

# TAMALPAIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Larkspur, California

## Course of Study

### ESSAY/EXPOSITION

#### I. INTRODUCTION: COURSE DESCRIPTION

- A. As an eleventh and twelfth grade upper division course, Essay/Exposition builds upon the work begun in the 9-10th grade core. The students will work to improve their writing by reading model essays and by writing their own. Students will use current technology as a tool to hone their work. They will explore and develop ways of approaching subjects deductively and inductively, establish a relationship between cause and effect, and support generalizations with analogy, anecdote, illustration, example, argument, and use of authority.

Perhaps the most important outcome is the completion of a successful personal essay for college admission and future employment. In addition, to serve the requirements of the senior exit portfolio, students will further develop the following expository writing types: narration, reflection, evaluation, report of information, speculation about cause and effect, controversial issue, interpretation, and observational writing.

The course activities address the instructional goal of preparing students to think conceptually, solve problems, acquire knowledge, communicate ideas and work individually and collaboratively. Additionally, students will demonstrate individual and collective responsibility, creativity, productivity and initiative. Assignments are designed to provide opportunities for meaningful adult/student contacts for each student. The rigorous challenges of expository writing demand high standards and expectations of student performance.

- B. This course addresses the following District student learning outcomes which ask students to:
- #1. communicate articulately, effectively, and persuasively when speaking and writing;
  - #2. read and analyze material in a variety of disciplines;
  - #3. use technology as a tool to access information, analyze and

solve problems, and communicate ideas;

#10. analyze and propose solutions to contemporary issues using a variety of perspectives;

#11. interpret, experience, create and/or perform artistic work.

Essay/Exposition will contribute to the attainment of the following Tam 21<sup>st</sup> Century Goals,

- acquire, manage and use knowledge and skills;
- think critically and creatively;
- develop respect and understanding for the diversity of our community;
- understand individual and cultural differences;
- take responsibility for self and community.

C. Essay/Exposition is a course that draws on previous English courses, as well as other courses, where students have been introduced to the fundamentals of the essay. It provides an opportunity to develop critical thinking skills and learn to present ideas with coherence and clarity.

D. The goals of this course include the following:

1. construct a clearly reasoned, well-organized essay with an effective introduction, a sharply focused thesis statement, supporting paragraphs and commentary that fully develop the central idea in both concrete and abstract terms, and an appropriate conclusion;
2. analyze the strategies and rhetorical techniques of effective expository writers;
3. use the following techniques skillfully in order to develop the central idea of the paper: example, narration, description, definition, classification, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, and process analysis;
4. reason cogently by developing sound premises, insightful commentary and conclusions that depend on convincing evidence for support;
5. write with coherence, clarity, and organization;

6. state a position and argue it with reason, conviction and evidence;
7. write analytic papers on selected works of literature;
8. use vocabulary developed through the study of rhetorical terms and the authors' diction;
9. use critical thinking skills in analyzing and writing essays;
10. establish the connection between writing and thinking through regular practice in the steps of the writing process;
11. practice the conventions of written English, including usage, structure (grammar), and punctuation.

## **II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

### **A. Writing:**

1. use the stages in the writing process, especially responding, revising, and editing (R/LAF W W/S 1.0; 1.9);
2. apply basic grammar and appropriate vocabulary in the context of their writing (R/LAF W W/O 1.0);
3. write well-developed essays using the thesis statement effectively to focus the essay, and practice patterns of organization, such as chronology, classification, and steps in a process, with appropriate transitional techniques, language and form to suit purpose and audience (R/LAF W W/S 1.3);
4. draw generalizations from recorded observation and experience—e.g., from stories, poems, journal entries, autobiographical and biographical pieces, descriptions and accounts—and support them with convincing evidence and examples (R/LAF W W/A 2.2);
5. use deduction and induction, understand logical fallacies, know what constitutes evidence and authority, while distinguishing between primary and secondary sources (R/LAF W W/A 2.2);

6. develop an interpretation that uses convincing textual evidence for support and explain the interpretation rationally to convince the reader of its soundness (R/LAF W W/A 2.2 a - e);
7. examine ideas and information from a variety of sources and draw conclusions about the point and purpose of that information and to evaluate the conclusions and determine whether or not they are sound (R/LAF W W/A 2.4 d);
8. analyze information from various sources through systematic notetaking, integrate material from outside sources into their own work, and acknowledge those sources (R/LAF W W/S 1.6).

B. Literature/Reading:

1. understand and use the language of literary criticism, such as setting, characterization, foreshadowing, symbolism, and metaphor; consult sources to enrich understanding; recognize the relationship of specific incidents to theme; understand an author's method of narration, i.e., who tells the story and how far the narrator is from the action; be aware of and understand shifts in point of view (R/LAF R L/RA 3.0 S/F 3.1; N/A 3.2, 3.3, 3.4);
2. put ideas in one's own words through such devices as paraphrase, precis, modeling, unscrambling sample passages, reading and interpreting maps, charts, and graphs; recognize that rereading enhances the reader's understanding and appreciation;
3. determine the author's point of view and distinguish his or her bias from established fact (R/LAF R C/A 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5);
4. recognize the importance of reading beyond the assigned works and use outside sources of reference; refine the use of research techniques;
5. develop a greater understanding of the contributions of ethnic groups by studying their traditions, their cultural stance, their similarities and differences (R/LAF R L/RA 3.5 b).

