Syllabus

English I Pre-AP

English I Pre-AP is the advanced study of literature and writing including language structure. The course initiates preparation for the College Board Advanced Placement English Exams at the high school level; therefore, the literature study is classical in nature, meeting standards set by the College Board.

As a Pre-AP student, you are only two years away from taking an AP exam, a college level test good for college-credit, if you qualify. This is both exciting and scary because the level at which you must be functioning this year must be equivalent to being two years away from college – junior level work, at the very least. For this reason, standards are going to be high. The College Board’s The AP Vertical Teams Guide for English gives an accurate summary for English Pre-AP expectations:

An AP course in English Language and Composition engages students in becoming skilled readers of prose written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts and in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Both their writing and their reading should make students aware of the interactions among a writer’s purposes, audience expectations, and subjects as well as the way generic conventions and the resources of language contribute to effectiveness in writing.

You must become a critical thinker, a theorist, and a master in the communication of your analyses of literary works through writing if you are to receive college credit through the AP exam. This is an enormous challenge. In-depth and intensive learning require hard work and will stretch your brain muscles in ways that they’ve never been stretched before.

Some kind advice: Often times, bright students rely on memory and listening skills to get them through a grade level English class with an A or B. There is absolutely no doubt as to the intelligence of these students. However, the concern is for those students who may not have the discipline, seriousness, and maturity for an advanced program such as the AP program. All of these qualities are often gained with experience and age. Those who do not have these traits now may not be good candidates for the AP program at this time. However, they may well opt to enter the AP program at a later time as they are faced with serious decisions about their future careers and recognize the importance of advanced work and skills. In order to survive in an AP course, you must be willing to work intensively, spending as much, if not more, time on studies at home as you do in the classroom.

Course Objectives

Close Reading is a skill that is required in order to discover more than an author’s message and what was said. Rather, we begin to concentrate on how an author conveys, persuades, evokes, and so on. In understanding a writer’s talent and craft, we improve our own ability to convey, persuade, and evoke. The following is a list of some of the devices and concepts that we will be focusing on this year:

- Finding patterns in a text through annotation
- Analysis, including, for example, author’s development of theme or tone through imagery, diction, syntax, choice of details and point of view; author’s use of figures of speech and sound devices
Grammar is important for clear and effective communication. On the one hand we will analyze the writer’s syntax in our close readings. On the other hand, students will learn concepts and practice skills through the platform NoRedInk.com.

Writing is a process. Learning to write is a process. The only way to learn how to write well is through writing and writing and writing some more. Part of the process is revision. These two activities are imperative to a good writer. You must be able to:

- Write introductions that attack an issue in a thoughtful manner
- Write well-developed and solid paragraphs
- Use facts, quotations, and paraphrase as support for a stated position
- Write thesis statements powerful enough to dictate the direction of the paper
- Gain patience for deep and meaningful revisions
- Analyze, not simply summarize
- Develop a voice
- Develop ideas quickly and under the duress of timed settings

TEKS (Learner outcomes as defined by the state of Texas) can be found at: http://www.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter110/ch110c.html

Texts
Holt McDougal Literature, Grade 9 (the big purple text book)
Contemporary Vocabulary (photocopies/PDF’s are provided)
Of Mice and Men
Cry, The Beloved Country
The Odyssey (found in literature book)
Greek and Roman Mythology (excerpts will be provided)
Romeo and Juliet (in text book and available online)
To Kill a Mockingbird
Selected poems, speeches, essays and short stories (provided)

Suggested: Although the school can provide copies of all required texts, it is strongly recommended that pre-AP students purchase a copy of the paperback texts (if applicable) so that you may highlight and annotate as you read; this is an invaluable skill that will be required in college. You may choose to read these texts on an e-reader (ipad, kindle, etc.). If you choose to read these texts on e-reader, you must still annotate them using the functions of your e-reader. However, please no books via your phone.

Scope and Sequence
Notice: Scope and Sequence is subject to change at the teacher’s discretion.

