

AP Language and Composition
Course Syllabus 2006 – 2007

Class Texts:

The Bedford Reader Ed. X.J. Kennedy, Dorothy M. Kennedy, Jane E. Aaron
Everyday Use Ed. Hephzibah Roskelly, David A. Jolliffe
Prentice Hall Literature: Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes
Warriner's *English Composition and Grammar*, 5th Course

Summer Reading:

How to Read Literature Like a Professor by Tom C. Foster (used throughout course)
Billy Budd by Herman Melville (used during Unit One)
The Shipping News by Annie Proulx (used during Unit Three)

Unit One – Introduction to Course

Focus:

Course Expectations

Instruction/Assignments

Syllabus distributed and discussed
Emphasis placed on the class' being a college level class with college level requirements. Brief introduction to the differences between style analysis, rhetoric (argumentation), and synthesis processes. Discussion of nonfiction emphasis with selected novels adopted to enhance understanding of how rhetorical and language choices create effect.

Group Fusion

www.ruben.groupfusion.com

Students are introduced to English Language and Composition website. Here students will engage in scheduled book/essay chats, group peer edits, and current event discussion boards. This is also a place where students can access additional resources and check on missed assignments. The class grade requires participation in online events and exercises.

Summer Reading

Review and assessment of summer reading
Billy Budd Quote Quiz: Students will have 15-20 minutes. Prompt: In 100 words briefly explain what took place before, during, and after the excerpt and analyze the significance of the passage.

Emphasis of novels: introduction of three reading/writing levels (narrative, figurative, thematic) and of stylistic devices and rhetorical strategies.

Reading Critically and Writing Effectively

Readings from the *Bedford Reader* (chapters 1-2) and discussion. Students will take notes on chapter for homework and those notes will be collected the following day for credit.

Vocabulary:

Warriner's *English Composition and Grammar*, chapter 35: Vocabulary: Meaning through Context and Word Analysis Vocabulary derived from novels, stories, and Barron's 3500 GRE Word List.

Visual Literacy

Readings from the *Bedford Reader* (26-30) and discussion Reading selection deals with learning to think critically about visual images. It breaks the analysis into the following component parts: getting an overview or sense of the whole, making inquiries, focusing on individual elements, inferring meaning from arrangement and selection of details, understanding the synthesis of overall intentions and effect, and evaluating the success or significance or value.

Terms: theme, style analysis (tone/attitude, voice, diction/language, figurative language/figures of speech, detail/imagery, point of view/perspective, organization/structure, sentence structure/syntax), rhetoric

Lecture and class discussion, movie clips shown and discussed to provide visual examples of stylistic devices, quiz on terms. Students will be tested on terms the day after terms are given in class. Students are expected to write the terms and their definitions verbatim. There will occasionally be refresher quizzes throughout the first few weeks as a means of reinforcing key elements of style analysis and rhetorical strategies.

Marking Text

College Board marked text sample transparencies
Provided samples demonstrate the type of analysis that is required when reading pieces of writing. This skill will be utilized throughout the class and is essential to students doing well on a timed write.

Billy Budd

Book report, found poem (emphasis on extraction of theme) Found Poem: students translate a text from one genre into another, and, in the process, collaborate in deepening their understanding and appreciation of the original text. In the case of *Billy Budd*, this will be especially valuable in terms of theme and characterization. The group's task is to capture the essence of the story – its essential flavor and meaning – by editing it drastically, adhering to

specific guidelines. Project must incorporate a visual, which reflects theme, characterization, and time period.

Billy Budd, Chapter One

Close read (emphasis on tone, detail, and diction)
Transparency of chapter one is placed on the overhead and group analyzes function of imagery, figurative language, connotative words (diction and detail) in establishing tone and creating effect. This models the process of analyzing style.

“Billy in the Darbies”

Practice essay: collaborative analysis – focusing on tone, diction, and detail This assignment is designed to reinforce skills modeled with the chapter one close read.

Revision and Teacher Feedback

Jane Schaffer’s *Teaching Style Analysis to Advanced Placement English Students* Units 1-3: Diction and Detail Analysis Teacher feedback: emphasis on writing commentary (specific not generic) that analyzes rather than interprets the diction and detail.

Billy Budd Analysis Project

Students break into groups (each considering different chapters) to analyze theme, character development, and the use of allusion. They also choose a passage to demonstrate acquired skills in close reading and marking texts, which they present on transparencies in class. In this way, students are able to work with analysis in an informal, collaborative assignment before tackling individual analytical essays. Teacher provides immediate feedback.

