

# AP Language and Composition

Mr. Harris – B359

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## Class Description

Welcome to AP Language and Composition! In this class, we study rhetoric (more on that later). We will spend most of our time reading essays, novels, and poems to understand how and why authors use language to create meaning. But we will also look at commercials, posters, viral videos, cartoons, The Daily Show, and just about anything else you can imagine, to analyze how meaning is constructed in a variety of mediums. And all along the way, you will be applying what we learn to your own writing.

This is **not** a test-prep course. Think of this class as an entry-level college composition course. The objective of this course is, quite simply, to produce excellent readers and sensational writers. And if we are successful in class, then success on the AP test will naturally follow.

## Course Objectives

By the end of this class, students will be able to

- identify how an argument is constructed, and determine whether it is effective.
- identify and explain an author's use of rhetorical strategies.
- write effectively in a variety of modes, including description, narration, exposition, and argument, integrating a variety of rhetorical devices.
- reflect on their own writing and understand how revision is a vital part of the writing process.
- evaluate, incorporate, and cite a variety of sources into their writing.

## Student Responsibilities

This is treated as a college-level course, so be prepared for high expectations. You can expect a minimum of 5 hours of homework each week, whether reading or writing. We will have a number of long-range assignments, so you will need to manage your time carefully. You are expected to be prepared for class each day. While I understand that a number of you are taking other AP courses and/or are involved in a number of extra-curricular activities, I will not accept any excuses for being unprepared.

Much of your work will be done online, so you must have access to a computer at all times. Failure to be able to get to a computer to finish work is **NOT** an acceptable excuse for not having work completed.

**Saturday Sessions:** There will be three Saturday study sessions this year. Please understand that attendance at these sessions is an important and valuable part of the course. All students are expected to attend all three sessions. **If you are aware you have a scheduling conflict, talk to me ASAP! The weeks before are not the best time to let me know.**

Saturday Session #1 - October 25 @ PVMHS

Saturday Session #2 - January 10 @ PVMHS

Saturday Session #3 - March 14 @ TBA

## Classroom Policies

**Attendance:** This will be a fast-paced course. Absences mean that you will miss out on important material, and it will be very easy to find yourself falling behind. Regular classroom attendance is therefore expected. **In the event that you are absent, I expect to find out what you have missed as soon as possible.** The best ways to do this is to ask a fellow classmate or refer to my website. Please do not ask me at the beginning, middle or end of class. You should plan on checking with me after school to make sure you have not missed anything. To make up the day, make an appointment in the appointment book.

**Field Trips:** I believe students need to be exposed to many different areas and experiences throughout their high school careers. With that said, please be aware of how many field trips you agree to go on and why you are going on them. Are you just looking to get out of school or is it something worthwhile? Just think about it before you ask me to sign off. Can you afford the missed class?

**IMPORTANT: All work will be made up when students arrive back from being out.**

**Tardiness:** Being late to class is simply unacceptable. Please be on time for every class. We only have 45 minutes to get a lot accomplished.

**Conduct:** Students are expected to follow all the rules listed in the student handbook. That means no food, coffees, etc... in my classroom. Please don't try to be clever; I've seen it all.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is any attempt to pass off someone else's work as your own, whether it is a copied homework assignment or an essay that contains material copied off the internet or any alternative source. **Any** student involved in plagiarism will receive a **ZERO** on the assignment and a phone call will be made to that student's guardians explaining what has happened. Furthermore, all cases of plagiarism are referred to the Dean's office for possible additional consequences. Allowing your homework/quiz/test/paper/etc... to be copied makes you just as guilty as the person doing the copying! Finally, **ignorance** is not an acceptable excuse. If I find it, you did it. End of story.

Remember that at the end of all this is the AP test, and there is no way to cheat your way to a good score. Also, plagiarism can have dire consequences beyond this class. Imputations of cheating can keep you out of NHS, make it more difficult to get letters of recommendation for college, etc...

**Deadlines:** For the most part, deadlines are firm. If there is any time you need an extension, please ask me ahead of time. **The night before does not count as ahead of time. Homework is not taken late.**

### Grading

All assignments in class are assigned a value of 10 – 200 points. Homework assignments are generally 10-20 points, quizzes 40-60, written assignments 80-100, and major projects (such as the research paper) can be up to 200 points. Each quarter your average will be the percentage of points you have earned out of the total possible number of points.

In order to keep the grade that you have earned, there are **2 prerequisites**. You must...

1. Read 1 recreational book per month that you have selected to read.
2. Write a monthly one-pager based on your recreational book.

If you are unable to meet these prerequisites, you will lose a letter grade.