First Quarter:
Testing of summer reading: To Kill a Mockingbird
To Kill a Mockingbird
Of Mice and Men (will continue 2nd 9weeks)
Selected poems, short stories, and non-fiction
Begin writing instruction: SAQs, thesis statements, theme statements (TDEC)
Intensive writing assignments, grammar, vocabulary, and research will be on-going throughout the year.

Second Quarter:
Of Mice and Men
Selected poems, short stories, and non-fiction
Intensive writing assignments, grammar, vocabulary, and research ongoing.

**Third Quarter:**
Mythology Unit
*The Odyssey*
Selected poetry related to mythology
*Cry, The Beloved Country* (Will continue next nine weeks)
TDEC Three Chunk Paragraph
Culmination of Research and Presentation
Intensive writing assignments, grammar, vocabulary, and research ongoing.

**Fourth Quarter:**
*Cry the Beloved Country*
*Romeo and Juliet*
TDEC Timed Writing: Three Chunk Paragraph
Intensive writing assignments, grammar, vocabulary, ongoing.

**Exams:**
You will have a midterm exam at the end of the 2nd nine weeks and a final exam at the end of the 4th nine weeks. Exams will be SKILL-BASED. You will be asked to apply the skills that you have learned through your course of studies rather than recall facts about the reading you have completed during the year.

**General Policies & Procedures**
*English I Pre-AP*

Welcome! We look forward to working with you as a guide in your learning.

**General expectations:**
- **Common Sense.**
- **Be courteous.**

1. Demonstrate a positive attitude toward school and this class. The class will be boring if you refuse to contribute or if you send out a negative vibe that discourages others from contributing.
2. Treat the instructor, guests, substitute teachers and fellow students with courtesy. This means listening whenever another person is speaking and communicating attentiveness through your body language.
3. Questions on content and process, when expressed courteously, are always appropriate. Questions of a personal nature relating to grading, behaviors, or personal needs are private conversations between the student and the teacher. They should be conducted during work periods or outside of class.
4. Be ready to work when the bell rings; expect to work until the bell to dismiss rings.
5. Communicate with your teacher. We are here to help.

**Assignments and Grading:** EVERY GRADE IS EARNED. NONE ARE GIVEN.
Anyone who wishes to earn an A must achieve excellence in the required assignment, demonstrate higher order thinking and/or writing skills, and demonstrate the highest level of mastery for any given skill. “A” output is always exceptional.

Anyone who wishes to earn a B must demonstrate strong thinking skills and writing skills. To earn B’s, a student must show sufficient mastery of skills. “B” output is good.

Every student who takes this course and completes the requirements satisfactorily should be able to earn at least a C and pass the course. Our goal is to help anyone who wants to work earn a C, a grade worthy of average work and developing competence (nothing particularly original or outstanding but meeting requirements).

Earning an F reflects failure to complete all work and/or failure to master minimum basic requirements. Missing assignments, failing to make-up quizzes or tests, and poor work ethic, leads to F’s.

Homework is always purposeful and should be treated as such. It is not busy work, but rather, the practice of an important skill, completion of an activity started in class, or preparation for the following class period. Failure to complete homework (including reading and annotating) will greatly affect your grade.

Grades will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major grades-60%</th>
<th>Daily grades—40%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Averaging**: Grades will be entered as soon as they are available. Please note that some grades are worth different amounts of points. For example, if your score is entered as a 50 on a 50 point assignment, that equals a 100%. If your score is entered as a 25 on a 50 point assignment, that equals a 50%.

The point differentials also affect how your grades are averaged. For example, if we have three daily grades, two of which are worth one hundred points and one of which is worth fifty points, the gradebook will average those grades by points out of 250, not percent out of three hundred.

For example, if you have the following three daily grades: 50/50, 80/100, and 60/100, your daily average is a 76, not an 80.

