

**AP English Language Composition Syllabus - 2019-2020**

**Quarter 1**

**1. Recognizing the Rhetorical Situation**

**Essential Questions: What is the relationship between the speaker, the message, the exigence, and the audience and how a writer crafts a message?**

**Summer Reading** – *Thank You for Arguing* (chapters 1-13)

**Summer Reading** - “Cool in America”

“How Cool Works in America Today” by David Brooks

“Why Cool Matters” TED talk by Joel Dinerstein;

“American Cool: An Interview with the Curators” by Philip Kennicott

“Defining Cool from Walt Whitman to James Dean and Steve Jobs to Tony Hawk”

“Nobel Prize Banquet Speech” by Bob Dylan.

Introduction to Socratic Seminar.

**Practice with Purpose, Audience, and Exigence**

Compare Michelle Obama Democratic Convention speech and Sarah Palin Republican Convention speech. Analysis paragraph.

**Reading and Writing About the Rhetorical Situation**

iPad photo scenarios. Analysis paragraph.

**Mentor Passages for Rhetorical Situation Analysis**

“Above All Else, Do Not Lie” by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

“The UnInstagrammable Self” by Tara Westover

Analysis paragraphs.

**II. Claims and Evidence for Rhetorical Analysis**

**Using Mentor Texts to Read Rhetorically**

George W. Bush 9/11 Address

“Of Revenge” by Sir Francis Bacon

“Frogs” by Annie Dillard

“Two Views of the River” by Mark Twain

“The San Francisco Earthquake” by Jack London

“Travels with Charley” by John Steinbeck

“Blood Rights: Origins and History of the Passions of War” by Barbara Ehrenreich

“Migration of the Caribou” by Barry Lopez

“There is No News from Auschwitz” by A.M. Rosenthal

“Joyas Volardoras” By Bryan Doyle

“Save the Redwoods” by John Muir

“To the Moon” by John Fitzgerald Kennedy and analysis paragraphs

**III. Reasoning and Organization for Rhetorical Analysis**

**Essential Question: How does a writer use a method of development to achieve a purpose?**

**Methods of Development and Author’s Purpose**

Patterns of Organization chapter from *Language of Composition*

“Storm Country” - Paul Crenshaw (**narration and description**)

“On Conversation” - William Cowper (**classification** and analogy)

“Redefining Definition” -Erin McKean

“Solitude” -Alice Meynell (**definition** and contrast)

“How Flowers Changed the World” - Loren Eiseley (process analysis)

“Laziness” - Christopher Morley (satire, definition)

“In Search of the Good Family” - Jane Howard (**classification**)

“On Envy” - Hannah More and “I Won’t Hire People Who Use Poor Grammar” - Kyle Wiens (**cause and effect**)

“English is a Crazy Language” -Richard Lederer (exemplification)

“On Good Nature” - William Hazlitt (**comparison/contrast**)

How does the author use this method to achieve a purpose?

#### **Thesis statement boot camp**

### **IV. Style I**

**Essential Question: How does style contribute to a writer’s purpose and engage an audience?**

#### **Foundational Skills**

- Punctuation in Mentor Texts and punctuation rules
- Benny Paret syntax analysis
- “Brushstrokes” from Henry Noden’s *Image Grammar* (appositives, absolutes, participles, nouns, verbs, adjectives, repetition, parallelism)
- Syntax exercises from Michael Degen’s *Crafting Expository Argument* (subordination and coordination)
- Grammar as rhetoric and style exercises from *The Language of Composition*
- Transitions

**Outside Essay:** Nature essay (revision process).

**Independent Reading:** *The Great Gatsby*

### **V. Writing the Rhetorical Analysis Essay**

**Essential Question: How does one write a rhetorical analysis essay?**

#### **Command and Conquer**

**Introductions, body paragraphs, lines of reasoning, transitions, and conclusions**

“Challenger” speech by Ronald Reagan

Abigail Adams letter to John Quincy Adams

**RA Essay 1** - Florence Kelley’s Child Labor Speech (2011)

**RA Essay 2** - Madeline Albright’s Commencement Address (2018)

**RA Essay 3** – Benjamin Banneker’s letter to Thomas Jefferson

### **VI. Claims and Evidence for Argument and Synthesis**

**Essential Question: How does perception shape common ground and productive discourse?**

#### **Perception - Leaving the Cave**

“Gala Contemplating the Mediterranean Sea” - Salvador Dali

Plato’s Levels of Reflection

“This is Water” by David Foster Wallace

Philosophical Chairs

“Allegory of the Cave” by Plato

Videos about Plato’s philosophy; Illustrations of “Allegory”; “The Cave and the Matrix”

“In Plato’s Cave” by Susan Sontag;

excerpts from *The Prince* by Nicolo Machiavelli.

## Quarter 2

### American Common Ground

“Farmer Refuted,” “You’ll Be Back,” and “One Last Time” from *Hamilton, the Musical*;  
George Washington’s Farewell Address  
Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address  
Argument paragraphs that develop a position on the two speeches.

