

## **AP English Language & Composition**

Mr. Jason Spitzer

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### **Course Overview:**

This course is designed to meet the standards for AP English Language & Composition, as outlined in the most recent edition of the course description provided by The College Board.

This course teaches and requires students to write in several forms (argumentative, analytical, synthesis, expository, narrative, research) about a variety of subjects. Students will write both informally and formally, with formal writing passing through several stages or drafts and revision aided by the teacher and/or peer writing groups.

The course requires writing assignments that are based on readings that represent a wide variety of styles and genres, including nonfiction and fiction. Each reading is selected to give students opportunities to identify and explain an author's use of rhetorical strategies and techniques, as well as intended audience and purpose.

The course will teach research skills, such as the ability to evaluate, use, and cite primary and secondary sources. All major papers will adhere to Modern Language Association (MLA) or American Psychological Association (APA) editorial style.

In addition to written text, the course will teach students to analyze how graphics and visual images both relate to written texts and serve as alternative forms of text themselves.

### **Prerequisites:**

The Desert Junior-Senior High School English Department recommends that students who wish to enroll in the course maintain at least a "B" average for each previous semester in English.

Students who do not maintain a "C" average for the first semester of the course or do not demonstrate the desire to keep up with the rigorous coursework may be encouraged to drop from the course.

## Course Planner:

### First Quarter: Rhetoric and Argument

Nonfiction: *Fast Food Nation* by Eric Schlosser.

Essays: “Allegory of the Cave” by Plato; “Declaration of Independence” by Thomas Jefferson; “I Have a Dream” (Speech) by Martin Luther King, Jr.; “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King, Jr.; “The Gettysburg Address” (Speech) by Abraham Lincoln; “A Modest Proposal” by Jonathan Swift; “Why I Went to the Woods” by Henry David Thoreau; “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” by Jonathan Edwards; “Letter to Her Son” by Abigail Adams.

**\*\*Major Paper #1:** Rhetorical Analysis of Schlosser’s argument in *Fast Food Nation*.

**\*\*Major Paper #2:** Argument of Proposal based on one problem/concern raised in Schlosser’s *Fast Food Nation*. Multiple sources should be referenced in creating an argument/claim.

### Second Quarter: Exposition and Synthesis

Nonfiction: *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell

Essays: “Death of a Moth” by Virginia Woolf; “Living Like Weasels” by Annie Dillard; “Consider the Lobster” by David Foster Wallace.

Visual Analysis: *Inequality for All* by Robert Reich

**\*\*Major Paper #3:** Rhetorical Analysis of Gladwell’s argument in *Outliers*.

**\*\*Major Paper #4:** Expository essay on “Success” and the “American Dream”. Multiple sources should be referenced in creating an argument/claim.

### Third Quarter: Narrative and Personal Experience

Nonfiction: *A Deadly Wandering* by Matt Richtel

Essays: “Once More Onto the Lake” by E.B. White; “Shooting an Elephant” by George Orwell; “Learning to Read and Write” by Frederick Douglass; “Salvation” by Langston Hughes; “Notes of a Native Son” by James Baldwin; “Lights of the Long Night” by Andre Dubas.

**\*\*Major Paper #5:** Rhetorical analysis of Richtel’s argument in *A Deadly Wandering*.

**\*\*Major Paper #6:** Narrative essay describing one person’s experience with the “American Dream”. The narrative must be constructed around an interview of an American and his or her experience with the “American Dream”.

### Fourth Quarter: American Literature

American Literature: *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald and *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller.

**\*\*Major Paper #7:** Literary analysis of *The Great Gatsby*.

**\*\*Major Paper #8:** Thematic analysis of *The Crucible*.

## **Teaching Strategies:**

“Says/Does” Analysis: An important close reading routine.

When students conduct close reading, they must consider not only what a text says but what it does. Students will consider how language functions, which is distinct from what it says. This is based on Kenneth Bruffee’s “descriptive outline” as presented in *A Short Course on Writing*.

