**Lake Travis High School**  
**English III-AP: English Language and Composition Course Syllabus 2016-2017**  
**Instructors: Aaron Wedemeyer & Janice Bech**  

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**Conference:** 8:45-10:00

**Course Description:** The English Language and Composition AP course is, primarily, a study in rhetoric—how a writer or speaker uses a variety of elements of language to advance his or her purpose; create intended tones; and appeal logically, emotionally, and personally to his or her audience. For this reason, we will mostly be concerned with the study of non-fiction texts. We will, however, also study a handful of fictional works, but they will be considered in light of the authors’ rhetorical purposes. As part of becoming skilled readers of literary works written in a variety of periods, genres, and rhetorical contexts, students will become acquainted with the historical, moral, social, and philosophical forces that have impacted selected works of fiction and non-fiction, while they analyze the interactions among a writer’s purpose, subject, and audience expectation. This course will aid students in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes and who develop a personal style as they write in a variety of modes for various audiences through both process (requiring multiple drafts) and timed writing assignments. Analysis of visual media such as photographs, films, advertisements, and satirical cartoons will accompany the students’ study of rhetoric. In addition, students will synthesize materials from primary and secondary sources and write documented argument essays, citing sources using Modern Language Association (MLA) format.

This class will demand a lot from you—your time and quality effort, your critical and analytical thinking, your creativity and engagement, your cooperation and kindness. We will be playing at one of the hardest of human endeavors, persuasion via language. That said, we want to create a space where you feel comfortable with the possibility of enduring high-risk failure. I know that likely sounds antithetical to your experience in education—heck, even your experience in life. But over the years, we have found that students are weary of low-risk success and, as a result, are either bored to death with typical school work or are scared to death of not being perfect. This class, then, is a place where graceful failure is not only tolerated but is encouraged.

**Textbooks:**


**Other works:**

- Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451* (summer reading)
- Krakauer, Jon. *Into the Wild* (summer reading)
- Miller, Arthur. *The Crucible*
- Assorted non-fiction pieces (essays, speeches, articles, letters, etc.)

You should check out this textbook from the book room, if you have not already done so. The others will be provided in class.

You will need to purchase a copy of *The Crucible* (ISBN# 978-0-14-243733-9) by the end of September.
**BRING THE FOLLOWING SUPPLIES TO EVERY CLASS MEETING:**

1. Loose-leaf notebook paper, and lots of it (spiral notebook paper will not be accepted, unless it has a perforated edge—No frillies!).
2. Blue or black ink pens (pencils will be needed for Scantron tests)
3. Highlighters—yellow, pink, green, blue, and orange
4. A notebook OR a section in a notebook that is for English III only.
5. A Working System to record homework—such as a planner.
6. Whatever we are currently reading and/or have completed for homework

**Though certainly not required, Mr. Wedemeyer would be forever grateful if you would be willing to bring a box of tissues for our classroom supplies.

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**Course Expectations**

**Reading:**
- Students generally find that close, critical reading provides one of the biggest challenges in English III-AP. In this course, students will read a variety of texts and will be held accountable for comprehension, interpretation, analysis, and vocabulary.
- Annotating closely facilitates understanding, improves scores on reading quizzes, and contributes to the student’s ability to participate in class discussions.

**Composition:**
- Students will write a variety of essays (e.g., rhetorical analysis, argumentative, and research-based synthesis). In preparation for the AP English Language and Composition exam, most first drafts of essays will be written in class under time constraints. These will be graded using AP timed-writing rubrics and returned to students. Most of these timed writings will be processed—revised and edited—at least once.

**Graded Class Discussions:**
- Because this class is designed to assess students’ abilities to communicate their ideas via verbal, as well as written, expression, students will occasionally participate in graded class discussions throughout the year. Criteria for these discussions will be provided, and students will be expected to come prepared to lead and/or participate in a worthy discussion over the reading.

**Academic Integrity:**
- Students who plagiarize writing assignments of any kind will be disciplined according to school honor code policy.
- Students must not share work or steal writing from published authors. When outside sources are used in writing—even on homework assignments—students must document properly.
- Because assignments are designed to help you further develop your own reading and writing skills, it is important that your first attempt be a solo activity. However, after you and a classmate have both completed your assignments independently, it’s acceptable to
discuss, debate, or help one another with challenges or confusion you may have encountered. However, simply giving someone an answer or allowing a classmate to copy your work is **NEVER** okay. It’s **cheating and a violation of the honor code.**

- Moreover, even when working with a classmate, you and another student should **NEVER** have the same word-for-word responses on a written assignment. If two assignments are submitted that are the same—*even for just a few questions out of many*—both students will be in violation of the LTHS honor code. This even goes for assignments that demonstrate similar ideas or textual evidence choices that could not reasonably be identical. Push yourself to try. If you’re stuck, come in for help or email me. However, don’t compromise your honesty and integrity when completing an assignment. Your work should always reflect your thinking and ideas.