Billy Budd Argumentation Paper

Prompt: Defend, refute, qualify: “If we have learned something from the preceding incidents, then Billy Budd has not died in vain. There will be law as long as men have minds and there will be justice as long as men have hearts.”

Revision and Teacher Feedback

Discussion of effective evidence based on a narrative text: evidence must be specific and focused to support argument. Teacher feedback: emphasis on the importance of using “meaty” partial quotes and of integrating/embedding quotes

Billy Budd Vocabulary 1 & 2

Focus:

Instruction/Assignments

Description Method and Process

Readings from the *Bedford Reader* (chapter 5) and discussion Students will take notes on class discussion and chapter assigned for homework, and those notes will be collected the following day for credit.

Visual Literacy

Doug and Mizan's House, East River, 1993, photograph by Margaret Morton (135) Students will discuss Morton's photograph as a work of description in a Socratic Seminar.

Style Analysis Terms: tone, diction, detail, figurative vs. literal, concrete vs. abstract, organization (spatial, chronological, emphatic, sensory), allusion, symbolism, dominant impression, volta

Lecture on purpose and methods of style analysis (emphasis on analytical and synthesis level of Bloom's Taxonomy) New terminology will be given and old terminology reviewed. Students will be given a broad overview showing that analytical levels range from the narrow word level to the broad organizational level. Focus on specific strategies in succeeding units beginning with the word level of diction and detail.

Rhetorical Strategies: purpose, audience, exigence

Classical Schema handout and discussion Elements presented on handout will be applied via class close read to "God Have Mercy, War Has Come Home" John Balzar (*Los Angeles Times*, Wednesday, September 12, 2002).

Descriptive Literature: "On WWII," Ernie Pyle; "Billy in the Darbies," Herman Melville; "Arm Wrestling with My Father," Brad Manning; "Shooting Dad," Sarah Vowell

Close Reading, analysis, annotating/marketing text focusing on tone, diction, and detail "On WWII" marked text collected

Descriptive Writing

Personal Essay Description of student's bedroom or personal space -- Essays will be 500 words and focus on organization (spatial, chronological, emphatic, sensory), dominant impression, and selected details and two (2) timed writes: *Billy Budd* timed write and *Shipping News* timed write

Revision and Teacher Feedback

Warriner's English Composition and Grammar (Chapter 2: Structure and Development, 44-53) and discussion Emphasis: structure (organization) concepts evaluated include: unity and coherence, which includes techniques such as transitions and repetition

Novel: Grand Conversation: Student Choice
Coming of Age Novels

Grand Conversations are novel "discussions" that allow students to grapple with interpreting a complex text as a group. The emphasis is on working at the thematic level. Teacher instruction is limited to encouraging and guiding student interpretation. The purpose is twofold—expose students to complex, quality literature and

provide practice for students to analyze text on their own (without teacher structure). The structure of the GC is as follows: students sign up for one of the texts listed on the GC book list, with no more than four to five students per group. Students will complete an in-class book report and present their interpretations of their novels' themes in a seven-minute film.

Unit Three – Narration

Focus: Narration Method and Process	Instruction/Assignments Readings from the <i>Bedford Reader</i> (chapter 4) and discussion
Visual Literacy	<i>How Joe's Body Brought Him Fame Instead of Shame</i> , advertisement for Charles Atlas Students will discuss the comic-book ad as a work of narration in a Socratic Seminar.
Style Analysis Terms: syntax (parallel, periodic, interrupted, cumulative, balanced), antithesis	Lecture and class discussion (including class analysis of use of syntax to create specific effects in selected readings)
Selected Readings: passages from "Where Do We Go from Here," "Letter from Birmingham Jail," Martin Luther King Jr., and shorter excerpts from John F. Kennedy, Chief Justice Earl Warren, and others.	Close read and analysis For longer passages, class discussion includes analysis of syntax as well as diction and detail.
Rhetorical Strategies: continuing with structure (focusing on chronological), continuing with exigence, <i>ethos</i> , <i>pathos</i> , <i>logos</i>	Revisit Classical Schema handout and discussion
Narrative Literature: "Champion of the World," Maya Angelou; "Fish Cheeks," Amy Tan; "Indian Education," Sherman Alexie; "Silent Dancing," Judith Ortiz Cofer	Close Reading, analysis, annotating /marking text focusing on tone, diction, and detail. "Silent Dancing" marked text collected
Narrative Writing	Personal Essay: Narration of decisive moment in their lives. Essays will be 500 words and focus on point of view, diction, selection of detail, pace, and central theme Two timed writes: <i>Madame Bovary</i> and Frederick Douglass timed write
Revision and Teacher Feedback	Sentence structure and variety Warriner's <i>English Composition and Grammar</i> 5 th Course, Part Two: Writing and Revising Sentences (Coordination and Subordination, Placement of Modifiers, Sentence Combining, Fragments and Run-ons) and discussion Teacher feedback on narrative essay: emphasis on sentence variety
<i>The Shipping News</i>	Quote quiz, book report, and found poem (emphasis on syntax and figurative language)

