

# AP English Language & Composition/ American Literature

- **Course Description:**

Students in this course, which fuses the critical reading, writing and thinking skills of an introductory college-level course with primarily American Literature readings, develop their abilities to work with language and text with an awareness of rhetorical purpose and strategy. The course allows students to develop their skills in expository, analytical and argumentative writing, and emphasizes the synthesis of primary and secondary sources to develop their writings. Students learn to read complex material, integrate material from these texts into their own writing, and cite sources based on the conventions of the Modern Language Association (MLA).

- **Course Expectations:**

Throughout the year, students read 4 novels. Average novel-related reading assignments are 20-25 pages a night. Writing assignments are given regularly as well. Each quarter, students write one major essay, in addition to several shorter writing assignments (2 pages).

- **Special Projects:**

1<sup>st</sup> Semester: Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Documented Essay (4-5 pages long)

2<sup>nd</sup> Semester: American History Research Paper (6-8 pages long)

- **Beyond the general education course:**

Upon entering the course, students should have solid reading and study skills, including managing time and following directions. Successful students possess and are willing to work on building these skills. The major differences from American Literature are

- ✍ We work at a faster pace, particularly with novels and writing assignments.
- ✍ Critical reading is required (students are expected to read a piece more than once, attending to the nuances of language).
- ✍ Students must manage their workload – unit assignments and reading schedules are given out well in advance of due dates, making it possible for them to schedule homework time.
- ✍ The two weeks leading up to the AP Exam in early May require students to carefully manage their time. Minimalizing other commitments and activities will allow more time for study, review, and final preparations, contributing to student success on the exam.

- **Other:**

Students are encouraged to come in before or after school for writing conferences; these conferences lead to the greatest growth in students' writing abilities.

Because of the similarities between skills required for the AP Exam and the SAT, students who take this course will be especially well prepared to be successful on the new SAT and to meet the writing demands of the collegiate environment.

Students are asked to purchase the textbook (although a few copies are available to be checked out.) The text, Everything's An Argument, costs approximately \$34, and serves as a great reference for MLA formatting, various writing tasks, and college composition.