Pre-AP®
English 1
COURSE SAMPLER

Course launches in Fall 2018
About the College Board

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of more than 6,000 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success—including the SAT® and the Advanced Placement Program®. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators, and schools.

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Dear Educator:

Thank you for taking the time to review the sample instructional materials for the College Board’s new Pre-AP Program.

**Pre-AP Rationale**

Less than 50% of U.S. high school students are ready for college. Over 300,000 high school students demonstrate AP potential based on their PSAT score but do not take an AP exam. Teachers have told us that they want the College Board’s assistance in helping define what a Pre-AP curriculum should look like. Given these statistics and feedback, the College Board developed the Pre-AP Program.

While the AP Program has helped prepare millions of students for college, data and educator feedback show that we need to reach more students, earlier, because all students deserve access to a challenging curriculum. By offering Pre-AP courses to all ninth-graders, with more grades to come, we hope to provide a new, consistent standard of high-quality instructional resources with the focus on supporting all students, so that more of them are ready for college and, when appropriate, able to access and complete college-level work before leaving high school.

Launching in fall 2018, Pre-AP will begin with five ninth-grade courses in World History and Geography, Algebra I, Biology, English, and Arts.

**Goals**

- Significantly increase the number of students who are able to access and complete college-level work before leaving high school
- Improve the college readiness of all students

**Teacher Developed**

We developed the Pre-AP Program in collaboration with educators and teachers like you. Teacher feedback helped us design a program that supplies effective resources and yet gives teachers the freedom and flexibility to teach the way they’ve always wanted to teach.

**What We Provide**

- **Instructional Resources**: Course frameworks, high-quality texts, and source materials paired with effective teaching strategies, model lessons, and shared routines
- **Assessments**: Digital unit assessments and performance-based tasks accompanied by scoring rubrics
- **Student practice**: Resources and tools to help students master content
- **Professional learning**: Training and teacher supports

We hope you find the sample instructional materials useful. As the Pre-AP Program develops, we anticipate that feedback from our school and educator partners will help us strengthen the program to better meet our mutual goal of preparing as many students as possible for success in college. Thank you!

Respectfully,

The Pre-AP Team
Getting to Know the Pre-AP English 1 Course

Pre-AP English 1 focuses deeply on the reading, writing, and language skills that are most essential for success in high school, college, and careers.

Overview

Pre-AP English 1 focuses on the close reading, analytical writing, and language skills with immediate relevance for students’ current and future work both inside and outside the classroom.

Texts take center stage in the Pre-AP ELA classroom, inspiring and preparing all students for close, critical reading. The course trains the reader to observe the small details within a text to arrive at a deeper understanding of the whole. It also trains the writer to focus on crafting complex sentences as the foundation for writing that facilitates complex thinking. Pre-AP ELA classroom work guides students to examine and appreciate authors’ choices, developing an awareness of how words produce effects and how the conventions of the English language are used for both precision and style.

Instructional Shifts in English 1

Pre-AP English 1 instructional resources focus on the following key instructional shifts:

Reading Closely:
Students read closely and analyze a range of complex literary and informational texts.

Valuing Evidence:
Students value textual evidence and incorporate it effectively in writing and speaking.

Noticing Language Choices:
Students understand how writers and speakers use specific words and sentences to move the thoughts, emotions, and actions of readers and listeners.
Shared Instructional Principles Across All Courses

All Pre-AP courses share a common set of classroom routines and approaches that give students many opportunities to practice and strengthen their skills while building their confidence in the classroom.

Close Observation and Analysis
Pre-AP courses require careful examination of one object, text, or problem before requiring students to grapple with multiple. Students engage in deep observation to build, refine, or confirm their knowledge, thus developing a foundational skill that supports analysis and learning in each discipline. As students encounter texts, visual art, graphs, maps, problems, and other source materials, they learn first to engage in deep, close observation before being asked to explain, and then apply or evaluate.

