

AP English Language and Composition  
2022–23  
Room 211  
Class website: [cheriewalsh.weebly.com](http://cheriewalsh.weebly.com)

Mrs. Cherie Walsh  
[cwalsh@brookewood.org](mailto:cwalsh@brookewood.org)  
301 529 5582 (use judiciously, see below)  
Office hours by appt.: sign up on  
office or classroom door

### Description

AP English Language and Composition will prepare you for college-level academic writing. The course has three major objectives:

- It prepares you for the AP English Language exam, which highlights an undergraduate conversance with rhetoric. Rhetoric is the art of persuasion, and you will develop skills supporting this art as you encounter it as both a reader and writer. Academic writing is a discourse, and this course will help you participate in the ongoing conversation about ideas. The course features a research paper sequence.
- Relatedly, it encourages you to take the building blocks of grammar you have learned over the years along with the usage experiences you've had in grades 9 and 10 and to galvanize them, though your greater understanding of how language works, into skills you can wield as a writer of arguments and of art.
- It gives you a solid background in several major movements of American literature, improving your cultural understanding and aesthetic appreciation of beautifully written works across the genres of the novel, the poem, the short story, the drama, the letter, and the essay.

### Class Texts

Literary texts:

*Flannery O'Connor: Spiritual Writings*. Summer reading

Short stories by Flannery O'Connor

“‘Indians’: Textualism, Morality, and the Problem of History” by Jane Tompkins

*The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Poems by Ezra Pound, HD, William Carlos Williams

“The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” by T.S. Eliot

Excerpts from writings by Columbus, Franklin, Crèvecoeur

*The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Excerpts from writings by Emerson, Thoreau, Bryant

“Bartleby the Scrivener” by Herman Melville

Fascicle 13 by Emily Dickinson

Excerpts from “Song of Myself” by Walt Whitman

Selections from *Winesburg, Ohio* by Sherwood Anderson

Selections from *In Our Time* by Ernest Hemingway

*As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner

Excerpts from writings by DuBois, Washington, Hurston,

Poems by Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, Jean Toomer

Excerpts from Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*

“Black Men and Public Space” by Brent Staples

*Othello* by William Shakespeare

Textbooks:

(These books must be returned at the course's end.)

*They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing* by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein  
*Rhetorical Grammar* by Martha Kolln

Resource:

*5 Steps to a 5: English Language and Composition*, by Barbara L. Murphy and Estelle M. Rankin

\*\*\*\*\*

Class Outline

**Unit 1:** O'Connor, Rhetorical Situation, Exigence, Appeals

**Unit 2:** *Gatsby*, learning to write closely and analytically about literature, introduction of the research paper sequence

**Unit 3:** Making an argument, the academic summary, argument of inquiry, amassing sources, the stasis grid, rhetorical analysis, Rogerian argument, causal and proposal arguments, the Toulmin method

**Unit 4:** Emily Dickinson, textual production, reception theory and the rhetorical triangle

Winter reading: *The Scarlet Letter*

Midterm: Synthesis essay: excerpts from great American essays along with paintings and poems to discuss the role of nature as "American scripture."

**Unit 5:** Proto-Modernism and Modernism: *Gatsby* redux, *In Our Time*, *Winesburg, Ohio*, creative writing, *As I Lay Dying*, alternative texts

**Unit 6:** Harlem Renaissance, essays, poems, rhetorical analysis, cultural analysis

**Unit 7:** *Othello* and characters' rhetoric, original pronunciation and recontextualizing Shakespeare

\*\*\*\*\*

A few policy points:

1. Academic honesty. This course will follow the school policy for academic honesty, which will be discussed in class. Ask if you have questions about your relationship to outside sources.
2. Late work. Late homework is accepted for half credit; late papers lose one letter grade per day late, bottoming out at 50%. Fill out a late work slip to receive any credit for late work. Ask for an extension at least 36 hours in advance if you see trouble coming. IEP-type accommodations apply to work completed in class only, e.g., in-class writings or tests.
3. The end of the quarter is the end of the quarter; the end of the year is the end of the course.

\*\*\*\*\*

Tips for success:

1. Class is much more interesting when you have done the reading. If you fall behind, do the current assignment and then reach back to pick up what you have missed. If you read ahead, be sure to go over your annotations before class so that you are clear about what material is in the current reading.
2. The revolution will not be televised.
  - a. Come to class whenever you can; when you miss, get assignments from friends, the website, and the teacher.
  - b. Take notes. Students sometimes think that book annotation is enough. It is not. Keep a daily record of class in your notebook.
  - c. Annotate your books. We'll review how to do it, but most students develop their individual styles.
  - d. Frequent office hours. You will not be fully successful in this class unless you come to office hours with drafts, ideas, and questions.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Hot Seat:

For major papers, you need to bring your best drafts to me to be graded/marked in real time. The purpose of the exercise is to help you really read your draft, understand the process of your reader, and engage in a mature way about your ideas.

A paper that comes to a Hot Seat with five or more instances of the “Unlucky 13” errors will be returned to you for polishing before we meet again. In the AP class, you don’t want my comments to be about your commas but about the effectiveness of your expression and the quality of your ideas.

\*\*\*\*\*

A final word:

The rigor of this AP Lang/American Literature class, if all is going well, hits a sweet spot in your development as a reader and writer, enabling you to see more than ever what literature and language itself are and can do. We read both to see ourselves in characters (for better or for worse) and to test out decisions and patterns of thought in a safe, artistic way and also, of course, to learn about others. We read to enjoy the well wrought line or sentence, the structure of argumentation, and to be persuaded by it or to learn from it while arguing differently. I’ve selected the readings with this push to greater sophistication in mind. I hope you prepare well, work hard, and learn as much as you can.