### Finding common ground on controversial issues

“America is on the Brink of a Civil War” and “America is not on the Brink of a Civil War” – identifying claims, evidence, and reasoning in arguments. Develop a position on one assertion and provide evidence for it.

“Using language to Persuade” and “The Simple Psychological Trick to Political Persuasion” by Olga Khazan. Claim and evidence paragraphs revised to appeal to specific audiences and self-analysis.

“Up in Arms: 11 Americas” by Collin Woodard. Develop a position on Woodard’s assertion and support with claims and evidence.

### Types of introductions and conclusions. Mentor texts for introductions and conclusions.

## VII. Reasoning and Organization for Argument and Synthesis

### Why is a line of reasoning important to argument?

#### Argument and Lines of Reasoning

Inductive and deductive reasoning - Monty Python argument clinic; Monty Python witch scene, and excerpt from Sherlock Holmes

Lines of reasoning in art: “George Washington Crossing the Delaware” and “American Progress”

Lines of Reasoning in text: Abigail Adams letter to John Adams (reading in favor of and against the author)

Chapter 3, “Analyzing Arguments” – *The Language of Composition* and related readings

“Sex, Drugs, Disasters and the Extinction of Dinosaurs” by Stephen J. Gould and “Deccan Volcanism” video. Excerpt from *Blink* by Malcolm Gladwell.

Logical Fallacies and “I Know Why the Caged Bird Cannot Read” by Francine Prose

Media Bias – evaluate media bias in news stories using MediaBiasFactCheck.com.

Argument structure and types of evidence: “Not by Math Alone” by Roy Romer and Sandra Day O’Connor.

### Reasoning and Organization

“What to a Slave is the 4<sup>th</sup> of July?” by Frederick Douglass

“What Is an American” by Edward L. Hudgins

Thomas Paine excerpt.

Passage from *The Atlantic* 1939 by Raoul de Roussy de Sales

excerpt from *Hillbilly Elegy* by JD Vance

excerpt from *Educated* by Tara Westover

“Young Latinos Carving out their Own Identity” by Suzanne Gamboa, Sandra Lilley and Sarah Cahlan

“Muslims are facing a Civil Rights Crisis in America” by Evelyn Alsultany

“The Real Success to Asian Americans was Not Education” by Jeff Guo

“I Love America That Is Why I Must Tell the Truth about It” by Viet Thanh Nguyen

Socratic Seminar

Revise original draft of the Thomas Paine argument prompt.

“The Olympic Contradiction” by David Brooks

### **Editorial Analysis**

Students choose two editorials by the same writer and analyze their stylistic choices.

**Independent Reading** – *The Crucible* and “Why I Wrote *the Crucible*” by Arthur Miller.

## **VIII. Writing the Argument Essay**

**Essential Question: How does one write an argument essay?**

**Argument Essays** - “The Unknown” (2018); “Artifice” (2017); Thomas Paine (2011)

## **IX. Writing the Synthesis Essay**

**What does it mean to synthesize?**

Lines of Reasoning Card Swap

**Synthesis Essay 1** – Windmills (2019) - peer review, lines of reasoning and deep revision

**Synthesis Essay 2** - Eminent Domain (2018) - lines of reasoning, teacher conference and revision

**Independent Reading** – *The Rediscovery of North America* by Barry Lopez

**Author’s Purpose and Methods of Development: writing**

Mentor Texts: excerpts from “Memory and Storage and Neural Systems” by Daniel Alkon; “The American Wedding” by Marcia Seligson; “The Sissy” by Geoffrey Gorer; “Hub Fans Bid Kid Adieu” by John Updike; “The Knife” by Richard Selzer; “On the Difference Between Wit and Humor” by Charles S. Brooks; “Living Like Weasels” by Annie Dillard.

### **Quarter 3**

## **IX. Advanced Methodology - Style and Voice**

**Essential Question: How does one use sophisticated style in crafting an argument for a particular audience?**

### **Punctuation**

**Mentor Texts for Punctuation**

Excerpts from “My Bondage and My Freedom” by Frederick Douglass; *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy; *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* by J.K. Rowling; *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky; *The Red-Headed League* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck.  
Em dashes, semi-colons; commas; exclamation points.

Add stylistic elements to introductions and conclusions.

### **Satire**

**Modern Satire**

“The Triune Tale of Diminutive Swine” and “Happiness” - videos

“Game of Thrones Breaks Illegal Download Records” by James Hibbard and Shocking ‘Game of Thrones’ Finale Concludes with Arrest of 5 Million Viewers for Piracy.”

“Massive Hack shows users still don’t know how to create safe passwords” and “Hacked Facebook Accounts May Explain Billions of Inane Posts.”

“I Don’t Vaccinate My Child Because It’s My Right to Decide What Eliminated Diseases Come Roaring Back” by Andrea Martin.