Evidence-Based Writing
Pre-AP courses provide a scaffolded approach to writing that begins with a focus on sentences before progressing to paragraphs and essays. All courses provide tools and supports (sentence frames, outlines, and graphic organizers) to support writing skills. In English 1 students are met where they are as their writing skills are developed through explicit instruction and ample practice. Writing instruction and practice are linked to reading comprehension as students learn to create clear sentences that incorporate textual evidence. By first focusing attention on sentences and paragraphs, students acquire a strong foundation to support later work with essays and other types of writing.

Higher-Order Questioning
When examining texts, data, problems, and other sources of evidence, students are guided to grapple with questions that spark curiosity, cultivate wonder, and promote productive lingering. Pre-AP lessons provide teachers with questions that motivate thought and support students to build evidence-based claims and to solve problems from multiple angles.

Academic Conversations
In Pre-AP classrooms, students have frequent opportunities for active, thoughtful participation in collaborative conversations about significant themes, topics, and texts. Through these discussions, students practice the skills of academic conversation that they will need to employ in college and career settings. Students regularly compare, critique, debate, and build upon others’ ideas and arguments to advance their learning.
Course Framework

The Pre-AP English 1 course framework is intended to provide a clear and focused description of what students should know and be able to do as a result of this course of study to secure the foundations for AP and college readiness in English.

Based on the Understanding by Design (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998) model, the framework also serves as the blueprint for the instructional units and assessments that are part of the Pre-AP course.

Big Ideas and Enduring Understandings

Big Ideas and Enduring Understandings cut across all units of the course. The Big Ideas map out the core principles and processes of English Language Arts and offer students a broad way of thinking about the discipline. The Enduring Understandings represent the long-term takeaways that students should develop as a result of focused study of the key concepts in the course. By design, Pre-AP English 1 is based on a small, focused set of Big Ideas and Enduring Understandings that can rest on a single page. This design supports deeper learning of concepts and skills and allows students to understand the connections among them.

Unit Outlines

Unit Outlines articulate the key concepts and learning objectives for each of the four major units of the course. These unit outlines also include general pacing recommendations and mappings to Pre-AP instructional resources to support teacher planning.

The Pre-AP English 1 course framework encourages a deep exploration of texts, an appreciation for the evidence, and the development of relevant skills and knowledge applied to reading, writing, language study, research, and oral communication.

Learning objectives are backmapped from a close examination of the intersections among the expectations of the AP English Literature and Composition and AP English Language and Composition courses, state standards documents, and the content and skills measured by the SAT suite of assessments. The course framework is structured around five big ideas that are listed separately but intended to be integrated within English Language Arts classroom instruction.

The full course framework will be released in spring 2018, but the following section offers a preview.
**Engaging with Texts**

**Enduring Understanding 1.1:**
Close and critical reading of complex literary and informational texts leads to a deeper understanding of the explicit and implicit meanings of the works.

**Enduring Understanding 1.2:**
Evaluating an argument is a complex task that includes analyzing stated and implied claims, logical reasoning, supporting evidence, and stylistic elements.

**Enduring Understanding 1.3:**
Evaluating literature is a complex task that includes making inferences, examining an author’s use of literary and stylistic elements, and drawing conclusions about the meaning of the work as a whole.

**Enduring Understanding 1.4:**
A text may be read in conversation with other texts or in the broader context in which it was written or read.

**Constructing Texts**

**Enduring Understanding 2.1:**
Composing is a recursive process that can be used to explore ideas and illuminate concepts for both the writer and the reader.

**Enduring Understanding 2.2:**
Constructing an argument is a crucial skill with importance in academic, civic, social, and workplace settings.

**Enduring Understanding 2.3:**
Writing an analysis requires interpreting the relevant details and features of a work and explaining their relationship to the meaning of the work as a whole.

**Enduring Understanding 2.4:**
Writing a narrative allows a writer to convey experience, share perspective, or deepen his or her own understanding.

**Focusing on Language**

**Enduring Understanding 3.1:**
Critical readers develop a sense of word consciousness that motivates them to investigate word meanings.

**Enduring Understanding 3.2:**
Precise word choice and compelling language patterns can stir the thoughts, emotions, and actions of readers.

**Enduring Understanding 3.3:**
Conventions of standard English are used to aid the reader’s understanding, and authors may use or defy these conventions to achieve different stylistic effects.

