

AP English Language and Composition  
2021–22  
Class website: [cheriewalsh.weebly.com](http://cheriewalsh.weebly.com)  
Office: Lower hallway across from 115

Mrs. Walsh  
Room 211  
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Office hours by appt,: sign up on  
office or classroom door

### Description

AP English Language and Composition teaches classics of American literature even as it prepares students for the AP English Language exam, which has a rhetorical focus. Students may opt to take the course at the honors level or at the AP level. Main texts all eleventh graders will study include:

Short stories of Flannery O'Connor

*The Great Gatsby*

*The Scarlet Letter*

Short stories by Hemingway (Nick Adams stories) and Sherwood Anderson (from *Winesburg, Ohio*)

*As I Lay Dying*

excerpts of *Invisible Man*

poems and essays from the Harlem Renaissance

*Othello*

*They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*

*Rhetorical Devices: A Handbook and Activities for Student Writers*

The class focuses strongly on academic writing, as for many students this course supplants a college Intro to Academic Writing course. Students will complete a research paper with topics inspired by *The Great Gatsby*; the research paper gives students important experience reading non-fiction texts and in making causal arguments and proposal arguments, incorporating sources, citing properly, and crafting a longer piece on a beginning undergraduate level.

Students will also practice rhetorical analysis, shorter synthesis papers, and shorter rhetorical argument papers.

### AP expectations

Students who have opted to take the class for AP credit complete the requirements for the course even as they also

- read additional short texts as well as two longer works, *Flannery O'Connor: Spiritual Writings* and Annie Dillard's *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*;
- attend a weekly "lab" during seventh period to help with test prep (both multiple choice and essay), to complete additional in-class writings, and to extend and develop classroom discussions in light of the AP texts. The lab period can also be a work period for group assignments that find presentation to the larger mixed classroom.
- produce, periodically, a portfolio with timed essays, some revised, to hone essay writing skills.

### Vocabulary

In AP Lang, you'll learn a panoply of rhetorical terms, some composition jargon, names of logical fallacies. All this is so that you can talk intelligently about patterns you see in writing—once we know the names for these patterns, we can talk about their effects in sophisticated ways. At the same time, I am cognizant that you may be heading toward some pretty high-stakes testing. We'll follow Merriam-Webster's delightful Word of the Day feature in class, which includes SAT-grade words presented in an accessible and thorough way, including etymologies; I'll make additions and point out derivatives; you can take sample quizzes online through the feature; we'll have monthly tests, more advanced, in class. You can also study with other upper school students across grades 9–11—we can build a discourse community surrounding the words we use. Your parents might want to subscribe to the feature, too, and everyone can play!

### Poem memorization

Memorizing poems is important to the culture of Brookewood School K-12. Students who memorize a poem for recitation:

- gain experience with public speaking
- learn to trust themselves
- internalize structures of syntax to increase their understanding of how sentences can work
- internalize patterns of sound
- increase vocabulary in a permanent way

In English 11, students will memorize one poem that corresponds to each major text in the course.

### Essay revision and the “hot seat”

Students will produce major essays over time, and I will sometimes collect outlines and drafts before a finished piece is due. Students will have ample time to produce their papers; when a student thinks that her paper is finished, she will sign up for the “hot seat,” an encounter in which she and I will read the paper together. If the paper earns an A, I will stamp the paper, and the student has finished the assignment. If the paper is not stamp-worthy, the student may revise during the period that the hot seat is open, using the advice I have given. The student may meet with me up to three times during the hot-seat period in the first half of the year; two times will suffice in the second half. (Of course, I will always answer specific questions or read a thesis without counting such an interaction as a hot-seat meeting.). At the end of the hot-seat period, the paper is due. The hot-seat period cannot be extended because of scheduling; students must plan ahead and sign up in advance, knowing that everyone will want to get in at the end.

A student who has not visited the hot seat may not earn an A on the paper.

### Presentation of work

All assignments may be handed in on paper in class or uploaded as a PDF through the Dropbox set up for this purpose. You can find the link or URL for the Dropbox on the class website; you may need to adjust your browser or otherwise tinker around a little to get the Dropbox to work the first time. Once your computer has found the path, though, you should be able to use the

Dropbox easily. There will be an early assignment that tests your ability to use the Dropbox, as you may find because of illness or snow days, you are unexpectedly required to use it.

Please pay attention to the condition and completeness of work prepared out of class. Include the MLA heading and a title for the assignment that identifies specifically the assignment at hand. I hate to be a terrifying school marm, but I won't accept work not neatly presented and clearly labeled. Late work that's unlabeled is particularly hard to track.

#### Electronic submission

All assignments presented electronically should be uploaded as a PDF through the particular assignment on Jupiter. Emailed work or work attached to a Jupiter message can't be accepted.

Please give your work a reasonable name (yourname assignment) Brooke Gatsby SQ 3.pdf. Also, even though you have identified the assignment in the document name, please still write a heading and a title on your assignment, so that if I print out a batch of assignments, I can tell them apart.

Please double space all work.

#### Missed classes

The revolution will not be televised. Come to class. Be present in order to participate in your education.

I recognize that some absences are inevitable, but students absent for any reason need to make up work or complete at home activities that we did in class, even if we just read results and did not turn in a paper. English class is discussion-based; the discussion is important: it, along with the text, is where knowledge comes from. In-class exercises are designed to help you engage with the material, to elicit insights, and to deepen your understanding.

When you miss a class, you should return ready to jump in the next day, missing homework in hand along with the assignment that's due (or ready for the quiz/test) on the day you've returned. I will ask you to take any quiz we have that day, but you should ask before class if you need me to delay a major test for you. If all this readiness is not possible because you were super-sick and you are just pleased to be dragging yourself to school, bring a parent's or doctor's note that covers the gap and know that you'll need to make up missing work pretty soon to avoid administrative confusion and so that you have all the pieces you need to learn.

Please check the website, get class notes from a classmate, pick up any missed handouts from the tray in the classroom, and deposit late work in the tray designated for that purpose. Then, show me that you've done this and ask if there's anything else you need to do. Expect that there will be make-up work.

#### Late work

Late homework receives half credit. (If you must miss class, please hand in your homework when you are at school—or hand it in electronically, uploading it to the Dropbox.)

Any late work should be handed in to the tray designated for that purpose. It should be clearly labeled, so that I can tell what assignment it is and when it was due as well as when you are handing it in. There's a form to provide more explanation. If you hand in late work by uploading it to the Dropbox, you must write me a short, informal note telling me what you have done and place the note in the late-work tray. This alerts me to check for your assignment, which I might otherwise miss. Not following these guidelines may result in my not accepting your work.