

Course Description:

In this course, you will read and analyze informational and argumentative texts across a number of genres and from a number of sources, including magazine articles, legal proceedings, and video presentations. Through the presentation of topics as varied as plastics in the ocean, depression, and computer hacking, the course demonstrates ways to understand central ideas, organizational structures, and techniques of composition. You will examine argumentative writing in seminal US documents, such as the Bill of Rights and speeches by 20th-century US presidents. In addition, you will encounter numerous infographics and videos that enhance the instruction.

As you read the selections in this course, you will practice ways to analyze evidence, grasp central ideas, examine word choice, and identify figurative language in informational writing. You will also make inferences, evaluate bias, draw conclusions, and increase your vocabulary. In addition, you will review basics in, grammar, usage, and punctuation.

The course also will instruct you in writing formally, and in using rhetorical devices to persuade audiences. Writing activities offer you tips and techniques as you research and organize expository and argumentative compositions.

Through the lessons provided in this course, you will use critical thinking and master techniques that help you achieve a deeper appreciation of informational and argumentative texts.

Suggested Prerequisites: English 11A/B Honors

Course Objectives:

- Use textual evidence to make inferences and determine implicit and explicit meaning in informational texts.
- Analyze and evaluate the organizational structure and interactions and development of multiple central ideas and key individuals, ideas, and events in informational texts.
- Analyze the use of figurative, connotative, and technical words in informational texts and the ways authors refine the meaning of key terms over the course of an informational text.
- Analyze the author's point of view and use of rhetoric in informational texts and the ways style and content add power, persuasiveness, and beauty.
- Analyze and evaluate how authors present information in different media and formats in informational texts to address a question or solve a problem.
- Analyze, evaluate, and distinguish between themes, concepts, rhetorical techniques, and reasoning in seminal US documents.
- Read and interpret informational texts and literary nonfiction.
- Use conventions of standard English grammar and language correctly.
- Identify an author's use of varied syntax in informational texts and analyze its effectiveness.
- Use Greek or Latin affixes and roots, context, or reference materials to determine word meanings or parts of speech.
- Interpret and analyze the role of figures of speech and nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations in informational texts.
- Distinguish between the meanings of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.

- Participate appropriately in an academic discussion.
- Present information effectively to make decisions and solve problems, using multimedia components, visual displays, multiple sources of information, and speech skills.
- Evaluate the various elements of arguments and claims in persuasive writing and speaking, including point of view and the use of sound reasoning and relevant and sufficient textual evidence.
- Use knowledge of writing ideas, concepts, and strategies to write, revise, and publish a researched informative essay and an argument essay.
- Complete writing activities and projects in which the development, organization, content, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Required Materials:

- Word processing software
- Internet browser
- Presentation software

*Additional materials listed in the course

Course Overview:

Each unit begins with a brief description of the intended learning outcomes. Following the introduction are these standard activities, which may or may not be present in each lesson:

Vocabulary Words – Includes parts of speech, definitions, synonyms, related words, and etymology. Is followed by graded workbook questions.

Language Skill Instruction – Includes instruction in language skills. Is followed by graded workbook questions.

Reading Selection – Includes annotated reading selections.

Reading Skill Instruction – Includes instruction in reading skills. Is followed by graded workbook questions.

Writing Skill Instruction and Activity / Writing Projects – Includes instruction in writing skills. The writing projects, which are assessments graded by the instructor, require you to apply your knowledge and writing capabilities to demonstrate mastery of the lesson content. Writing projects for LA401 ENG12A are in Units 2 and 3 (informative essay) and Units 4 and 5 (argument essay).

Honors Enrichment – Includes additional critical thinking and writing activities to perform more in-depth analysis.

Checkpoint – This graded activity uses 10 questions to assess mastery of lesson objectives. You may take the Checkpoint up to three times.

Discussion Board – An academic discussion board that gives you a chance to share your thoughts and ideas about the topics covered in each lesson.

Review – Presents a summary of the skills covered in the unit.

In the last lesson of each unit, the Checkpoint activity is replaced with a comprehensive assessment:

Unit Exams – At the end of the unit is an exam that will assess mastery of unit objectives. You may take the Unit Exam only once.

End of Course Writing Assessment – This exam is in the next-to-last lesson and tests how well you have learned the writing skills presented in the course. You may take the End of Course Writing Assessment only once.

Final Exam – This exam is in the last lesson and consists of 50 questions that reflect key concepts and information from the course. You may take the Final Exam only once.

Schedule of Work

Unit 1: Screen Time

- Vocabulary Words 1–5 Workbook Assessment
- Language Skill 1, 3 Workbook Assessment
- Reading Selections 1–5
- Reading Skill 1–4 Workbook Assessment
- Writing Skill and Activity 1–5
- Honors Enrichment 1–5
- Checkpoints 1–4
- Discussion Board 1–5
- Vocabulary, Language, and Reading Skill Reviews 5
- Unit 1 Exam

Reading Selections Unit 1

- “Household Robots Are Here, but Where Are They Going?”
- “I Rode 500 Miles in a Self-Driving Car and Saw the Future. It’s Delightfully Dull”
- “Cyber-psychopathy: What Goes On in a Hacker’s Head”
- “Hackers: The Internet’s Immune System” (TED Talks presentation with transcript)
- “Video Games in the Age of Cell Phones”
- “Going Dark: Are Technology, Privacy, and Public Safety on a Collision Course?”
- “Virtual Reality Gets Real”
- “This Virtual Lab Will Revolutionize Science Class” (TED Talks presentation with transcript)

