Welcome to Advanced Placement (AP)

Language and Composition

**Course Description:** The College Board describes AP English Language and Composition as a course that “engages students in becoming skilled readers of prose written in a variety of rhetorical contexts, and in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes.” It continues: “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.”

The course is designed to meet the goals of college composition classes that incoming freshman typically take. Therefore, AP states that students must be prepared to read primary and secondary sources closely and to synthesize material from these texts in their own compositions. The student enrolled in AP Comp must be ready to read and analyze complex texts accurately and insightfully, and be able to write prose of “sufficient richness and complexity” to engage and communicate effectively with mature readers.

Readings will range from 16th century to 21st century and will span the globe, incorporating the diverse views of the prominent and the obscure, the privileged and the suffering, the liberal and the conservative, the male and the female, and the values of cultures worldwide. Genres will include all modes of fiction plus large amounts of nonfiction. Analysis of rhetoric, style, and argumentation will build upon the usual analysis of plot, character and theme. Students are expected to read actively, annotate text, and respond to texts with insight. Much reading will be done independently, therefore struggles are inevitable; the effort to pace oneself, set and meet deadlines, look up unfamiliar words and terms, and read beyond the text in order to comprehend text are keys to success.

Writings will include narrative, expository, analytical and argumentative compositions that explore complex central ideas and are developed with appropriate evidence drawn from primary sources, secondary sources and personal experience. Cogent explanations, clear transitions and stylistic mastery of language are expected. This mastery results from hard work, including application of new ideas and classroom lessons, peer reviewing, and frequent revision. Not all writing will be graded; the act of writing is necessary practice that leads to growth and improvement. Graded writing will be assessed using the AP Holistic Scoring Scale (9 point). The goal, in the end, is to “write like writers write.”

Ultimately, students enrolled in AP English Language and Composition are required to take the three hour AP Exam administered in May, and those who pass may earn college credits, based on the college’s discretion.

Do not be mistaken. This class is difficult, and many students who have earned As in English class over the years will find themselves challenged, and probably struggling at times. There are no shortcuts to success, and no guarantees of success. But perseverance and hard work have proven to pay off for students over the years. Over 80% of my AP Comp students have passed the AP Exam since I began teaching the class in 2011.

**Course Goals:**

* To establish and experience a respectful environment in which thinking, discussion and self-discovery take place.
* To cultivate students whose attitudes, thinking, and dynamic involvement make the classroom a better place.
* To increase confidence, knowledge and ability as readers and writers.
* To express interpretations and opinions fearlessly and articulately.
* To analyze, understand and utilize rhetorical strategies that writers use to achieve purpose.
* To meet the demands of college-level work and expectations as a junior in MHS.
* To prepare students for AP Exam success.
* To enjoy a positive learning experience.

**Expectations and Suggestions for Success:**

* Read assigned material closely and thoroughly
* Push yourself to think!
* Push yourself to write!
* Voice ideas and opinions
* Be yourself
* Be consistent
* Ask questions
* Use your imagination
* Take risks
* Have a positive attitude
* Believe in yourself!
* Respect yourself
* Make good decisions
* Do more than you think is necessary
* Communicate with me
* Listen – to both classmates and teacher
* Be responsible
* Do homework
* Be a positive influence
* Let yourself laugh!
* Trust me

**Attendance:** you must be in class in order to be consistent, stay organized and succeed. If you are absent, stay updated online and by talking to your classmates. It is your responsibility to make up missed assignments promptly. Typically, 1-2 days is sufficient, but see me to arrange additional time if necessary.

 Remember, too, the MHS attendance policy: more than 8 absences means automatic loss of credit for the class. Avoid course failure by bringing notes for excused absences to the office on a timely basis.

**Extra Help:** will be available Monday - Wednesday after school in room 112 from 2:30 – 3:00 and until 3:15 on Thursdays. See me to make other arrangements if necessary. \*\*Do not allow yourself to get confused, frustrated or overwhelmed! Ask for help when you need it.

**Materials**: 3-ring binder (2”) with composition paper, a sturdy folder, and whatever else you know works for you, such as pencils, pens, highlighters, index cards, sticky notes etc.

**Course Grades:** Marking period grades will be calculated by dividing total points earned by total points allotted. In general, marking period grades will break down as follows: tests & quizzes 40-45%; essays, projects and other writing assignments 40-45%; learning activities (in class) and homework assignments 10-20%.

**Class Rules:**

* *Be on time and be prepared* – Arrive before the bell with materials for class, including charged laptop, books, notebooks, homework, pencil/pen… without a pass you are late, no exceptions. Remember: three lates are an absence.
* *Be polite* – Nastiness, personal attacks, taunting or teasing will not be tolerated. We learn together, the classroom is our community. Respect it.
* *Be honest* – Liars, cheats, and thieves lose respect, trust, privileges, grades and status. See below for additional information.
* *No food or drink in class (except water). \*\*\**
* *No wearing earbuds, hats or hoods.*
* *No sleeping or slumping.*
* *Keep the classroom clean. Pick up after yourself.*
* *Ask for permission to open windows or blinds, use computers etc.*
* *Turn cell phones off. Have them available for use in class as instructed.*
* *No unauthorized audio or video recordings in class, as stated by Manasquan Board of Ed policy #5516.*

**Academic Dishonesty:**  You will pay a heavy price if you choose to take the dishonest route. Cheating comes in many forms, ranging from copying another student’s homework to copying and pasting ideas from the Internet and passing them off as your own. Your best bet is to trust yourself, think for yourself and do your own work (see suggestions on side one). If you cheat, a referral slip will be written, your parents and the administration will be notified, and you will lose credit on that assignment, putting your grade at terrible risk. Be honest.

**Classwork & Homework:** is critical for any student who expects to succeed in class. It should be done completely and thoughtfully before you enter class. Not copied, not scribbled while sitting in the hall, not emailed to me. It should be in your possession. You will be informed when HW will be collected, when it should be typed, or when it will be checked but remain in your binder or on your tablet. Follow instructions accordingly. Homework grades will be assigned as follows: 5 points when work is completed sufficiently and 0 when not completed. If your work is completed but insufficient, your grade of 2-4 is my judgment.

**Dear Parents:** Thanks for taking the time to glance over these pages. Remember, feel free to contact me anytime you have questions or concerns about your child’s progress. Contact info via phone: 732-528-8820 X1807; via email: jmawn@manasquanboe.org.

Also, you can keep track of your child’s progress through Canvas and Parent Portal on the MHS website. Assignments and resources are available in Canvas; grades are available through Parent Portal.

Please sign below. Your child will print the page and turn in tomorrow. If you would like, please help your child with his/her homework tonight, which is to write three questions about the class. We’ll use these questions as a discussion piece in class.

Thanks again! Sincerely,

Jamie Mawn

QUESTIONS ABOUT CLASS:

Print (this page only), sign and submit.

**Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**