ADVANCED PLACEMENT
LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION:
Syllabus and Annotated Bibliography

“Put it before them briefly so they will read it, clearly so they will appreciate it, picturesquely so they will remember it and, above all, accurately so they will be guided by its light.”

--Joseph Pulitzer

INSTRUCTOR’S CONTACT INFO:
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COURSE PHILOSOPHY:
The primary focus of this course is to prepare students for the AP Language and Composition Exam on May 9. Every student who takes Junior AP is required to take either the official AP test or a formal practice test. The official test fee is $89; although this seems expensive, the financial benefits of performing well on the test outweigh the cost of the exam. Details about the test will be further discussed in class; additionally, information is available on the College Board’s official website: http://www.collegeboard.org.

There are two components to the AP exam: first, a 60-minute multiple choice test, where students analyze 5-6 reading selections and answer several questions for each; second, a 2 ¼ hour block of time in which student needs to complete three separate essays, relating to rhetorical analysis, free response, and research synthesis.

Upon completing the AP English Language and Composition course 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;
• write for a variety of purposes;
• produce expository, analytical, and argumentative compositions that introduce a complex central idea and develop it with appropriate evidence drawn from primary and/or secondary sources, cogent explanations, and clear transitions;
• demonstrate understanding and mastery of standard written English as well as stylistic maturity in their own writings;
• demonstrate understanding of conventions of citing primary and secondary sources;
• move effectively through the stages of the writing process, with careful attention to inquiry and research, drafting, revising, editing, and review;
• write thoughtfully about their own process of composition;
• revise a work to make it suitable for a different audience;
• analyze image as text; and
• demonstrate research skills and, in particular, the ability to evaluate, use, and cite primary and secondary sources.
• evaluate and incorporate reference documents into researched papers.
• cite sources using Modern Language Association editorial style
SUGGESTED MATERIALS:
I strongly encourage you to purchase a three-ring binder (with dividers) and a couple of spiral bound notebooks that are solely for this course. Or, if you prefer, several manila folders would work fine, too. The most important thing is that you find an organizational structure that works for you. The following sections are suggested for optimal organization:

- Agenda/Planner
- Drafting Process
- Rhetorical/Stylistic Devices
- Rhetorical Analysis Journals
- Vocabulary
- Practice AP Exams

Other materials you will need are: paper, black/blue pens, pencils, highlighters and post-it notes.

SUMMER COURSEWORK PREREQUISITE:
For the 2013-2014 school year, it is required that students enrolled in AP Language and Composition have completed a few reading and writing assignments—prior to the first day of class.

All students who enrolled in this course during the spring of 2013 had summer coursework information communicated to them. Coming to class unprepared with this material will be detrimental to your grade, as well as raise serious doubts about your commitment to an AP course; if this happens, I will contact your parents so that we can discuss what options may be best for your success.

PRIMARY TEXTS:
The fictional texts that we read are chosen first and foremost because they have literary merit; you will study the techniques found in the texts to enhance your individual writing style. Furthermore, the intense study of these texts will help prepare you for the AP Language and Composition test. Yet, the focus of the AP Language and Composition exam is exclusively non-fiction, therefore the bulk of reading will be non-fiction books and essays, as well as visual (documentary and photo) analysis.

The following is a list of possible fiction covered (*excerpted from amazon.com):

Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451.*
"First published in 1953, *Fahrenheit 451* is a classic novel set in the future when books forbidden by a totalitarian regime are burned. The hero, a book burner, suddenly discovers that books are flesh and blood ideas that cry out silently when put to the torch.” Students will examine Bradbury’s use of syntax, figurative language, imagery, allusion, and diction.

Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening.*
At the turn of the twentieth century when this novella was published, it caused a great deal of controversy. The general public was not ready for the story Chopin illustrated: an upper-class woman who experiences confusing and dissatisfied feelings with her domestic life. Students will study Chopin’s use of symbolism and motif and look at her purpose through a feminist lens.

Voltaire. *Candide.*
"Satirical novel published in 1759 that is the best-known work by Voltaire. It is a savage denunciation of metaphysical optimism—as espoused by the German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz—that reveals a world of horrors and folly. In this philosophical fantasy, naive Candide sees and suffers such misfortune that he ultimately rejects the philosophy of his tutor Doctor Pangloss, who claims that "all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds." Candide and his companions--Pangloss, his beloved Cunegonde, and his servant Cacambo--display an instinct for survival that provides them hope in an otherwise somber setting. When they all retire together to a simple life on a small farm, they discover that the secret of happiness is "to cultivate one's garden," a practical philosophy that excludes excessive idealism and nebulous metaphysics. Students will read the text to sharpen their grasp of satirical arguments."
The following is a list of possible non-fiction covered or excerpted (*publisher’s back cover summary provided):


*“The first full-color rhetorical reader, *Frames of Mind* has provocative visuals and smart assignment cycles designed to inspire real rhetorical responses to the balanced mix of readings that range in every chapter from the familiar to the academic.” Students will read examples of the various modes of discourse as models and analyze the visuals for the message, tone, and style.

