

# Course Guide for AP English Language and Composition

Palo Alto High School 2024-2025

**Ms. Angell**

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*Pronouns: she/her/hers*

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## Ms. Angell's Schedule

1°: Prep	5°: SJP (rm. 218)
2°: Prep	6°: SJP (rm. 218)
3°: AAR (rm. 204)	7°: Prep
4°: Prep	



Please continue to expect a supportive, focused learning environment & make every effort to create the same for others. Communicate early & often with your teacher.

## What is AP English Language and Composition?

The following course description is published by the College Board:

“AP English Language and Composition cultivates the reading and writing skills that students need for college success and for intellectually responsible civic engagement. The reading and writing students do in the course should deepen and expand their understanding of *how* written language functions rhetorically: to communicate writers’ intentions and elicit readers’ responses in particular situations. The course cultivates the rhetorical understanding and use of written language by directing students’ attention to writer/reader interactions in their reading and writing of various formal and informal genres (e.g., memos, letters, advertisements, political satires, personal narratives, scientific arguments, cultural critiques, research reports).”

## WHAT IS RHETORIC?

“RHETORIC IS A THOUGHTFUL, REFLECTIVE ACTIVITY LEADING TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION, INCLUDING THE RATIONAL EXCHANGE OF DIFFERING VIEWPOINTS.”

“[Rhetoric] can resolve conflicts, persuade readers or listeners to support [your] position, or move others to take action.”

*The Language of Composition (4)*

Drawing from a wide selection of nonfiction texts, this course will emphasize close reading skills, rhetorical analysis, and argumentative writing tasks that require synthesis of such texts’ claims and central ideas. Students who take this course are highly recommended and encouraged to take the Advanced Placement exam given by the College Board in May.

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## What is on the AP Language Exam?

### Exam Overview

*The AP English Language and Composition Exam assesses student understanding of the skills and essential knowledge outlined in the course framework. The exam is 3 hours and 15 minutes long and includes 45 multiple-choice questions and 3 free-response questions. The details of the exam, including exam weighting and timing, can be found below:*

Section	Question Type	Number of Questions	Exam Weighting	Timing
<b>I</b>	<b>Multiple-choice questions</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>60 minutes</b>
	Reading questions	23–25		
	Writing questions	20–22		
<b>II</b>	<b>Free-response questions</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>2 hours, 15 minutes</b> (includes one 15-minute reading period)
	Question 1: Synthesis (6 points)			40 minutes recommended per essay
	Question 2: Rhetorical Analysis (6 points)			
	Question 3: Argument (6 points)			

The exam assesses the following four big ideas for the course, as detailed below:

#### Big Ideas

Rhetorical Situation

Claims and Evidence

Reasoning and Organization

Style

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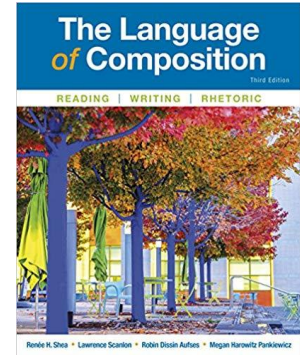
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## What will I read in this class?

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Selections from *The Language of Composition*, Third Edition.  
The chapters contain nonfiction texts that are organized thematically across the following topics:

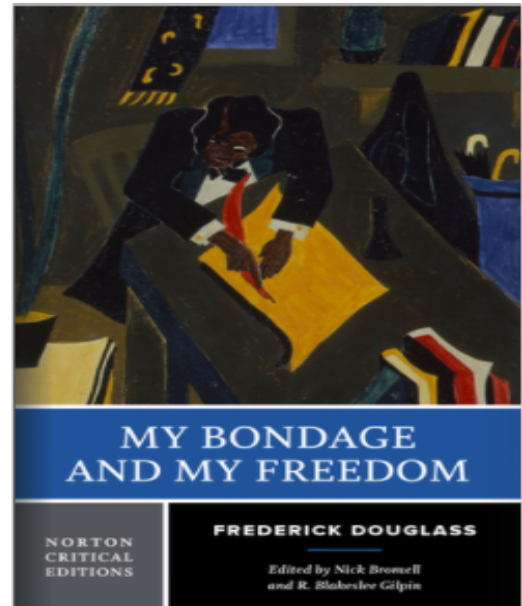
- **Education**—*To what extent do our schools serve the goals of a true education?*
- **Popular Culture**—*To what extent does pop culture reflect our society's values?*
- **The Environment**—*What is our responsibility to the natural environment?*
- **Community**—*What is the relationship of the individual to the community?*
- **Sports**—*How do the values of sports affect the way we see ourselves?*
- **Money**—*What is the role of money in our everyday lives?*
- **Gender**—*What is the impact of the gender roles that society creates and enforces?*
- **Justice**—*To what extent do our laws and politics reflect the values of a just society?*