- There’s one area of academic integrity that is oft-ignored but that I think is critical: the sharing of information about quizzes, tests, and timed writing prompts. You know how it goes: maybe you have English on B day and a good friend of yours has it on A day, and so on the evening of an A day in which your friend wrote a timed writing—a timed writing that you’ll encounter the next day—you happen to ask said friend about said timed writing, even going so far as to ask about the prompt itself, and maybe, just maybe, this bit of information allows you to be better prepared for tomorrow’s timed writing than other students in the class. Does this unfair advantage qualify as cheating? Well, what is cheating if not an unfair advantage? It’s insider trading. Even worse, it’s exploitation of a friend. When you ask that friend about a quiz, test, timed writing prompt, etc., you are, in essence, taking advantage of the relationship you share with that person for your own personal gain. And it’s kinda sick.

- All out-of-class papers will be submitted to Turnitin.com.

- Students talking, passing notes, using a cell phone, or communicating in any way during testing will be regarded as cheating and disciplined according to school policy.

**Make-up Work/Retesting:**

- Students are expected to utilize the class Schoology page for assignment updates, resources, and make-up work. **If you are absent, check Schoology. Waiting until you see a zero in the gradebook is too late to discover an assignment that you needed to complete.**

- **Make-up work is the student’s responsibility.**
  - If a student misses class on the day of a test or quiz, he/she should expect to make up the test or quiz **within one week.** If the student has not made up a test or quiz within a week or by the time established with the instructor, then he or she will receive a grade no higher than a 70.
  - If a student is absent the class before a test, quiz, or timed writing but is present the day of the test/quiz/timed writing, he or she will still be expected to complete the assessment, unless cleared by the teacher.
If a student misses class on the day a major project/writing assignment is due, he/she is still expected to turn the project/writing assignment in on time to turnitin.com and to email the instructor. The student will be expected to turn in hard copies of the process pieces the day he/she returns to school, regardless of whether it is an A or B day.

- Students should not expect to make up tests, quizzes, or in-class essays during class time.
- For non-planned absences, students have the number of days they were absent to turn in daily-grade homework or in-class assignments.
- Students missing class for extra-curricular activities or a planned absence are expected to meet the same deadlines as his/her classmates and should arrange for making up work prior to the anticipated absence.

Late Work:
- Students are expected to complete all work on time. Any homework assignment not turned in on time will result in a zero. However, students will be allowed one FUDGIE per nine weeks. With a FUDGIE, students can turn in one homework assignment one class period late for a maximum grade of 80. Fudgies cannot be used on major grades or quizzes.
- A major assignment will be penalized 10 percentage points the first calendar day it’s late, then 5 percentage points for each additional calendar day.

Grading:

Daily grades (40%):
- Homework assignments (analysis, annotation, argument, etc.)
- Writing/grammar practices
- In-class individual and small group assignments

Major grades (60%):
- Reading accountability assessments
- Rhetorical terms and skills assessments
- Grammar assessments
- In-class timed essays
- Major papers: process and final
- Graded discussion: facilitation and participation

Important Information about English III AP Grades in TxConnect: The English III AP team uses a points system. This allows us to create smaller major and daily grades so the grade’s weight corresponds with the time, effort, or knowledge required. For example, when viewing a reading quiz grade on TxConnect, a quiz out of 25 will show how many points the student earned—such as 22—rather than converting the score to a percentage (88%).
STUDENT
I have read, am familiar with, and accept the requirements and expectations of the entire syllabus packet for Mr. Wedemeyer’s English III-AP class.

Student signature: ________________________________

Printed student name: _____________________________

PARENT/GUARDIAN
You have two options. You can sign and fill out the form below, or you can email me at wedemeyera@ltisd.org to acknowledge that you have read the syllabus packet. If you email me, make sure to identify the name of the student in the subject line. Also, please respond to the video consent form on the back. This also gives you an opportunity to communicate any information you feel is important for me to know so that I can help your son or daughter to be successful in English III-AP this year.

________ (initial) I will email you regarding syllabus and video consent.

If you are unable to email me, please sign and fill out the information below.

Yes, I have read the syllabus, including the assignment and classroom expectations for Mr. Wedemeyer’s English III-AP class.

Parent/Guardian signature: _____________________________

Printed Parent/Guardian name: _________________________

Email address: _____________________________________

Home telephone: ___________________________________

Work telephone: ___________________________________
CONSENT FORM FOR CLASSROOM VIDEO/FILM PRESENTATION

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Student’s Name: __________________________________________

Please check the responses below that apply to your consent.

_____ Yes, my child has my permission to watch the film adaptations of *Into the Wild* and *The Great Gatsby* and of the play *The Crucible*.

* Because *Into the Wild* is rated R, certain scenes will be skipped. However, the viewing assignment provides an opportunity for high-level thinking as students evaluate the credibility and techniques of author Jon Krakauer compared with the filmmaker’s interpretation of events.

_____ Yes, my child has my permission to watch appropriate film and video clips that pertain to educational study this year in English III-AP.

_____ No, I have concerns about my child viewing ____________________________ in the classroom and will contact you to discuss arrangements for alternative activities.

__________________________________________
Signed by parent or guardian Date

**If emailing me your acknowledgment of reading the syllabus, please include your consent/response regarding the films and clips as well.**

*I LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU AT BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th!*