Roskelly, Hephzibah C. and David Jolliffe. *Everyday Use: Rhetoric at Work in Reading and Writing.*

“Brief and accessible, this [reader] teaches students to read closely, critically, and rhetorically, and to write effectively to achieve their rhetorical goals. The five traditional canons of rhetoric--invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery--are introduced in a particularly accessible chapter, showing students that rhetoric has roots in antiquity but essential applications in our own time” (barnesandnoble.com).

Schlosser, Eric. *Fast Food Nation.*

*“Fast food has hastened the malling of our landscape, widened the chasm between rich and poor, fueled an epidemic of obesity, and propelled American cultural imperialism abroad. That’s a lengthy list of charges, but Eric Schlosser makes them stick with an artful mix of first-rate reportage, wry, wit and careful reasoning.” Students will read Schlosser’s account to practice their analysis of rhetorical strategies and argument. Students will also increase their knowledge of current issues to better prepare for mature discourse on the AP exam essays.


In 1845, Thoreau moved to the woods near Walden Pond to escape the material world around him and to allow time for writing, thinking, observing nature, and learning the "art of living.” His observations on society are frequently alluded to in literature and media. Students will study this text as an argument; they will discuss and write their responses to his views. Students will also tackle excerpts of the archaic language that gives them more practice for the types of sophisticated reading selections they will encounter on the AP exam.

Wiesel, Elie. *Night.*

“This memoir is a terrifying account of the Nazi death camp horror that turns a young Jewish boy into an agonized witness to the death of his family, the death of his innocence, and the death of his God. *Night* awakens the shocking memory of evil at its absolute and carries with it the unforgettable message that this horror must never be allowed to happen again” (amazon.com). Students will analyze the author’s use of syntax, diction, figurative language and imagery.

5 *Steps to a 5.*

This text is useful because it provides students with key information on how to perform well on the Language and Composition exam.

**DOCUMENTARY FILM:**

In order to reach visual learners, we will analyze documentary films for their rhetoric. Documentaries are a great way to show the art of rhetoric beyond the written word, considering how visual imagery, camera angles, editing, music, and text create an argument. In addition, some documentaries will be shown to illustrate weak arguments (those using fallacies and propaganda techniques). Documentaries that may be shown are:

- *Boys of Baraka* (2006)
- *Jesus Camp* (2006)
- *Just for Kicks* (2005)
- *Why We Fight* (2006)
COURSE OUTLINE FOR 2013-2014:
The term “supplementary material” applies to all essays, shorts stories, films, and other visuals that support the theme and/or rhetorical modes covered in each unit. The time frame, texts, and writings are subject to change based on the needs of the class and new resources that become available.

SEMESTER ONE
Unit 1: Introduction to Rhetoric (9-10 weeks)
“I didn’t have time to write a short letter, so I wrote a long one instead.” –Mark Twain
Supplementary Material: Gore, Al. An Inconvenient Truth (paired with documentary film of students’ choice)
King, Jr., Dr. Martin Luther. “Letter from Birmingham Jail”
“Public Statement by Eight Clergymen”
Walker, Alice. “Everyday Use”
Rhetorical Modes: Narrative, Argument, and Rhetorical Analysis
Writing: “This I Believe” Essay, Visual Analysis, Documentary Rhetorical Analysis, AP Timed Writing—Rhetorical Prompt, Rhetorical Analysis Journal, Learning Targets Reflections

Unit 2: Developing Strong Arguments (8-9 weeks)
“All generalizations are false, including this one.” --Mark Twain
Moore, Michael. Bowling for Columbine.
Schulman, Max. “Love is a Fallacy.”
Rhetorical Modes: Argument and Rhetorical Analysis

SEMESTER TWO
Unit 3: Arguments in Science Fiction (5 weeks)
“A forbidden writing is thought to be a certain spark of truth, one that flies up in the face of them who seek to tread it out.” --Sir Francis Bacon
Supplementary Material: Quindlen, Anna. “With a No. 2 Pencil, Delete!”
Vonnegut, Kurt. “Harrison Bergeron.”
Rhetorical Modes: Argument and Rhetorical Analysis