Student selected book-length texts for independent reading.

*My Bondage and My Freedom* by Frederick Douglass.

*My Bondage and My Freedom* is Frederick Douglass' second autobiography in which he recounts his journey growing up in and escaping from American slavery to become one of the most important intellectuals of the 19th century. Always striving to “shine a light upon” the injustices of slavery as a system, Douglass' perspective was central to the debate resulting in the Civil War, and he continues to inspire through his appeals to “the indestructible and unchangeable laws of human nature” in the struggle against oppression.



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## How will I understand my skill growth over time?

All course materials and grades will be posted on Schoology. Assignments will focus on building your abilities in the following skills:

1. **Claims**—creating arguments
2. **Evidence**—supporting arguments
3. **Analysis**—explaining how evidence supports claims
4. **Organization**—structuring arguments
5. **Close Reading**—analyzing rhetorical choices
6. **Style**—vocabulary, grammar, proofreading

Grading categories will continue to be either Formative or Summative.

Work will be graded on the following scale using skill-specific scoring guides aligned to the College Board scoring rubrics whenever possible:

Levels of Performance	
<b>A</b>	<b>Mastery: Exceeds the standard</b> Advanced application or analysis of the standard Demonstrates a <b>sophisticated</b> application of skills via artifacts. Students explicitly and accurately address a <b>complex task that includes multiple steps or concepts</b> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>★ Exhibits novel, insightful, and/or creative ways to show learning.</li><li>★ Shows frequent evidence of growth.</li><li>★ Missing few or no artifacts.</li></ul>
<b>B</b>	<b>Proficient: Strongly meets the standard</b> Good application of the standard. Students explicitly and accurately state relevant concept knowledge as well as <b>apply it correctly and completely</b> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>★ Demonstrates an ability to <b>apply</b> foundational skills via artifacts.</li><li>★ Shows some evidence of growth.</li><li>★ Missing some artifacts.</li></ul>
<b>C</b>	<b>Competent: Meets the Standard</b> Student's work demonstrates basic understanding of standard. Students <b>explicitly and accurately state relevant concept knowledge</b> , but the application is incorrect or incomplete. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>★ Demonstrates an ability to <b>identify</b> basic knowledge via artifacts.</li><li>★ Shows little evidence of growth.</li><li>★ Missing many artifacts.</li></ul>
<b>P</b>	<b>Not Yet Meeting standard</b> Student is unable to demonstrate the standard without assistance. Students use relevant content knowledge to <b>try to address the task</b> . The content knowledge may not be correct. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>★ <b>Striving</b> for basic knowledge.</li><li>★ No evidence of growth.</li><li>★ Missing most artifacts.</li></ul>
<b>NM</b>	<b>Insufficient Evidence</b> Missing assignment. Students <b>did not complete</b> the artifact or address the task in a way that allows for meaningful feedback to be provided.

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## A Note about Writing in this Class

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We will be completing timed and take-home writing. On-demand, or timed papers will help you to prepare for the test. Take-home or process papers will measure your growth over time. All process (papers that you are able to revise before turning in) papers must be submitted in order to earn credit for the course. If you cannot turn in a process paper within one week of the due date, you will be required to complete a timed write (during PRIME) to replace the paper.

## What if I need more time on an assignment (other than an essay)?

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I'm committed to providing you with detailed, specific feedback on your learning activities during in-class conferences or through writing trackers to chart your growth. In order for you to benefit from this feedback, please meet due dates to the best of your ability. If you need an extension, please contact Ms. Angell.