The Shipping News chapter one

Close read (emphasis on syntax, figurative language, and motif (food imagery))

The Shipping News Argumentation Essay

Prompt: In *The March of Folly*, historian Barbara Tuchman writes: “Wooden-headedness, the source of self-deception, is a factor that plays a remarkably large role in government. It consists of assessing a situation in terms of preconceived fixed notions while ignoring or rejecting any contrary signs. It is acting according to wish while not allowing oneself to be deflected by the facts.” Some people would claim that what Tuchman calls wooden-headedness plays a remarkably large role in all organizations, and indeed, in all human affairs. Defend, qualify, or challenge this idea about the prevalence of wooden-headedness in human actions and decisions. Using evidence from *The Shipping News* to develop your position.

Revision and Teacher Feedback

Continued focus on syntax In the novel *The Shipping News*, Annie Proulx uses syntax development as a stylistic tool that gives insight into the development of her main character, Quoye. After the students have had a chance to see how effective syntax can be in creating meaning, they will need to pay careful attention to syntax within their own essay.

The Shipping News Vocabulary 1 & 2

Unit Four – Style Analysis and Introduction to Rhetoric (Argument/Persuasion) Techniques of argument and persuasion will be further developed and refined in Units Six and Seven

Focus:
“Politics and the English Language,” George Orwell

Instruction/Assignments

Personal Essay: Students will test their own essays against Orwell’s six principles of effective writing. They will use concrete details from their essays (freshman to junior essays found in writing portfolio) to support their conclusions about their writing as it relates to effective writing.

Revision and Teacher Feedback

Warriner’s English Composition and Grammar (Chapter 3: The Expository Paragraph, 63-67), *Everyday Use* (66-70).
Emphasis: Expository paragraphs focusing on selection of details and the use of general vs. specific words.

“Nature of Proof”: Rogerian and Toulmin arguments, claim, qualifier, grounds, evidence, warrant, syllogism, enthymeme, logical fallacies, *ethos, pathos, logos*, inductive, deductive

In small groups, students will read and discuss the strategies used in the genre of argument to prove a claim. Each group will present an analysis of these strategies found in the provided texts (argumentation essays), such as “The Case for Torture” by Michael Levin.

Rhetorical Précis

Selected Readings: from *The General History of Virginia*, John Smith; from *Of Plymouth Plantation*, William Bradford; from *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, Jonathan Edwards; “Speech in the Convention,” from *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, Benjamin Franklin; *The Declaration of Independence*, Thomas Jefferson; from *The Crisis, Number 1*, Thomas Paine; “Speech in the Virginia Convention,” Patrick Henry and Benjamin Franklin; “Letter to John Adams,” “Letter to Her Daughter from the New White House,” Abigail Adams; from *La Relación*, Álgar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca; from *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, Olaudah Equiano; “Lecture to a Missionary,” Red Jacket; “Letter to the Reverend Samson Occom,” Phyllis Wheatley; “What is an American?,” Michel-Guillaume Jean de Crèvecoeur

Political and Editorial Cartoon Project

Writing Assignments

The Scarlet Letter

Rhetorical Précis handout

In small groups, students will choose an editorial writer to follow for the remainder of the school year. Bi-weekly, students will meet within their groups to choose the editorial column that they like best. Students will then compose a rhetorical précis of said article to be completed with response paragraph (per précis handout).

In small groups, students will analyze specific rhetorical strategies and stylistic techniques in historical narratives, public documents, political speeches, political essays, letters (epistles), lectures, and sermons. Students will present rhetorical analysis to the rest of the class accompanied by a display that visually represents the literary period and includes written analysis of the strategies.

In small groups, students will collect several political and editorial cartoons over the course of two weeks. The small group will then select the best of the collected cartoons in order to prepare and present a handout (to be given to each class member) to accompany a prepared student-led discussion.