Unit 4: Satirical Arguments (6 weeks)
“Satire is a lesson; parody is a game.” --Vladimir Nabokov
Book: Voltaire. Candide
Swift, Jonathon. Gulliver’s Travels.
Opinion/Editorials from The Onion.
Clips from Jon Stewart’s The Daily Show.
Rhetorical Modes: Argument Synthesis
Writing: Satire Project and Reflection, AP Synthesis Timed Write, ACT Argument Writing, Learning Target Reflections
Unit 5: Thematic Study: Breaking the “Glass Ceiling” (6 weeks)

“Who looks outside, dreams, who looks inside, awakes.” --Carl Gustav Jung

Book: Chopin, Kate. The Awakening.

Supplementary Material: Brady, Judy. “I Want a Wife.”
Chopin, Kate. “The Story of an Hour.”
Chopin, Kate. “A Pair of Silk Stockings.”
Dillard, Annie. “Death of a Moth.”
Friedan, Betty. Excerpts from The Feminine Mystique.
Woolf, Virginia. “Death of the Moth.”
Wolstonecraft, Mary. “The Vindication of the Rights of Women.”

Rhetorical Modes: Compare/Contrast

Writing: Compare/Contrast using researched sources, Reading Rehearsals, Learning Target Reflections, “One-Pager” Response on outside reading

ONGOING ASSIGNMENTS:

- Weekly to Bi-Weekly: Vocabulary exercise (vocabulary write or quiz due Mondays)
- Monthly: Rhetorical analysis (some articles will be assigned, some chosen through research by students)
- Monthly: Take-home books to read and analyze
- Monthly: Take-home process essay in a certain mode of discourse with reflections
- Monthly: AP timed writing practice AND multiple choice (AP test practice)
- Every unit: Rhetorical/stylistic devices to add to “cheat sheet” and embed in own writing
- Every unit: Reflections on progress toward standards
- Each Semester: Independent non-fiction reading of your choice

TAKE-HOME PROCESS ESSAYS:

The process for completing most major essays will involve multiple drafts, the first being an outline, cluster, or brainstorm. The next drafts will receive feedback from both your peers and instructor. Then a graded draft, which is considered a finished product: it is free of surface errors and is an example of your best effort. All sources analyzed, discussed, or used in essays must be cited using Modern Language Association editorial style.

Although four drafts are required, you can choose to continue revising to improve your grade. Revisions are due within TWO weeks after the graded draft is returned; any written comments or rubrics filled out by me should accompany your revised drafts. After 5 revisions, a student must conference with me one-on-one to be eligible for further revisions.
FINAL EXAM:
The final exams for each semester are worth 20% of your semester grade. There are two components to this final exam grade:

1. **Rhetorical Analysis Conference**: 100 points. You will be required to attend a 30-minute individual conference before or after school with the instructor. You will lead the discussion, demonstrating your growth as a critical reader. You should be prepared to discuss the following: rhetorical and stylistic strategies that convey the author’s purpose, voice, and tone; connections to other texts; and your growing awareness as a reader. This time should be used to share your finest thoughts from both the material covered and, avoiding a regurgitation of class discussions. Your grade will be based on the quality of the journals (as well as completion, if not originally complete on original due date).

2. **Writing Growth**: 100 points. This will be assessed differently each semester.
   1st Semester: You will take a timed write on the rhetorical and free-response AP prompts. Based on the college board’s 9-point essay rubric, a score of 6 is “adequate”; 5 and lower is “inadequate”.

   2nd Semester: Based on the evidence you’ve collected in your writing portfolio throughout the year, you will write a final reflection on your growth as a writer and your ability to meet the learning targets. This will also be an opportunity for you to consider weaknesses and set goals for the future.

THE ADVANTAGE OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT ON YOUR G.P.A.:
AP courses are awarded an extra point toward your overall grade point average. This is meant to encourage you to take on more challenging courses. On the other hand, the letter grade you earn is the grade that will appear on your report card. Although getting a D would only affect your g.p.a. as a C would, a D will still appear on your transcript. As I always tell students, a D never looks good to colleges. The following chart will help you get a better idea of the impact of your AP grades on your GPA:

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<th>GPA POINTS ASSIGNED</th>
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LATE WORK POLICY:
Unless you have arranged for an alternative due date—in advance—then 10% of the total points possible will be deducted from your grade on late assignments. No more than 10% will be reduced. You have up to two weeks to turn in a late assignment; after that, it won’t be accepted. Some assignments will only be accepted on the due date; this will be stated when that work is assigned.

