school if the assessment was first-announced during their absence. Graded assignments should be scored to accurately reflect the level of mastery of standards.

Collusion: To support malpractice by another student as in allowing one’s work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another.

To AP Parents: Your child has elected to take a demanding college-level class in the study of English Language and Composition. Please commend and encourage his/her efforts often. You will see great development in critical thinking skills, composition, and independent learning. Your support and interest will benefit your child. Foundations for your students’ future are being put in place now.

To AP Students: I look forward to working with each of you this year. I realize that you have accepted the challenge of a rigorous course, and I applaud your efforts. Be assured that I am working diligently right beside you to ensure that your year in this class is not only successful, but also is enjoyable. Never hesitate to come to me to ask for help or assistance. Just as I ask you to respect others in my class, I will always be respectful of you. I believe that all students have valid opinions, and I encourage students to share these opinions as long as it is done so in a respectful manner. I believe that participation in the AP program will help you fully prepare for the demands of college English, and I will do all I can to ensure your success. Bring a great attitude and work ethic, and I know we will accomplish great things this year!

Final Thought

This course thrives on the energy and commitment you bring. Meaningful discussion happens when everyone participates thoughtfully and respectfully. We’ll explore major themes that impact both society and your personal growth—your voice matters. While outside assignments will vary, your success depends on the effort you invest. I’m excited for a great year ahead and honored to be your teacher.

Note: The teacher reserves the right to make changes or additions to the syllabus at any time.