Style Mimic Writing Using an excerpt from *Genesis*, students will mimic the style of Melville, Proulx, Edwards, and Orwell’s “purple passages”

Two Timed Writes (Descriptive and/or Narrative): *Scarlet Letter* and Zora Neale Hurston

Quote quiz, book report, and found poem (emphasis on symbolism, point of view, and narrative structure)

The Scarlet Letter Argumentation Essay

Prompt: “It is human nature to want patterns, standards, and a structure of behavior. A pattern to conform to is a kind of shelter.” Defend, challenge, or qualify the assertion above. Use evidence from *The Scarlet Letter* to develop your position.

The Scarlet Letter Vocabulary 1 & 2

Unit Five – Irony

Focus:

Instruction/Assignments

The Structure of Irony

Structure of Irony handout Students have trouble recognizing verbal irony. Irony results from a contradiction between subject matter and tone of voice, and students are confused by this unusual juxtaposition. Either they don’t see the unbalanced nature of the comparison or the comparison eludes them through its subtlety. The nine methods (exaggerated quantifiers, inflated diction, etc.) delineating how irony is created provide students with a tool used to identify the elements of an ironic tone.

Selected Readings

“Dam Letters;” “Cat Bill,” Adalai Stevenson

Writing Assignments

Timed Write: Coca-Cola letters

Unit Six – Rhetoric and Satire

Focus:

Instruction/Assignments

Rhetorical Writings: “The Case of Against *Huck Finn*,” John H. Wallace; “Why We Still Need *Huckleberry Finn*,” Dudley Barlow

Close Reading, analysis

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Quote quiz, book report, and found poem (emphasis on satire and structural irony)

Huck Finn vocabulary 1 & 2

Novel: Grand Conversation: Student Choice
War Novels

Unit Seven – Argument/Persuasion

Focus:	Instruction/Assignments
Argument Method and Process	Readings from the <i>Bedford Reader</i> (chapter 13) and discussion
Visual Literacy	Corporate American Flag, image from Adbusters Media Foundation (515). Students will discuss their response to the argument presented in the photograph as a work of description in a Socratic Seminar.
Argumentation Literature: “War,” Luigi Pirandello; “Dooley Is a Traitor,” James Michie; “I Want a Wife,” Judy Syfers; “Hollywood’s Responsibility for Smoking Deaths,” Joe Eszterhas	Close Reading, analysis

Argumentation Writing

Prompt: Public officials or individual citizens have frequently attacked or suppressed works they consider harmful or offensive on the basis of its action, language, or theme. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is one that people object to. In a well-organized essay, discuss the possible grounds for such an attack and then defend the work, arguing on the basis of its artistic merit or its value to the community, that it should not be suppressed.

Revision and Teacher Feedback

Warriner's *English Composition and Grammar* (158-162)

Emphasis: removing any logical fallacies

Argumentation Writing

Two timed writes: Sontag's *On Photography* and Kundera's *Testaments Betrayed*

Unit Seven – Definition

Focus:

Definition Method and Process

Instruction/Assignments

Readings from the *Bedford Reader* (chapter 12) and discussion

Visual Literacy

Need Is a Very Subjective Word, advertisement for the HUMMER H2 (477). Students will discuss what need the ad might appeal to during a Socratic Seminar.

Definition Literature: "The Meanings of a Word," Gloria Naylor; "The Equity of Inequality," George F. Will; "TV Addiction," Marie Winn; "The Holocaust," Bruno Bettelheim

Close Reading, analysis

Definition Writing

Define an abstract word (such as *patriotism*, *love*, *hope*) in concrete terms. Essays will be 500 words and focus on details and unity

Timed write: Nancy Mairs' "I am a Cripple"

Revision and Teacher Feedback

Warriner's *English Composition and Grammar* (544 – 546)

Emphasis: removal of passive voice and rephrasing to eliminate helping verbs.

The Great Gatsby

Quote quiz, book report, and found poem (emphasis on characterization, symbolism, and point of view)

The Great Gatsby Argumentation Project

Students will create a poster that illustrates how the novel defines or negates the American Dream through symbolic imagery and written analysis.