GRADING SCALE:
You will receive a weighted grade for this course. In other words, some class requirements have a greater impact on your final grade than others. Updated grades will be posted regularly. Grades can also be accessed by parents and students on Zangle Parent Connect (an account can be set up through your counselor). Your grade will be based on the following percentages:

Calculating your Academic Grade:
70% = Process Writing and Assessments
30% = Daily Work / Homework

Calculating your Final Grade:
20% = Final Exam
80% = Academic Grade

CONCLUSION:
This class requires a commitment to completing assignments in a timely manner. We will cover material at a steady rate, and I will post a weekly schedule so that you can plan your time accordingly.

Your success is important to me; I admire the maturity and commitment of a student who accepts the challenge of an AP course. Whenever you have questions, concerns or ideas, please share them with me.
September 4, 2013

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to the 2013/2014 school year! I am very excited about working with you. The purpose of this letter is to share important information for the 36 weeks ahead. First, I want to make sure students and parents feel comfortable with the focus of this class: AP courses are most appropriate for highly motivated students seeking a rigorous challenge. The content and rigor of AP Language and Composition at BCCHS—which focuses on non-fiction—emulates the academic demands of similar courses at a college or university. Readings, discussions, assignments and assessments in the AP classes require students to use higher-level thinking skills such as analysis, application, synthesis, and evaluation.

The major objective of this course is to prepare students to be successful on the AP Language and Composition test, held in early May. Those of you who elect to take the AP test in the spring are able to compare yourselves with students from other high schools across the nation. There is an additional bonus for students who score well on the AP tests: they may earn college credit for only a small fraction of the dollar cost paid later for similar college courses (although this varies among different institutions; research your colleges of choice to find out university policies). The cost of the exam is $89. In the past, students who qualify for free/reduced lunch had their exam paid for through state funding. For further information, check the College Board website, the organization that prepares the objectives for AP courses and designs the AP tests:

http://www.collegeboard.org/ap/students/index.html

Even students who do not wish to take the official exam should take the time to learn more about the exam expectations since this class does teach to the test. In order to increase student motivation to learn the test material, a portion of the 2nd semester final exam will require all students to take the AP Language and Composition test, either the official test or an in-class practice test that I will grade.

As the instructor for this accelerated course, I teach with the understanding that students’ education is their top priority. This means that those students who are spread thin by involvement in many extracurricular activities and/or AP courses typically struggle with the combined workload. Students should expect to have some material to read and analyze as well as writing assignments to complete daily. There will also be a weekly focus on grammar and vocabulary lessons. In addition, students will be expected to read one non-fiction book of their choice per semester. Remember that this is a college level course that will challenge students to take risks in learning about themselves as readers and writers. I want students to feel successful, and often times this is a matter of making sure students are taking an AP course for the right reasons, specifically so they can be challenged in their study of English composition.

To give students a taste of the kind of workload ahead and to expand their reading repertoire, students were assigned coursework over the summer, to be completed prior to the first day of school. If a student did not meet this expectation, I will contact parents and we will discuss alternate options for the student. I am concerned about the commitment level of students who do not take such expectations clearly and who cannot find the time to fit reading into their schedule.

Please feel free to contact me at any time with questions or concerns. I have included my phone number and email address below, so please don’t hesitate to use them if needed.

I am looking forward to an exciting and challenging year—one that provides all of us with a sense of accomplishment and continues to foster a love of exploring the world through the English language.

Respectfully,

Email: cbriggs@battle-creek.k12.mi.us
Web Site: www.briggsbattlecreek.weebly.com
Cell Phone: 269-598-0288
Please return to Mrs. Briggs by Monday, September 9, 2013!

By signing below I signify that I have thoroughly read and understood the class syllabus and the above letter. I understand that I may contact the teacher with any questions and/or concerns.

Also, I understand that film clips from R-rated films may sometimes be used for educational purposes and I (the parent/guardian) am indicating my feelings about this below:

___ I am okay with my student viewing R-rated clips for educational purposes.

___ I prefer that the teacher contact me with information on specific R-rated clips before giving my consent.

__________________________________________  __________________
Parent Signature       Date

__________________________________________            __________________
Student Signature       Date

____  Yes! Please add me to your parent email list for website updates and email bulletins regarding the course.

Parent Name: ________________________________

Email: ________________________________

Comments: