

  <b>SYLLABUS/ Course Handbook</b>	Mascenic Regional High School
	<b>Advanced Placement Language and Composition through American Literature</b>
	2017-18
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## Core Values Statement

Mascenic Regional High School's mission is to create a respectful, secure and engaging learning environment. Our goal is to motivate all students to become knowledgeable, independent, lifelong learners who will be ethical, effective 21<sup>st</sup> century citizens.

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## Course Description

The Advanced Placement Language and Composition through American Literature course explores a variety of American texts through which students develop close-reading and analysis skills. One purpose of the course, as stated by College Board's *AP Language and Composition Course Description*, is "to help students become skilled readers of prose written in a variety of rhetorical contexts and to become skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes..." The other is for students examine both varied works by American authors, within historical contexts, in order to reach a deeper understanding of the history of ideas in our country, as we critically examine our past and strive to define our future.

Through the completion of AP Language and Composition through American Literature and the achievement of a passing score on the AP exam in May (cost is about \$95, and students qualifying for free/reduced-price lunch get a discount), students have the opportunity to earn a college English credit while still in high school as well as develop skills related to the end-of-grades 11 and 12 standards outlined in the Common Core State Standards and tested on the SAT and ACT.

Throughout this mainly chronologically-organized, two-semester course, students will be instructed in the different forms and functions of rhetoric in order to analyze written as well as visual works and to write on various topics through argumentation, narration, exposition, and synthesis. The student's willingness to collaborate with other students and with the instructor throughout the writing process of drafting, revising,

editing and proofreading is crucial to success in this course, as is use of past, graded work as a guide to improving composition skills.

We will read and respond to a variety of works from different eras and genres in American literature, including foundational political documents; religious and philosophical writing; historical, narrative and persuasive nonfiction; prose fiction; poetry; and drama. Each unit of study will be also incorporate a thematic thread of Contemporary Issues running throughout the curriculum. Emphasis will not be on discrete literary methods and devices, but rather on how pieces examined both reflected and helped shape American society. Primary emphasis will be given to analysis of themes, ideas, and rhetorical devices used to express meaning and viewpoint. **See [culliton.org](http://culliton.org) for more information.**

Because of the collegiate level of the course, some topics covered in the selected literature will be of a mature nature, requiring students to think and respond in a mature, independent manner.

### **Essential Questions**

How can we achieve clarity in writing in order to best communicate our thoughts and findings?

What is meant by “close reading” and “textual evidence” and why is the use of these techniques important?

What has the term “American Dream” meant in various time periods and for various sub-cultures?

How have writers represented as well as influenced what it means to be American?

What roles have such factors as individual nature, gender, race, class, geography and education played in the creation of America’s literature?

In what ways do rhetorical method, genre, style, and voice create meaning and reveal universal themes?

How may reading America’s literature help us understand ourselves in relation to today’s America?

How does possessing an overarching understanding of how the country’s literature and an understanding of its chronology and themes illustrate how we as a people came to be who we are today?

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**Prerequisites:** Completion of required Grade 10 Society in Literature course (preferably at the Honors level)

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### **Required Resources**

*Conversations in American Literature* (Aufses) and various other literature books; *The Elements of Style*, and *A Writer’s Reference*; AP Test preparation materials (all provided by MRHS at various times throughout the course)

Numerous titles from the Mascenic English Department collection (provided by MRHS)

Supplemental handouts and Study Guides (provided by MRHS)

Three-ring binder

Access to [www.culliton.org](http://www.culliton.org) and a printer outside of school

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USB Flash drive

MRHS Network account, G-mail, Google Classroom and Google Docs (provided by MRHS); a way to access these outside of school

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## Course Standards

The goals of this course are to help you do the following:

**Become citizenship ready. Use literature to examine the following, in the context of the history of the United States:**

Ideals

Law/government

Populations

Ideas

Power

**Become life ready. Use literature to observe, experience and analyze about the following:**

Relationships

Human nature and psychology

Conflict

Decision-making/problem-solving

Ethics

**Become “college and career ready.” Demonstrate success in the following essentials of any workplace:**

Attendance

Achievement

Cooperation

Preparation

Engagement

**Communicate. Demonstrate ongoing improvement and effectiveness in the following areas:**

Verbal participation

Synthesizing sources and presenting arguments

Diverse forms of writing

Analyzing rhetorical methods

To achieve these goals, you will need to

**Be Present.  
Be Prepared.  
Be Positive.**

To support the areas of study listed above, students will develop vocabulary through the use of a **Vocabulary Notebook** in which to complete the **Perpetual Vocabulary Assignment**.