**Gradebook Symbols:**
When viewing grades online, please use the following as a guide:

M=This was assigned and expected to be completed, but the student failed to turn it in or has not yet made it up due to an absence or similar circumstance. Thus, the grade is a zero and will remain a zero unless resolved.

0=The student completed/turned in the assignment and scored a 0%. A 0% also indicates that the assignment is past due and may no longer be made up.

Blank=This grade has not been entered yet, but it has been assigned.
**Make-up work:** It is ultimately your responsibility to get caught up after an absence. This means that you are expected to complete the assignments listed on the teacher’s calendar, if at all possible before you return to class. If you are unable to understand an assignment, you must initiate contact with the teacher during work time or outside of class to clarify. When you do turn in an assignment, be sure to write “absent” at the very top so that it is not counted late. The best solution is NOT to be absent if at all possible.

The time limits for your make-up work are:

Daily assignments = same number of class periods that you missed

Tests/major grades = set make-up date as soon as possible. Emailing your teacher is a great way to do this. If you do not show good will in make-up, then the window of opportunity will close within a week and the result will be a zero. *If you are absent the class period before a posted test, you are responsible for taking the test on the day of your return provided that no new material has been covered.*

Paper or project = due on the day you return from an absence

If you know that you are going to be absent ahead of time, please let the teacher know, in writing. If you do not get the assignments in time to take on your trip, then follow the above make-up policy. However, if you fail to uphold your responsibility of getting make-up work prior to a foreseen absence, you will not have the opportunity to make up those assignments and thus, will receive a zero. This includes tests, quizzes, homework, and all other activities.

If you miss school for ANY reason, you should complete the following on the SAME DAY that you miss if at all possible (although we do realize that doing this is not always possible):

- Contact the teacher via email.
- Check the teacher’s calendar in Schoology (You will still be responsible for any tests, quizzes, etc. given on the day you return). The expectation is that we all ALWAYS know what is happening in class, regardless of an absence. We will always update Schoology.
- Check with a classmate about what you missed.

**Late work & Late “Passes”:**

Daily Grades:

- 1 day late = 1 late pass/full credit
- No late daily assignments will be accepted without late passes
- Each student will be granted two late “passes.” Note: These are not physical passes; rather, the teacher keeps a record of how often you turn in work late.
- At the end of each nine weeks, your teacher will drop the lowest daily grade worth 100 points if you have two late passes left at the end of the nine weeks. Or, your teacher will drop one daily grade worth 50 points if you have one late pass left at the end of the nine weeks.
• You may not use late passes at the end of the nine weeks to drop missing grades or work that has not been completed. The idea is that you do the assignment with a late pass rather than get a free ride from the late pass.

Major Grades:
- 1 work day late = 2 late passes/full credit
- With no late passes, major assignments will be penalized 10% per day that it is late up to three days. After three calendar days, assignments will receive a zero.

Important: Since we deal with many students, we will not always remember a discussion we may have had about late work being turned in. If other extenuating circumstances apply, please write a reminder note to the teacher at the top of the assignment.

Disruption of testing/ Cheating: Cheating is an ethical issue that says much about a person's character. Someone who cheats generally cannot be trusted, and that person hurts the GPA standings and class rankings of others. For this reason, we are protective of vigorous students who earn their grades honestly and ethically.

A "cheater" is someone who uses materials not approved during a test, communicates with another student, uses another student's work to complete the cheater's own work, or someone (a "compliant" individual) who knowingly allows another student (a "borrower") to use the compliant one's work or testing advantage in the completion of his or her work or test.

1. disruption of testing- eyes that wander to other people's work or notes left out during testing, making eye contact with other students, verbal communication of any kind (talking, sounds)
2. electronic communication of secure materials
3. cheat sheets, writing on clothing or body parts, leaving clear binders/folders or papers out in plain sight
4. sharing testing information between classes, work that closely resembles another's work, missing the same answers on a test, quiz or assignment, giving the same or similar answers multiple times on a test, quiz, or assignment.

*An incident of cheating will result in an Honor Code violation as per the school's guidelines.