*Note: You will have multiple opportunities in each skill-based category to demonstrate growth over the semester. Once a new assignment exists in a category, previous missing assignments in that category will not receive feedback.*

*Note: All 504/IEP accommodations will be adhered to in this class, including penalty-free extensions. Advance-notification is appreciated, but not expected.*

## What if I'm absent?

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This class will abide by Paly's attendance policies. Punctual, regular attendance and thoughtful class participation are critical for your success in this class. Please speak with your teacher when you return from your excused absence to discuss makeup work.

## Academic Honesty

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Paly's Student Handbook explains that "honesty, trust and integrity are vital components of the education process. The School Board believes that academic honesty and personal integrity are fundamental components of a student's education and character development. The Board expects that students will not cheat, lie, plagiarize or commit other acts of academic dishonesty."

"Students are expected to produce their own work, complete course activities themselves, and take course exams, tests or quizzes without the assistance of others unless otherwise directly specified by the teacher. Students and families should understand and act upon the values of academic integrity and should encourage the highest standards of academic behavior from themselves and their peers."

**Plagiarism** is a form of academic dishonesty in which an individual submits or presents the work of another person as their own.

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## Some Examples of Types of Plagiarism We Have Encountered from Students:

- Not putting quotation marks around words that are not your own is plagiarism, not paraphrasing (even with a citation).
- Taking a single sentence from another writer and adding it to your work is plagiarism. (Some students mistakenly think this isn't plagiarism because the copied portion is so brief).
- Taking a selection of text that you did not originally compose and replacing some of the words with synonyms is plagiarism, not paraphrasing.
- Plagiarizing classmates' writing after a peer editing session (often without that classmate's knowledge).
  - *Pro Tip: If you digitally share docs with your classmates for peer editing, unshare the doc after the editing session to prevent the temptation of someone plagiarizing your work.*
- Plagiarism in AP Language tends to happen most frequently in the analysis portion of process papers (where you explain the implications of your evidence), so when you draft and revise your work, ensure your analysis is uniquely your own.
- 2 (or more) students submitting process papers that contain all the same pieces of evidence in the same order is plagiarism (even if the analysis is unique).

**A Note about Artificial Intelligence:** Ms. Angell will explain what you can and cannot use AI for when completing your AP Language assignments. It will never be acceptable to ask an AI to write your essay or the analysis portion of your essay—this includes cutting and pasting **or** rewriting and AI's analysis in your own words into your papers.

*Pro Tip: Just ask Ms. Angell before you use AI and describe how you'd like to use it so she can tell you in advance if that's an acceptable use or not.*

## Some Resources for Academic Honesty

- MIT [side-by-side examples of paraphrasing vs. plagiarizing](#).
- [Academic Honesty for English Students](#)—A video created by our librarian Mrs. Thomas (11:53)
- Google Docs has an Add-On called “Draft Coach” that allows you to scan your documents up to 3 times using turnitin.com's originality report before formally submitting your work on turnitin.com.
  - Google Docs > Extensions > Add-Ons > Draft Coach

If you consider plagiarizing at any point during the course, please stop and reach out to me. I can be much more helpful *before* you plagiarize than after. I'm your coach and I'm rooting for your success!

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## What are the classroom expectations for this class?

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The following is expected of each student:

1. Essential respect for classmates and teacher to ensure an intellectually safe environment;  
\*This looks like behavior that does not disrupt the students from learning or the teacher from teaching.
2. Regular and prompt attendance;
3. Preparation for class every day—this includes bringing supplies and completed work;
4. Frequent and relevant classroom participation that contributes to the learning taking place;
5. Adherence to school rules at all times.
- 6.

**Cell phone policy:** Cell phones are not allowed unless explicitly stated during instruction and work time in class.

**Food and drink:** Eating and drinking in the classroom is allowed so long as it is not disruptive (loud, messy, etc.) or dangerous (avoid foods with peanuts, tree nuts, and sesame).

**Leaving class:** Please raise your hand/communicate with me to get permission to leave class. Check out when you leave and check back in when you return. If you need to go to the wellness center, let me know so I can provide a pass.

## Can I reach out and check in?

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We want all students to be successful in this course. If you're having difficulty engaging with and getting the most out of this course, please let me know and we can discuss how best to support your success.