

READINESS PROFILE & COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Expository Reading and Writing

COURSE DESCRIPTION

- The goal of the Expository Reading and Writing Course is to prepare college-bound seniors for the literacy demands of higher education. Through a sequence of several rigorous instructional modules, students in this rhetoric-based course develop advanced proficiency in expository, analytical, and argumentative reading and writing. The cornerstone of the course presents a process for helping students read, comprehend, and respond to nonfiction and literary texts. Modules also provide instruction in research methods and documentation conventions. Students will be expected to increase their awareness of the rhetorical strategies employed by authors and to apply those strategies in their own writing. They will read closely to examine the relationship between an author's argument or theme and his or her audience and purpose; to analyze the impact of structural and rhetorical strategies; and to examine the social, political, and philosophical assumptions that underlie the text. By the end of the course, students will be expected to use this process independently when reading unfamiliar texts and writing in response to them. Course texts include contemporary essays, newspaper and magazine articles, editorials, reports, biographies, memos, assorted public documents, and other nonfiction texts.

COURSE CONTENT AND EXPECTATIONS

- **Rhetoric and Style Analysis:** We will learn how to analyze a writer's style, and we will be introduced to the patterns of development authors use to make their claims and to establish their purpose (Narration, Description, Process Analysis, Exemplification, Comparison and Contrast, Classification and Division, Definition, Cause and Effect, and Argument). We will read and analyze a variety of non-fiction texts that follow the modes of development, and we will write our own expository essays using these modes.
- **College Vocabulary:** Each unit consists of twenty-five vocabulary words. The first twenty-five questions ask students to match the word to the definition, and the next twenty-five questions are sentence completions, where students must use the contextual clues to place the appropriate word into the sentence. The lists are not cumulative, and there is not a final vocabulary exam.

MAJOR UNITS OF STUDY

- Various modules taken from the California State University Expository Reading and Writing Course.
- Whole units that focus on specific writing modes: Narration, Description, Process Analysis, Exemplification, Comparison and Contrast, Classification and Division, Definition, Cause and Effect, and Argument. In each unit students will read and annotate texts that use these methods of development. For many of these units, students will then write their own essays using the development pattern.
- Students will write rhetorical précis
- Students will read Orwell's *1984*, or Huxley's *Brave New World*. Exam and essay.

Please see syllabus for additional course rules and information

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STUDENT BACKGROUND

Students entering Expository Reading and Writing should already have a good understanding of the following:

- Critical Thinking skills
- Writing skills
- Comprehension skills
- High organization ability
- Independent work habits
- The ability to express ideas through evidence (writing and speaking)

Sample Prompt

- What is a serious public health concern that you believe does not get enough attention? Describe this problem in detail. Back up your arguments with appropriate research.
- Explain how a certain ritual or ceremony is conducted in your religion. Make sure someone of another faith could understand the process, and include a thesis statement that explains why the ritual is important.
- **You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned below. Before you begin writing, read the passage carefully and plan what you will say. Your essay should be as well-organized and carefully written as you can make it.**
As Americans add pounds, critics are increasingly blaming the fast-food industry. Teenagers have filed lawsuits blaming McDonald's for their health problems, and a public health group in California has asked the governor to declare childhood obesity a state of emergency. But parents—not the fast food companies, not the government—are in the best position to fight the epidemic of overweight children. Parents are responsible for teaching healthy eating and exercise habits. Parents are to blame if they let their kids eat unhealthy foods and sit in front of the television or computer for hours at a time. We have laws against parents leaving a loaded weapon where children can find and use it to hurt themselves or others. It's time to get parents to take the same responsibility to protect their children from unhealthy foods and lack of exercise.
Adapted from Daniel Weintraub's "The Battle Against Fast Food Begins in the Home"
The Sacramento Bee, December 17, 2002
Explain Weintraub's argument and discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with his analysis. Support your position, providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

Suggested preparatory courses

- Completion of high school English through Junior (11th) grade

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