“New Climate Change Study Just 400 Pages of Scientists Telling Americans to Read Previous Climate Change”

“Magnasoles”

### Pre-20th century satire

“A Modest Proposal” by Jonathan Swift

### Diction, Coherence and Voice

#### Mentor Texts

“A Presumption of Guilt” by Bryan Stevenson;

“Leffingwell Elementary School” by Firoozeh Dumas and “Two Kinds” by Amy Tan;

“Indian Education” by Sherman Alexie and “As Seen from the Midwest” by David Foster Wallace;

*Born a Crime* (chapter 15) by Trevor Noah

Imitation exercises. Essay: Photo memoir emulating a writer’s style. Teacher conference and revision.

### Tension, Complexity and Broader Context

#### Enduring Understandings:

Individuals write within a particular situation and make strategic writing choices based on that situation.

#### Skills:

Reading – Identify and describe components of the rhetorical situation: the exigence, audience, writer, purpose, context, and message

Culture - “‘Black Panther’ and the Invention of ‘Africa’” by Jelani Cobb

Gender - “Shakespeare’s sister” by Virginia Woolf

Language: “Politics and the English Language” by George Orwell;

“Is it Wrong to Say the United States has Concentration Camps?” by Zachary Wolf

“There are No Concentration Camps on the Border” by Richard Cohen

“The Stranger’s Case” by William Shakespeare; Sir Ian McKellan

Write a response in which you defend, challenge, or qualify the role of language in shaping Americans’ views of immigration.

Video: China Censorship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Sv0RkLlaEE>

Philosophy: “Self Reliance” by Ralph Waldo Emerson and “Where I Lived and What I Lived For” by Henry David Thoreau

**Independent Reading - Non-fiction:** Student-selected choices include: *Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah, *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson; *Educated* by Tara Westover; *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer, *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander or *Hillbilly Elegy* by J. D. Vance.

**Independent Reading - Fiction** – Student-selected choices include: *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini; *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini; *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr; *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver; *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan; *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak; *The Handmaid’s Tale* by Margaret Atwood; *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles; *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Adichie; *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy; *Candide* by Voltaire; *In the Time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez; *11/22/63* by Stephen King; *A Land More Kind than Home* by Wiley Cash; *Sing Unburied Sing* by Jessamyn Ward; *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens; *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi.

Grammar as rhetoric and style exercises from *The Language of Composition*: pronoun use; active verbs

**AP Argument Essays:** “Overrated” (2019); “Patriotism” (AP Classroom)

**AP Analysis Essays** – “Salt March” (2019); Caesar Chavez (2015)

## X. Combining Synthesis, Analysis, and Argument

### Quarter 4

#### Gender

**Essential Question: What privileges are conferred or denied based on an individual's or group's perceived gender?**

“The Danger of a Single Story” TED Talk by Chimamanda Adichie; Visual analysis of masculine advertisements: “Louie,” “Barbasol,” “What is a Man?” and “Egard Watches”; Visual analysis of feminine advertisements: Propaganda Postcards; “The Pink Tax”; Disney Rejection Letter, GoldiBlox “Princess Machine”; Nike “What are Girls Made of?”; Hulu “Morning in America”; “How Movies Teach Manhood”- TED Talk

#### Identity

**Essential Question: What privileges are conferred or denied based on an individual's or group's perceived identity?**

Excerpt from the documentary *Three Identical Strangers*.

#### Nature vs. Nurture articles

[What Makes Us? The Guardian](#) by Robin McKee

[Are we products of Nature or Nurture The Guardian](#)

[Are Siblings More Important than Parents The Atlantic](#) by Ben Healy

[You Are Shaped by the Genes You Inherit](#) by Carl Summer

“What we Learn Before We’re Born” TED Talk by Annie Murphy Paul

Read two of these articles and view the TED Talk. Then develop a position on the prompt: In America do you think an individual's life experiences are more the result of nature or nurture or a combination of the two?

#### Identity Articles

[The Real You is a Myth](#) by Giuliana Mazzoni

[Choose Your Identity NY Times](#) by Bonnie Tusi

[Speak for Yourself NY Times](#) by Kwame Anthony Appiah

[Can We Choose Our Own Identity The Guardian](#) by Kwame Anthony Appiah

“Where Does Identity Come from?” by Jason Castro

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/where-does-identity-come-from/>

**Independent Reading** – *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

“Mont Blanc” and “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”

*Contigent upon the 3 new practice exams to be released the last week of March and first week of April*

*AP Analysis Prompt: “Last Child in the Woods” (2013)*

*AP Argument Prompt: “Ownership” (2013) or “Civil Disobedience” (2016)*

*AP Synthesis Prompts: “Monuments”*

*AP review – “The Plastic Pink Flamingo” “America Needs its Nerds,” and “The Great Influenza.”*

\*\*\*\*\*AP EXAM MAY 13, 2020\*\*\*\*\*

*Macbeth* by William Shakespeare

Preparation for the New York State English Regents Exam

Sherry R. McHugh  
smchugh@lowvilleacademy.org

**Researched editorial** - Write an editorial on a topic of choice emulating the style of a specific editorial writer students have analyzed. Use MLA citations and hyperlinks. In a separate response, students evaluate how they emulated the writer's style in their own editorial.