

# Advanced Placement English Language and Composition/AP English III

## Instructors

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## Course Requirements

This course emphasizes the reading of non-fiction and writing synthesis, analysis and argumentative papers. It also meets the state curriculum goals that include the graduation project research paper and the reading of fiction, drama and poetry. The eleventh grade WCPSS English III course covers eight periods of American literature, and the AP part of the course infuses the literary mix with a wider array of sixteenth through twenty-first century works.

## Expectations

The College Board designed this course to enable high school students to meet the requirements of a college freshman composition course, and for those who score high enough on the AP exam, to earn credit for that course. Like its college equivalent, the purpose of this AP course "is to enable students to read complex texts with understanding and to write prose of sufficient richness and complexity to communicate effectively with mature readers" (from "English Language," <http://www.collegeboard.com>).

And there you have it. You will be vaulting over the large divide between your 10<sup>th</sup> grade English class and this college freshman course. You will be reading and writing on the college level, and we will be coaching you through this transition.

## Summer Required Reading List

To jump-start this transition, please secure a copy of each of the following works to study:

- [The Scarlet Letter](#) by Nathaniel Hawthorne
- [Walden](#) by Henry David Thoreau
- [Mythology](#) by Edith Hamilton
- [The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass](#) by Frederick Douglass
- [Raney](#) by Clyde Edgerton

## The Big "So What?"

Identifying literary devices, characters, grammatical/syntactical devices in a work is only the first step of close reading. Your job is to move beyond simply telling *what* devices an author uses, to analyzing and articulating *how* and *why* he or she uses them. The question to answer is not "*What?*" but "*So what?*"

For the works listed above, you will want to focus on four main questions:

1. What are the authors saying? (subject)
2. Why are they writing—how do you know? (For what purposes—to define, to defend, to argue, to explore, to persuade, to classify, to compare/contrast?)
3. How are they saying it? (the "what?"—what techniques do they employ?)  
Look for patterns of usage:
  - What does their diction (word choices) reveal about their tone (attitude)?
  - What level/s of diction do they use—any dialect, formal diction, etc.? (consider their intended audiences)
  - Do they employ imagery and the language of metaphor? How? What are the effects?
  - What grammatical/syntactical patterns do they use? (sentence lengths, structures, orders, parallelisms, inversions, repetitions, etc.)
4. What effects do they achieve as a result? (the "so what?")

Considering not only what the writer says, but also how he or she says it will work for you beyond analysis of the work itself. To discover and develop your own voice—your own writing style—you will emulate those writers' techniques that appeal most to you and apply them to your own writing. You get to try on different writing styles and determine which ones fit you best for which purposes.

### **Some Important Terms to Know:**

**Genre:** the literary form or type, such as, novel, play, poem, essay, speech, etc.

**Allusion:** a reference in a literary selection to an historical event, the Bible, mythology, works of art or other literature, i.e. the Depression, the Odyssey, Mona Lisa.

**Diction:** a writer's or speaker's word choice (connotation, denotation, symbolism, imagery)

**Syntax:** a writer's or speaker's sentence patterns, such as phrases and types of clauses

**Synthesis:** the combining of separate elements or substances to form a coherent whole. In research synthesis refers to critically selecting information from a variety of sources to inform your own discussion of a topic; combining sources and your position to form a cohesive, supported argument, documenting sources accurately.

**Modes of writing/ Rhetorical modes:** the strategy a writer uses to accomplish his or her purposes (analysis, description, argument, contrast and comparison, cause and effect, narration and definition.)

### **Note-taking Suggestions**

Here is where your reading for analysis greatly enhances your reading for enjoyment, so take the types of notes that will best help you to identify, analyze, and, ultimately, emulate the styles of great writers. Interact with the texts—talk to them, ask questions, make observations and comments. The following are some note-taking suggestions:

1. Dialectic journal/two-column notes: divide a loose-leaf page in half; write a thought-provoking line or phrase on left side and write a personal response to it on the right side.
2. Annotation: highlight, underline and write comments and questions in the margins.
3. Summary: Read a chapter of a book or a section of an essay. Close the book. Summarize what you have read. List major characters. Identify conflicts and turning points. Identify changes in style. (You may want to use a data organizer like the attached Major Works of Literature Data Sheet.)
4. SOAPStone analysis: especially helpful for non-fiction works, you may want to use the attached SOAPStone Tool for Analysis as a guide.

Whatever methods you choose for taking notes, look for the writer's purpose and the best literary techniques and strategies the writer employs. See important terms to know (above).

*Bring all notes with you on the first day of class for your own reference. You will keep them in your course notebook.*

### **Assessments** *(be prepared for assessments beginning the first day of class)*

- Objective test on the mythology material (see attached study guide)
- Essays (given in class): AP writing prompts requiring synthesis of several works to defend, refute, or qualify given arguments.

*You will not be writing assessment essays over the summer—we will give you diagnostic/assessment prompts the first part of class.*

*Bring all notes with you on the first day of class for your own reference.*

### **Attachments**

- Mythology study guide
- Major Works of Literature Data Packet
- SOAPStone analysis tool