

English Language and Composition

The Course

An AP course in English Language and Composition engages students in becoming skilled readers of prose written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and 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 generic conventions and the resources of language contribute to the effectiveness in writing.

The college composition course for which the AP Language and Composition substitutes is one of the most varied in the curriculum. The course often allows students to write in a variety of forms—narrative, exploratory, expository, argumentative—and on a variety of subjects from personal experiences to public policies, from imaginative literature to popular culture. But the overarching purpose is to enable students to write effectively and confidently in their college courses across the curriculum and in their professional and personal lives.

An AP English Language and Composition course should help students move beyond such programmatic responses as the five-paragraph essay that provides an introduction with a thesis and three reasons, body paragraphs on each reason, and a conclusion that restates the thesis. Although such formulaic approaches may provide minimal organization, they often encourage unnecessary repetition and fail to engage the reader. Students should be encouraged to place their emphasis on content, purpose, and audience and to allow this focus to guide their organization and develop their writing “voice”.

Upon completing the Language and Composition course, then, 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
- Demonstrate understanding and mastery of standard written English as well as stylistic maturity in their own writings
- Write in a variety of genres and contexts, both formal and informal, employing appropriate conventions
- Produce expository and argumentative compositions that introduce a complex central idea and develop it with appropriate, specific evidence, cogent explanations, and clear transitions
- Use literary devices to create voice and reader interest

The Resources

- Texts read
- AP Lang teachers (emails, phone numbers, and office hours are listed on syllabus)
- Newspapers, magazines, any reading material at all
- Fellow students (past and present)

- www.virtualsalt.com
- <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/>

- **The Exam**

**English Language and
Composition**

45%

Section I

54 questions (60 minutes)

55%

Section II

3 essays (15-minute reading period,
120-minute writing period)