This notebook is to be used throughout most units of the course. **The Perpetual Vocabulary Assignment is as follows:** Every time a student encounters an unfamiliar word, it is to be looked up and its definition—appropriate to its context in the literature—is to be written after it. Any word from any piece of literature could show up on a test or quiz, during which students may use their notebooks.

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**Instructional Methods (assessments will also tie in with many of these)**

Close-reading Study Guides	Modeling/demonstrations
Supplemental handouts	Film/audio depictions
Graphic Organizers	Presentations/slide show
Independent and group readings	Collaborative Process Writing

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**Assessment**

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

<b>A+ = 100 – 97</b>	<b>B = 86 – 83</b>	<b>C- = 72– 70</b>	<b>D- = 62—60</b>
<b>A = 96-93</b>	<b>B- = 82 – 80</b>	<b>D+ = 69 – 67</b>	<b>F = 59 or Below</b>
<b>A- = 92 – 90</b>	<b>C+ = 79 – 77</b>	<b>D = 66 – 63</b>	
<b>B+ = 89 – 87</b>	<b>C = 76 – 73</b>		

**The mid-term** examination for this class will count as 10% of the course grade. Everyone is required to take it. The **final project** at the end of 4<sup>th</sup> quarter will count as as 10% of the course grade; everyone must participate in this.

**Students will be assessed on the course standards via the following:**

**The MRHS School-Wide Rubrics will be used as appropriate, especially in the areas of Written, Oral and Visual Communications. See [culliton.org](http://culliton.org) for these.**

There will be reading/note-taking and vocabulary homework almost daily. During class, we will have discussions of readings, individual and cooperative tasks. Voluntary participation by all students in oral discussions is crucial. There will be quizzes (some announced and some not) on readings due for the day, reading homework assessed by oral questioning, a major persuasive research essay, and tests. Proper sentence, paragraph and essay structure; and correct usage and mechanics will also be included.

All assignments (including tests, quizzes, etc.) are given various “weights”—that is, grades for some will count one-quarter, one-half, one or two times (unannounced quizzes, in-class exercises), and still others will count three, four, or five times (announced quizzes, major tests, papers, projects, etc.). If you see “3X” beside something on your Assignment Schedule, that means the grade for the assignment counts three times, for example.

Overall class participation in discussions and activities will be assessed periodically during the semester and will constitute approximately 20% of each quarter grade. The final examination for this class will, as per School Board policy count as 20 percent of the course grade.

**Remember to check your grades and regularly using Power School.**

**The portal is here: <https://mascenic.powerschool.com/public/home.html>**

**Students will be assessed on the course standards/competencies, content, and skills based on the MRHS School-Wide Rubrics will be used as appropriate, especially in the areas of Written, Oral and Visual Communications.**

There will be reading/note-taking and/or vocabulary work on a regular basis, much of which will have to be done outside of class. During class, we will have discussions of readings, individual and cooperative tasks. Voluntary participation by all students in oral discussions is crucial. There will be quizzes (some announced and some not) on readings due for the day, reading homework assessed by oral questioning, a major persuasive research essay, and tests. Proper citations of research sources according to MLA format; proper sentence, paragraph and essay structure; and correct usage and mechanics will also be included.

All assignments (including tests, quizzes, etc.) are given various “weights”—that is, grades for some will count one-quarter, one-half, one or two times (unannounced quizzes, in-class exercises), and still others will count three, four, or five times (announced quizzes, major tests, papers, projects, etc.). If you see “3X” beside something on your Assignment Schedule, that means the grade for the assignment counts three times, for example.

Overall class participation in discussions and activities will be assessed periodically during the year and will constitute approximately 20% of each quarter grade. I may also give grades for preparation and cooperation, which will count once.

Remember to check your grades and regularly using Power School.