Caution: If you do not want to be accused of cheating, it is imperative that your behavior never leads the teacher to that conclusion - it is your responsibility to be mindful of your actions.

Plagiarism--See Appendix

Grade changes: Sometimes the teacher will make a mistake entering your grades, or you may wish the teacher to reevaluate one of your assignments. When this occurs, please contact the teacher immediately. It is helpful if you keep graded work that has been passed back to clear up any such issues.

Organization: Organization is open to you since one the major goals of 9th grade is to grow in independence and self-management (this may be one of the biggest changes from Middle School). You should absolutely have some sort of folder/binder/notebook for English class; how you organize it is up to you.

Phones and other personal electronic devices:
We encourage the use of your personal device when academically appropriate. Because we believe that if you are old enough/responsible enough to own the phone, we believe that you need to start managing it, and thus we will not collect it every class period. However, during testing you may be asked to turn in phones or place backpacks up front. Additionally, if the phone becomes a problem for an individual student, we will issue consequences as necessary, including the school's $15 phone confiscation fee.

**Tutoring/Office Hours:**
Barring unforeseen circumstances, we will hold regular “office hours” before and/or after school (check with your teacher for specific times) during which you may feel free to meet with either one of us. If you need any help at all throughout the semester, please come by outside of class, or set an appointment with one of us. We are always happy to be able to help our students.
Looking forward to a great year!

---

**Writing: Ethical Expectations (Appendix)**

Plagiarism:
the act of presenting another’s work or ideas as your own.

Your work, including the ideas in it, will be YOUR OWN. When you are asked to analyze a text, your teacher wants to know what your brain can do with the text in front of you. While most of you know that copying a classmate’s work or cutting and pasting from the internet isn’t allowed, many of you are unaware that the definition of plagiarism goes beyond that. Sometimes when you’re stuck, you may think, “I should look this up to get some ideas.” No—bad idea. If you Google that text or if you look at a classmate’s work, and you borrow ideas (doesn’t matter if you change the words), you are plagiarizing. Yes, you read that correctly, even if you put the idea in your own words, the idea still came from somewhere else, and that is the definition of plagiarism.

**Protect Yourself Against Plagiarism**

- Be informed. Educate yourself on plagiarism (by carefully reading this sheet) so that you don’t do it.
- Avoid Google. If you Google the text that you’re analyzing, it’s awfully easy to let the ideas and phrases of others seep into your writing. If you’re having trouble with a text, talk to your teacher. And think, which is worse: getting a low grade because you were struggling or getting zero and an honor code violation?
- Size doesn’t matter. Even if you borrow just a phrase or paraphrase one small idea to inform one sentence of your paper, if it’s a borrowed idea, it’s still plagiarism.
- Work individually. Don’t “work with someone” unless your teacher specifically tells you that it is a group/partner assignment.
- Do NOT lend out your assignment to a friend who is having trouble. That friend may borrow ideas from you, and now there are two papers where ideas were clearly shared.
• Know your options. Sometimes your teacher will provide you with resources to help you complete a writing assignment. If you have express permission to use a resource, it’s not plagiarism.
• Not sure if a source is allowed? Ask your teacher.
• Cite your sources. Even if you weren’t supposed to use outside sources, if you cite them correctly by quoting and adding parenthetical citations, it’s not plagiarism. If you weren’t supposed to use sources on that assignment, your grade may suffer for not following the directions, or you may be asked to do the assignment again. However, if you properly credit any and all sources that you used, you will at least not be in danger of an honor code violation for plagiarism.

Here’s a handy graphic to help you avoid plagiarism in your writing.
A GENERAL GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING WRITTEN PLAGIARISM

Are my own words being used?

YES

Is it my idea?

YES

Yay! You’re not plagiarizing!

NO

You’re paraphrasing

NO

Are you using quotation marks or placing it in a block quote?

YES

Yay! You’re not plagiarizing!

NO

You’re plagiarizing!

Now What?

ADD A CITATION AND BIBLIOGRAPHY!