Socratic Seminar: Students ask questions of one another in a discussion focused on a topic, essential question, or selected text. The question initiates the conversation that continues with a series of responses and additional questions.

Debate: Students present a formal or informal argument that defends a claim with reasons, while others defend different claims about the same topic or issue. The goal is to debate ideas without attacking the people who defend those ideas.

Jigsaw: Each student in a group reads a different text or different passage from a single text, taking on the role of “expert” on what was read. Students share the information from that reading with students from other groups, then return to their original group to share the new knowledge.

Monologue/Speech: Students will be given an opportunity to deliver a rhetorical monologue on a topic of their choosing. The monologue will not only test students’ public speaking ability, but their knowledge of argument, rhetoric, and language gain from the course.

## **Student Evaluation:**

Students are evaluated in the course on the basis of: major papers; class participation and discussion; in-class writing; AP-style practice exams; and homework. In this course, student thinking, reading, writing, listening, and speaking are at the center of class activity. Attendance (physical and mental) is crucial to success in the class, and it is part of the student’s participation grade. The breakdown of a student’s grade is as follows:

-Major Papers: 30%

-Timed Writings: 25%

-Quizzes/Multiple Choice: 20%

-Participation/Discussion: 15%

-Journals: 10%

-Homework: 5%

98-100%=A+ 93-97=A 90-92=A- 88-89=B+ 83-86=B 80-82=B- 78-79=C+ 73-76=C 70-72=C- 68-69=D+ 63-67=D 60-62=D- 59 and below=F

**\*\*Final Exams are worth one-third of the student’s semester grade\*\***

-The first semester final exam is a practice AP English Language and Composition exam.

-The second semester final exam is the AP English Language and Composition exam. Students who do not take the exam will write a research-based term paper covering one of the many topics discussed during the course.

### **Attendance:**

In order to get the most out of the class, it is important to come to class and to arrive on time.

If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to make-up the assignment or assessment on your own time. You can contact me through e-mail ([jspitzer@muroc.k12.ca.us](mailto:jspitzer@muroc.k12.ca.us)) or by calling the school (661-258-4411 ex.4028). You may also view the posted agenda on the class website ([jasonspitzer.org/ap-language-and-composition](http://jasonspitzer.org/ap-language-and-composition)).

**Coming to class late is disruptive.** Students must be in their assigned seats with the required materials when the bell rings or they will be marked tardy.

Unexcused absences and/or tardys will impact a student's participation and discussion grade.

### **\*\*Board Policy 5121 (Unexcused Absences)\*\***

If a student misses class without an excuse and does not subsequently turn in homework, take a test or fulfill another class requirement that he/she missed, the teacher may lower the student's grade for non-performance.

Students with excessive unexcused absences (more than 20% per grading period) may be given a failing grade and not receive credit for the class(es). Teachers who withhold class credit for this reason shall so inform the class and parent/guardians at the beginning of the semester.

### **Late/Missing Work:**

Late/Missing classwork and homework will be accepted no later than the end of the grading period for partial credit, unless it was assigned or due on a day in which there is an excused absence.

### **Course Textbooks:**

Beers, Kylene, et al. *Collections Grade 11*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017.

Diyanni, Robert, ed. *One Hundred Great Essays*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Pearson, 2011. Print.

### **Course Resources:**

*AP English Language Course Description*. New York: The College Board, 2014. Print.

Lunsford, Andrea A. and John J. Ruskiewicz. *Everything's an Argument*. 5th ed. Boston: Bedford, 2010. Print.

New York Times Room for Debate

Intelligence Squared: US

## AP English Language and Composition

I have read the course syllabus for the class, and I understand what is expected of me in this course.

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Print Student Name

Student Signature

Date

I have read my child's course syllabus for the class, and I understand what is expected of my child in this course.

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Print Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date

Parent E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Phone: \_\_\_\_\_