

# **Course Description**

## **English Language and Composition**

### **OVERVIEW**

The AP English Language and Composition workshop is designed in keeping with College Board's dedication "to developing excellent college-level courses for high school students." Both new and experienced teachers will gain the skills and information they need to successfully teach the course. Participants will understand the common approaches to the subject with its emphasis on rhetoric and composition, and also see how to adapt those approaches in ways that are best suited to their particular students, existing curriculum, and school setting.

Our goal is to present a rich variety of useful materials, to share our expertise, and to provide valuable professional stimulation. Discussions will address not only the rationale and "big ideas" of the course so that teachers can make coherent curriculum choices, but also many practical strategies that answer the question, "But what do I do on Monday?"

### **AP LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION EXAMINATION**

During the course we will deal extensively with the test itself and its relative importance in developing and teaching the course. We will look closely at the various types of questions on both the multiple-choice and free response sections of the exam. Participants will be trained to use the nine-point AP scoring guide to read and score student papers "like an AP reader."

### **CRITICAL READING AND RHETORICAL ANALYSIS.**

In addition to working with the exam itself, the workshop will emphasize two course essentials: critical reading and rhetorical analysis. Beginning with the end in mind, we will identify those skills necessary for successful college-level reading and the strategies with which we can best train our students. We will compare and contrast style analysis of literary texts with rhetorical analysis of nonfiction to understand what distinctions are pertinent for us and our students to know. Special attention will be given to choice of text, reading assignments, and teaching strategies that strengthen close reading skills. Because the course often is, as it is described in the *AP Language and Composition Teacher's Guide*, "a literature survey threaded with rhetorical emphasis, [it is] important to choose or augment texts with nonfiction and nonliterary readings that force students to consider the linguistic power and expository effectiveness of various writers and prose pieces." We will talk about how to make that a reality in a high school classroom.

### **WRITING IN AP LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION**

In order to add dimension to the label "effective writing," we will thoroughly discuss how much and what kinds of writing students need to do. We will explore what is meant by "mature academic perspective" and a variety of rhetorical modes as well as strategies to help students develop their own personal style and voice. We will differentiate between teaching the on-demand writing required on the AP exam and the multi-draft process writing necessary in any college freshman composition course. Participants will be given strategies and assignments suitable to each process.

### **Tentative Daily Schedule**

## Day 1

- **Essential Skills & Strategies:** an overview of the nuts and bolts of AP English Language and composition; overview of key concepts of rhetoric; successful basic strategies for any AP English Language class.
- **College Board:** resources and materials to support students and teachers, equity and access policy.
- **Teaching Writing and Writing Management in AP English:** methods for instruction, feedback, and management of timed writing; the AP scoring guide and grading; successful strategies for single-draft and multi-draft writing; writing project for teaching the rhetorical modes.

## Day 2

- **Passage Analysis and American Literature:** the “arch method,” a fundamental methodology for prose passage analysis; successful strategies, activities and projects for using American literature to teach AP Language.
- **The AP Exam, Passage Analysis Question:** read, score, and discuss student samples.

## Day 3

- **Teaching Argument And Persuasion:** “Everything’s an Argument”; logic fallacies; successful strategies and classroom activities.
- **The AP Exam, Argument Question:** writing and evaluating argument on the AP exam; read, score, and discuss student samples.

## Day 4

- **Multiple Choice:** types of questions, test-taking strategies for students, question-writing strategies for teachers, practice test for participants.
- **Argument Continued, the Synthesis Essay:** Latest information about the relatively new synthesis question, sample prompts and student essays, methods and strategies for teaching synthesis skills, how the new skill will appear on the multiple choice test.
- **The AP Exam, Synthesis Question:** background on the AP test; strategies for student success; read, score, discuss student samples.
- **“Best Value” Round Robin**
- **Course Evaluations**