The portal is here: <https://mascenic.powerschool.com/public/home.html>

## **Course Policies**

If something is affecting your performance in my class, or you do not understand something you have to do at home, TALK TO ME. I have no way of knowing what is going on with you unless you tell me. You MUST take responsibility in this area! See page 1 for contact information.

Set aside enough time to do homework assignments carefully. LOOK AHEAD ON YOUR ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE and plan your time. Almost all of the work for this class is made clear well in advance. Take all relevant books and handouts home every night, plan your time to allow for glitches, emergencies, etc., and have everything you need with you for each class at the beginning of the period.

Use of technology is expected. Students will at times need to use web site I have set up to access study guides and other materials, print them outside of class, and bring them to class as required. Students will

need a network password for use here at school, means to word-process or type papers at home, and access to the World Wide Web on a regular basis outside of class (our library, your town library, home, etc.).

Be prepared and willing to participate spontaneously in class discussions; it is only through these that we can go beyond superficial analysis of literature! Be thoughtful enough to make the leap and apply lessons, themes, ideals, values, etc., from literature readings to your own life, present and future.

Do not do anything that makes it difficult for yourself or others in the class to learn or for me to teach. (Always remember to LISTEN when someone else is speaking, SPEAK UP when it's your turn, and do NOT start side conversations or create distractions.) Be respectful; a classroom should be a safe space for all regardless of personal characteristics; rude comments are not allowed!

Keep up-to-date notes both from your own reading and from class discussions / lectures. You will need to have a LOOSE-LEAF (not spiral-bound), THREE-RING BINDER. I hand out many information sheets, reprints, and Study Guides that need to be saved in an orderly fashion by adding them to your notebook. Bring it to class with you every day along with a writing utensil and the book(s) we are using. You will also need a USB flash drive (1 gigabyte is more than sufficient) and are encouraged to bring your own laptop to class if possible.

Be in class every day. **If you are absent, contact someone else in the class**, find out what we did, and **do it before you return to school** unless it is a test or quiz. Also, **check your school email**; you may call me with any questions as well. You will be expected to know, by the time you come back, what went on regardless of how much class you miss.

## **Attendance/Assignments/Late Work**

**Be where you should be in the curriculum at all times.** I expect you to do the work regardless of absences.

I keep a **Make-up Work folder on the table to the right of the SmartBoard**; any tests or quizzes you miss will be in there, with your last name on them, as well as any handouts given to the class. Check this folder as soon as you come into the room after you miss ANY part of any class.

You may not hand in late an assignment whose answers we go over in class while you are present or which has been turned back to other students with answer corrections on it. In some cases, you may be able to have an alternative assignment. The **time between 1-B and Advisory is the time to arrange for this.**

**Tests and quizzes must be taken and previously-assigned work turned in with the rest of the class regardless of previous absences as well. Absences on your part do not change your due dates!**

You will need to contact me to ask for an exception if you were too ill to prepare for a test or quiz or complete an assignment. Do not wait until you are sitting in class to try to discuss this sort of thing; that's much too late. You have my phone number and e-mail—use them! **(Parent calls to the office do not come**

**through to me; you need to contact me directly.)**

**If you come in late have missed the entire class, come see me at some point during the day either before you leave or after you arrive** so I can give you anything that I may be passing out. Do not wait until the next day. In the case of absences for sports or other school-sponsored activities, the same policy applies.

**If are going to be absent from class for a reason other than illness or an emergency**, you MUST follow the procedure outlined in the Student Handbook for vacations during school time. This will entail that you tell me several days beforehand; I will see to it that you have all you need to keep up. You MUST complete the work I assigned you while you are out, passing it in upon your return. This will avoid your having to come in after school or miss class to make-up work during the period.

**If are going to be absent from class for a reason other than illness or an emergency**, you MUST follow the procedure outlined in the Student Handbook for vacations during school time. This will entail that you tell me several days beforehand; I will see to it that you have all you need to keep up. You MUST complete the work I assigned you while you are out, passing it in upon your return. This will avoid your having to come in after school or miss class to make-up work during the period. In the case of dismissals for sports or other school-sponsored activities, the same policy applies.

### **Cancellations**

In case of snow days or other cancellations of school, **do the all reading, writing and Study Guide work assigned for that day anyway**, to the best of your ability.