C. Speaking and Listening:

When speaking, students will:

1. function effectively in class discussion by answering and asking questions coherently and by clarifying responses with clear explanations; conceive and develop ideas that are soundly reasoned and well supported;
2. become more proficient in the various roles in editing and response writing groups; learn new roles: for example, panel chair, panel member, large group discussion leader, recorder, resource person;
3. learn argumentation techniques that allow both sides of a question to surface; learn skills in logic and reasoning to support arguments on conflicting sides of a question (R/LAF L/S O/D 1.5, 1.6);
4. give careful attention to preplanning a speech; develop a regard for the audience with respect to gaining attention, sustaining interest, making efficient use of time; learn skills in organizing for various modes of presentation: analysis, persuasion, explanation, interpretation, direction, and comparison (R/LAF L/S O/D 1.7 A/E 1.13);
- e. practice oral interpretation of literature, using the techniques of emphasis, expression, dramatic pause, inflection; practice parts in dramas, attempting realistic character identity, fluency in reading dialogue, and appropriate tone and mood (R/LAF L/S S/A 2.3 a—e; 2.5).

When listening, students will:

1. develop techniques that promote supportive, polite concern for the speaker, and learn the skills necessary to offer tactful, constructive criticism;
2. identify main and subordinate ideas presented in lectures and discussions, and evaluate them for sound reasoning and convincing support; take into account the nuances, the subtle shades of meaning (R/LAF L/S A/E 1.11—1.14).

#### C. Student Assessment:

Students will be assessed through a variety of indicators including homework, group work, oral presentations, visuals related to the reading, quizzes on the literature, essays and other writing assignments.

Students will be expected to take an essay examination that requires them to apply the thinking and writing skills they have developed in order to synthesize and analyze material from three to four major works covered during the semester.

Students will be expected to support their main ideas with specific examples from the works under discussion.

See the Essay/Exposition Resource Binder for sample assessments

D. Course Assessment

Essay/Exposition will be assessed through formal and informal surveys of the students. Course and unit goals will be reviewed by teachers on a regular basis.

### III. METHODS AND MATERIALS

A. Methods:

Students will complete a variety of interrelated writing assignments adapted from the James Moffet writing sequence. More than one paper may be required for each assignment. In addition to four process papers per semester, minor papers will be assigned regularly.

Eight different writing types have been identified as the focus for the upper division writing program: observation, reflection, controversial issue, evaluation, report of information, interpretation, autobiography, and speculation. See the introduction to the Upper Division program for specifics on the writing modes.

B. Materials:

Every teacher of Essay/Exposition will teach a selection of the following titles to guarantee consistency throughout the district. Each student will read at least four major works per semester.

#### Suggested Materials

1. Essay Collections and Writing Handbooks

Baker, Sheridan	<i>The Practical Stylist</i>
Bloom, Lynn	<i>The Essay Connection</i>
Clavell, James	<i>James Clavell's the Children's Story but Not Just for Children</i>
Decker, Randall, ed.	<i>Patterns of Exposition</i>
Jordon, June	<i>Civil War</i>
Kael, Pauline	<i>I Lost It at the Movies</i>

Kane and Peters	<i>Writing Prose</i>
Kirzner, L. & Mandell, S.	<i>The Blair Reader, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition</i>
Lamb, Charles	<i>The Essays of Elia</i>
La Rochefoucauld	<i>Maxims</i>
McQuade, Donald and McQuade, Christine	<i>Seeing and Writing</i>
Mencken, H. L.	<i>Prejudices: A Selection</i>
Montaigne, Michel de	<i>The Essays of Montaigne</i>
Orwell, George	<i>A Collection of Essays</i>
Pascal	<i>Pensees</i>
Penfield, Elizabeth	<i>Short Takes: Model Essays for Compositions</i>
Peterson and Houston, eds.	<i>Great Essays</i>
Roberts, Edgar V.	<i>Thinking and Writing About Literature</i>
Sedaris, David	<i>Me Talk Pretty One Day</i>
Strunk and White	<i>The Elements of Style</i>
Warriner	<i>Composition: Models and Exercises Number 4</i>
Warriner	<i>Advanced Compositon</i>
Winchell, Donna Haisty and Annette Rottenberg	<i>The Structure of Argument</i>
Wylie, Philip	<i>Generation of Vipers</i>

2. Works to Write About (Presenting controversial social and ethical problems)

Asimov, Isaac	<i>Robots: Machines in Man's Image</i>
Audrey, Robert	<i>World's Beginning</i>
Baldwin, James	<i>Blues for Mr. Charlie</i>
Carson, Rachel	<i>Silent Spring</i>
Cheever, John	<i>The Falconer</i>
Ehrlich, Paul	<i>The Population Bomb</i>
Galsworthy, John	<i>Loyalties</i>
Hill, Russell	<i>Cold Creek Cash Store</i>
Huxley, Aldous	<i>Brave New World (10<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors)</i>
Ibsen, Henrik	<i>Ghosts</i>
King, Martin L.	<i>Why We Can't Wait</i>
Lessing, Doris	<i>Shikasta</i>
Lindbergh, Ann Morrow	<i>Gift from the Sea</i>
London, Jack	<i>The Sea Wolf</i>
Luce, Claire Booth	<i>The Women</i>
Mosley, Leonard	<i>On Borrowed Time</i>

Porter, Katherine Ann	<i>Never-Ending Wrong</i>
Postman, Neil	<i>The Disappearance of Childhood</i>
Rose, Reginald	<i>Twelve Angry Men</i>
Shaw, G. B.	<i>Mrs. Warren's Profession</i>
Sherriff, R. C.	<i>Journey's End</i>
Sinclair, Upton	<i>Boston (Sacco-Vanzetti Case)</i>
Sinclair, Upton	<i>The Jungle</i>
Steinbeck, John	<i>In Dubious Battle</i>
Stewart, George R.	<i>Storm</i>
Wiesel, Elie	<i>The Accident</i>

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