

AP Language and Composition

2014-2015 Syllabus

Ms. Diane Shires Rm. 121 (x2121)

Course Overview

This course is meant to parallel an introductory college course in rhetoric and composition. As such, it is an intensive writing class where a variety of language skills are studied and practiced, including rhetorical skills of analysis and argumentation with a particular focus on non-fiction writing including speeches, essays, letters, news articles and editorials. Many American authors of both fiction and non-fiction texts are introduced and studied as a course requirement for "American Literature."

A primary goal of the class is to prepare students to pass the AP Language and Composition Exam given in May, but more than that, we hope to develop students' skills and comfort level in a variety of reading and writing situations, working to broaden their perspectives and overall appreciation for the power and uses of language. As such, our expectations for students involvement and commitment are high. Students are expected to complete all work and join in the critique and evaluation of their own writing and that of their peers. Students are expected to lead presentations as well as participate in discussions as they engage critically with the materials and the ideas as well as participate in discussion as they engage crucially with the materials and the ideas elicited through the wide variety of courses, both text based and visual, introduced in the course.

The course is designed around five rotating units: Rhetoric and Vocabulary, Writing, Outside Reading, *The Informed Argument* textbook, and Soapstone Reader.

Contact Information

- The best way to contact me is through email: dshires@fc.spusd.net. I will check email in the evenings and throughout the weekend until 9pm.
- When sending me an email, students should always include their full name, class, period, and a brief description of their question in the subject line. Parents should always include the name of their child and class period.
- There is no direct contact to my room during the school day.
- Students may make appointments for extra help or make-up work with me on an individual basis. Best times are 30 minutes before school and up to one hour after school.

Class Texts

- 1. Soapstone Reader** : This reader has been given to students. We are still accepting donations to cover the cost of paper and photocopying.
- 2. *The Informed Argument* textbook, 7th edition**: You have the option of purchasing the book online through a variety of websites listed on the "Day 1-Intro to Course" handout distributed on the first day of class. There are also some copies in the library and we are expecting more to arrive soon. We will also photocopy chapters for students who need them.
- 5. Ben Franklin and Transcendentalists**: In the Junior red textbook.
- 6. Hawthorne's Custom House**: In "*The Scarlet Letter*", available in the library.
- 7. Shakespeare's Folger Series *Othello***: Available in the library.

Homework Policy

- Homework may be submitted up to two class periods late. It will be marked down 10% each day it is late.
- Many assignments will be completed in teams; if the student responsible for turning in the assignment submits it late, the every team member will lose the points.

Aeries

- I encourage parents and students to check aeries at home regularly. Homework assignments, quizzes, and short classwork assignments typically have quick turn around (within 1-2 class periods). Essays and projects have longer turnaround.
- Please be aware that if an assignment is not checked "grading complete" then that assignment will not show up in the total percentage. This means that I have not finished grading all student work, or that I am waiting on late work.
- Grades are weighted: Classwork/Presentations (15%), Essays (40%), Homework (15%), Tests (20%) and Final exam (10%)

Turnitin.com

- Students received a class ID and password the first day of class for turitin.com.
- Turnitin.com is a website that allows teachers to view originality reports form student work- students upload assignments and if anything has been plagiarized from the internet, it is highlighted and visible to the teacher. It is also used by teachers to grade student work, and leave comments, online. Students can then view the feedback through the website.
- Many assignments will be submitted to turnitin. I will let students know when an assignment will need to be turned in to turnitin in advance of the due date.

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Date
