

AP Language/American Lit. – 2019-20 Course Guide

In this course, students refine skills in writing, analyzing literature, speaking, researching, and thinking; throughout, the focus is on argument. Students write persuasive, analytical, and research-based essays. Students study American Literature from the 1600s to the present, examining its links with history. Students should possess strong writing and thinking skills. Extensive reading with in-depth textual examination is required. This course is taught at an Advanced Placement level, requiring students to be prepared for and attentive during class.

Overall Goals: Through this course, students

- Refine writing skills using a variety of forms, specifically related to analysis of rhetorical strategies and developing researched arguments.
- Enhance speaking and listening skills in both large and small group situations.
- Analyze and evaluate argumentative texts, and synthesize both fiction and nonfiction readings.
- Recognize the cultural context of language, both past and present.
- Use critical thinking skills, specifically in problem solving and research strategies.
- Develop the skills and knowledge necessary to function as an “informed citizen” in our society.
- Create quality written and oral products that show clear, organized and developed thinking.

Course Content:

Ongoing Curriculum Emphasis:

Argument Textbook: *Practical Argument* by Laurie Kirszner & Stephen Mandell

Argument Writing and Analysis of Rhetorical Strategies Timed Write Responses

Research Skills and MLA Format Synthesis of Sources

Critical Analysis of Reading AP Test Preparation

Quarter One Focus: The Beginnings of American Literature

Units: *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

The Crucible by Arthur Miller

American Argument: Thomas Paine

Quarter Two Focus: Transcendentalism & Realism

Units: Transcendentalism: Ralph Waldo Emerson & Henry David Thoreau

Realism: Kate Chopin & Frederick Douglass

Quarter Three Focus: Historical Research, Harlem Renaissance & The Jazz Age

Units: American History Research Project – Paper and Speech

Harlem Renaissance: Richard Wright, Marcus Garvey, Langston Hughes & Zora Neale Hurston

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Quarter Four Focus: AP Test Preparation & Literary Experiences

Units: AP Language Exam Preparation: Multiple Choice and Free Response Practice

American Drama: *Fences* by August Wilson & *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller

Modern American Literature selection

Course Workload:

Students should expect several hours of homework a week. Reading and writing assignments are given out in advance, allowing students to manage their homework schedules. Students are expected to be active, critical readers who attend to the nuances of language, stylistic distinction, and audience; this requires more time than skimming the text. Students complete 1-2 major essays a quarter, along with several short analysis or synthesis responses. In 2nd semester, students complete a major historically-based research paper (6-8 pages in length).

Students benefit from taking the opportunity to improve their understanding of the world around them through reading the newspaper or news periodicals, and/or watching or listening to in-depth news coverage.

Behavioral Expectations – We are HERE

- **Be honest.** Practice academic integrity. Own your choices.

- **Be engaged.** Be on time. Participate fully and intelligently with assignments, including reading. Be attentive in class.
- **Be respectful.** Honor diverse opinions. Show respect for yourself, your peers, and our equipment.
- **Be empathetic.** Give and receive feedback kindly. Consider the impact of what you say, do & write. Help those who need it.

Evaluation, Grading & Assessment

The grading scale is printed below. Assignments are not weighted, and are graded on a point scale. Final semester grades within 0.5% of the next grade mark will be rounded up. While I am happy to discuss individual assignment grades, class time will only be used to discuss general grading criteria and expectations.

A = 93 - 100%	C+ = 77 - 79%	D = 60 - 66%
A- = 90 - 92%	C = 73 - 76%	F = 59% and below
B+ = 87 - 89%	C- = 70 - 72%	
B = 83 - 86%	D+ = 67 - 69%	

Assessment: A number of components are included in the final grade, including, but not limited to, homework assignments, group work, essays and writing process assignments, quizzes and exams, literature-based activities, and projects. Students receive clear guidelines, expectations and rubrics as assignments are given.

Academic Integrity

Demonstrating academic integrity is paramount to students' success in this course. Any form of cheating, including plagiarism, is an attempt by a student to show a level of skill that is not a true reflection of their own. Plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without properly acknowledging one's source) of any type will not be tolerated. "Someone else's words or ideas" may come from a professional source, an electronic resource or another student. Students are strongly discouraged from using study guides like *Spark Notes* or *Shmoop* when analyzing literature because of the ease of unintentionally "borrowing" ideas. Only those assignments labeled as group or partner work may be completed cooperatively. Violations of academic integrity also include any unauthorized use or discussion of tests or answer keys, or other methods of obtaining answers. **Students are required to turn in all final draft writing assignments to TurnItIn.com by the assignment's due date.** Assignments not properly submitted to TurnItIn.com will not be graded.

Attendance and Late & Make-Up Work

All writing process steps and major projects will only be evaluated if they are submitted by the posted due date.

Students who are absent are encouraged to email these assignments so that they receive this feedback. An excused absence on the date that a process step is due or when the class is working on a writing assignment does not excuse the student from meeting the final draft's due date. Students with excused absences must turn in assignments the day they return. Work will not be accepted if an absence is unexcused. Late work is accepted up to 5 school days after the due date, for a 10% point deduction. Work more than 5 school days late may be accepted, but only after a teacher conference has been held outside of class time to determine a make-up plan. Students are encouraged to use provided unit overviews and the class website to stay up to date on class activities and due dates: <http://issaquahhighkdean.weebly.com/>

AP Language Exam

This course is designed, in part, to prepare students to successfully complete the AP English Language & Composition Exam (given May 13th), using American Literature as the primary content. The exam focuses on argument and rhetoric. A portion of the 2nd semester grade can be improved based on exam performance.

Other Information:

Conferences: Because of their one-on-one nature, writing conferences lead to the most significant growth in writing abilities. Conference availability will be announced, but I am generally available before school (beginning at 7:15 am) and after school every day but Wednesdays.