Unit 2: Looking Inward

- Vocabulary Words 6–10 Workbook Assessment
- Language Skill 6, 8 Workbook Assessment
- Reading Selections 6–10
- Reading Skill 6–9 Workbook Assessment
- Writing Skill and Activity (Writing Project) 6–10
- Honors Enrichment 6–10
- Checkpoints 6–9
- Discussion Board 6–10
- Vocabulary, Language, and Reading Skill Reviews 10
- Unit 2 Exam

Reading Selections Unit 2

- “How Not to Raise a Bully: The Early Roots of Empathy”
- “The Key to Stop Bullying: Popular Kids”
- “Primates, Empathy, and Making Connections”
- “My Life as an Undocumented Immigrant”
- “16 Things I’ve Learned from 16 Years of Dealing with Depression”
- “Confessions of a Depressed Comic” (TED Talks presentation with transcript)
- “Teens, Your Brain Needs Real Food”
- “Among Teens, Sleep Deprivation an Epidemic”
- “Everyday Survival”

Unit 3: Going Green and Clean

- Vocabulary Words 11–15 Workbook Assessment
- Language Skill 11, 13 Workbook Assessment
- Reading Selections 11–15
- Reading Skill 11–14 Workbook Assessment
- Writing Skill and Activity (Writing Project) 11–15
- Honors Enrichment 11–15
- Checkpoints 11–14

- Discussion Board 11–15
- Vocabulary, Language, and Reading Skill Reviews 15
- Unit 3 Exam

Reading Selections Unit 3

- “The History of the Electric Car”
- “How Much Can Electric Cars Impact Climate Change?”
- “Plastics in the Ocean”
- “What We Know About: Plastic Marine Debris”
- “Plastics, Human Health, and Environmental Impacts: The Road Ahead”
- “Plastics”
- “The Real Reasons We Explore Space”
- “John F. Kennedy’s Moon Speech – Rice University”
- “How Light Pollution Works”
- “Missing the Dark: Health Effects of Light Pollution”
- “Climate Change in National Parks”
- “Natural Beauty at Risk: Preparing for Climate Change in National Parks”
- “Our Backyard Is 85 Million Acres”

Unit 4: An American Dream

- Vocabulary Words 16–20 Workbook Assessment
- Language Skill 16, 18 Workbook Assessment
- Reading Selections 16–20
- Reading Skill 16–19 Workbook Assessment
- Writing Skill and Activity (Writing Project) 16–20
- Honors Enrichment 16–20
- Checkpoints 16–19
- Discussion Board 16–20
- Vocabulary, Language, and Reading Skill Reviews 20
- Unit 4 Exam

Reading Selections Unit 4

- Background on the *Declaration of Independence*
- “The Declaration of Independence”
- “What Does the ‘Pursuit of Happiness’ Mean in the Declaration of Independence?”
- “Preamble to the United States Constitution”
- “The Bill of Rights”
- Lincoln’s “Second Inaugural Address”
- Bush’s “Address to Joint Session of Congress Following 9/11 Attacks”
- Obama’s “Remarks by the President on Osama bin Laden”
- Wilson’s “Address at Independence Hall: ‘The Meaning of Liberty’”
- “I Am the Son of a Terrorist. Here’s How I Chose Peace.” (TED Talks presentation with transcript)

Unit 5: For the Sake of Argument

- Vocabulary Words 21–25 Workbook Assessment
- Language Skill 21, 23 Workbook Assessment
- Reading Selections 21–25
- Reading Skill 21–24 Workbook Assessment
- Writing Skill and Activity (Writing Project) 21–25
- Honors Enrichment 21–25
- Checkpoints 21–24
- Discussion Board 21–25
- Vocabulary, Language, and Reading Skill Reviews 25
- Unit 5 Exam

Reading Selections Unit 5

- “Bias in the Media”
- “Participatory Journalism in the Twenty-First Century”
- “The Damned Human Race”
- Excerpt of “The Federalist No. 10”
- “NOW’s 1966 Statement of Purpose”
- Background for “The Louisiana Purchase”
- Thomas Jefferson’s “Letter to John C. Breckinridge”
- “George W. Harkins to the American People”

- “Smartphones and the Fourth Amendment”
- Excerpt from “Riley v. California”
- Excerpt from “Ingraham v. Wright”
- “Gun Debate? What Gun Debate?”
- Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I A Woman?"
- Shirley Chisholm’s “Equal Rights for Women”

Unit 6: Onward and Upward

- Vocabulary Review 26–28
- Language Skill Review 26–28
- Reading Selections 21–25
- Reading Skill Review 26–28
- Writing Skill Review 26–28
- Discussion Board 26–30
- End of Course Writing Assessment 29
- Final Exam 30

Reading Selections Unit 6

- Final Exam Reading Preview: “Joseph Galloway Speech/Patrick Henry Speech”
- “What Makes a Good Life? Lessons from the Longest Study on Happiness”
- “Career Planning for High Schoolers”
- “Why Should I Go to College?”
- Final Exam Reading Preview: “from the Federalist No. 51”
- “How to Make Sure the Next Generation Is Better Off Than We Are”
- “School Cell Phone Policy”
- Supreme Court Case: “Tinker v. Des Moines”
- Excerpts from US District Court Case: “Klump v. Nazareth Area School District”
- “Literary Heroes”
- “Winston Churchill: The American Connection”