Unit Eight – Research

Focus:	Instruction/Assignments
Prewriting: selecting a subject, limiting subject, considering purpose, audience, and tone, considering sources: primary vs. secondary, author's credentials and bias, strong and convincing evidence	Students will be taking notes on <i>The Bedford Reader</i> (49-56) and Warriner's <i>English Composition and Grammar</i> , 5 th Course (232-240) and class discussion
Writing the first draft: synthesizing and documentation	Warriner's <i>English Composition and Grammar</i> , 5 th Course (247- 257)
Citing Sources: summary, paraphrase, and quotation, introduction of source material, plagiarism, citing common knowledge, MLA style, parenthetical citations, Works Cited	<i>The Bedford Reader</i> (56-67) and Warriner's <i>English Composition and Grammar</i> , 5 th Course (249-256)
Revision and Teacher Feedback:	Warriner's <i>English Composition and Grammar</i> , 5 th Course (256-263)
Preparing the Final Draft	Warriner's <i>English Composition and Grammar</i> , 5 th Course (259-263)
Argumentation Research Paper	Prompt: Is censorship ever justified? Topics researched can include freedom of speech issues such as controversial books, pornography, school newspapers, Internet, news talk radio, television violence, etc.

Unit Nine – Transcendentalism

Focus:	Instruction/Assignments
What is Transcendentalism?	Transcendentalist packet containing an essay "Transcendentalism" by Jorge Luis Borges
Selected Readings: from <i>Nature</i> , from <i>Self-Reliance</i> , Ralph Waldo Emerson; from <i>Walden</i> , from <i>Civil Disobedience</i> , Henry David Thoreau; from <i>Memoirs</i> , Margaret Fuller	

Transcendentalism Research Project and paper

Directions: Students will create their own Transcendentalist Societies. They will work with one partner and have a week (start to finish) to complete the project. Their societies must adhere to the ideas common to the Transcendentalist mode of thinking, specifically, the ideas of relying on one's self for true happiness, the emphasis on nature, the importance of minimal government intervention, and the belief that humans are innately good. There are eight specific tasks that the students must complete. These tasks include naming the society, writing a pledge, designing a flag, developing a monetary system, describing the kinds of work citizens would be encouraged to engage in, and creating propaganda to entice classmates to join their communities. Finally, students will write a paper that justifies their inclusion of the elements that they've chosen, supported with quotes from Transcendentalists.

Revision and Teacher Feedback

Emphasis: effective use of semicolons, colons, dashes or commas

Additional Writing Assignment

Nature journal and "The Island Within" Richard Nelson Using the Sierra Club model as a guide, students will create their own Nature Journals. The journal provides an opportunity for them to study the natural world, to grow a deeper relationship with the Earth, to develop a greater awareness and caring for the Earth (all in the spirit of the Transcendentalists). Additionally, students will compare Nelson's essay with the thoughts and ideals of the Transcendentalists.

Unit Ten – Compare/ Contrast

Focus:
Compare/Contrast Method and Process

Instruction/Assignments
Readings from the *Bedford Reader* (chapter 7) and discussion

Visual Literacy

American Gothic, painting by Grant Wood;
Rural Rehabilitation Client, photograph by Ben Shahn. Students will discuss how the visions of rural folk are conveyed by Wood and Shahn in a Socratic Seminar.

Compare/ Contrast Literature: "Neat People vs. Sloppy People," Suzanne Britt; "Batting Clean-Up and Striking Out," Dave Barry; "Disability," Nancy Mairs; "Everyday Use," Alice Walker

Close Reading, analysis

Compare/ Contrast Writing

Prompt: Compare and contrast two groups of people (ex. sloppy vs. neat), males and females (ex. discourse patterns), or your childhood with someone else's childhood (ex. someone of whom you were envious). Essays will be 500 words and focus on purpose and organization
Two timed writes: Okefenokee Swamp and Audubon/Annie Dillard

Unit Twelve – Classification and Division

Focus:

Classification Method and Process

Instruction/Assignments

Readings from the *Bedford Reader* (chapter 10) and discussion

Division Method and Process

Readings from the *Bedford Reader* (chapter 9) and discussion

Visual Literacy

What Everyone Should Know About the Movie Rating System, chart from the Motion Picture Association of America (375) and *Deconstructing Lunch* (335), cartoon by Roz Chast. Students will have separate discussions about the visuals presented in the unit. Students will discuss what criteria they assume is used to sort movies into different groups. With the second visual, students will discuss the contradictions in values that might be presented in the cartoon.

Classification and Division Literature: "I Want a Wife," Judy Brady; "Not All Men Are Sly Foxes," Armin A. Brott; "The Ways We Lie," Stephanie Ericsson; "The World of Doublespeak," William Lutz

Close Reading, analysis

Division Writing

Timed write: Richard Rodriguez *Days of Obligation*

Unit Thirteen – Testing Practices & Strategies

Review

Classical Schema, literary terms, rhetorical strategies, modes of discourse, logic/logical fallacies, citing sources

Practice Tests

multiple choice sections, individual timed writes

on style analysis, argumentation, and synthesis,
and whole tests