**Investigating through Research**

**Enduring Understanding 4.1:**
Research is a powerful, recursive process used to gain knowledge, solve problems, make informed decisions, and enhance understanding.

**Enduring Understanding 4.2:**
The sharing of research includes a synthesis of others’ ideas and the independent findings of the researcher.

**Entering the Conversation**

**Enduring Understanding 5.1:**
Academic discourse requires collaboration to advance or deepen understanding of topics or texts.

**Enduring Understanding 5.2:**
Effective speakers design and deliver presentations according to their subject, purpose, audience, and occasion.
Instructional Units

Pre-AP English 1 is organized into four units:

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The following resources* are provided for each unit to support teachers and students:

**Lesson Sets:** Three weeks of model lessons that support the instructional shifts and demonstrate how to apply Pre-AP principles and meet course objectives through an integrated approach to reading, writing, language study, and speaking and listening. Lessons include core texts, guided instruction, and recommendations for additional student practice.

**Student Reader:** A collection of the core texts that students read and study during the three-week lesson sets, provided in a consumable format to allow the opportunity for student notes.

**Performance Task:** One performance task and scoring rubric for each unit.

**Assessments:** Two short objective assessments per unit, administered digitally to provide immediate performance feedback and score reporting.

*The model lesson sets comprise approximately one-third of the instructional time for the course, providing flexibility as they are used alongside district and school textbooks and curriculum materials.
Unit Outlines

Unit 1: Telling Details (Short Stories and Visual Texts)

Unit Overview
In this unit, as readers of visual texts and short fiction, students go beyond the superficial identification of visual and literary elements such as brushstrokes and plot moves and attempt to solve the mystery of how the artist and author have employed their crafts to reach their audience. Students also learn to present their analyses in sentences and paragraphs that capture the telling details discovered through close observation.

Key Concepts and Skills
Featured in the Unit 1 lesson set:
- Critical reading of short stories and visual texts
- The writing process
- Analytical writing
- Meanings of words in context
- Precise language
- Conventions of standard English
- Collaborative conversations

Not addressed in the lesson set, but closely linked to the unit and recommended for inclusion in the flexible weeks:
- Narrative writing

Unit 2: Pivotal Words and Phrases (Poetry and Drama)

Unit Overview
In this unit, students focus on the meaning and impact of individual words and phrases as they explore the work of poets, performers, and dramatists. By studying multiple drafts of a poem, students learn about the work of revision and the way in which authors select specific words to express their intended meaning. Students will also practice oral delivery and performance as an extension of their analysis of key words and phrases in short, dramatic scenes.

Key Concepts and Skills
Featured in the Unit 2 lesson set:
- Critical reading of poetry and dramatic scenes
- The writing process
- Analytical writing
- Meanings of words in context
- Precise language
- Conventions of standard English
- Collaborative conversations
- Oral presentations and performances
Unit 3: Analytical Reading and Writing (Nonfiction, Including a Collection of Essays)

Unit Overview

In this unit, students engage deeply with a collection of thematically linked nonfiction texts, including narrative and argumentative essays and speeches. These texts present multiple perspectives, styles, and structures as they present exemplary models of well-constructed analyses. Through their deep work with these model texts, students identify topics for further study as they learn to plan, craft, and revise their own written analyses.

Key Concepts and Skills

Featured in the Unit 3 lesson set:
- Critical reading and analysis of nonfiction texts
- Evaluating arguments
- Synthesizing ideas from multiple texts
- The writing process
- Analytical writing
- Meanings of words in context
- Precise language
- Conventions of standard English
- Collaborative conversations

Not addressed in the lesson set, but closely linked to the unit and recommended for inclusion in the flexible weeks:
- Argumentative writing
- The research process
- Sharing research

Unit 4: Effective Beginnings (Opening Chapters of Novels)

Unit Overview

In this unit, students examine the opening chapters of novels selected for literary merit, exceptional craft and style, and student engagement. By using multiple examples of opening chapters, the lesson set provides a model of close reading that students continue as they study a full novel selected by the classroom teacher. As the culminating unit, there is an opportunity and expectation for students to apply their year-long learning of close reading for telling details, pivotal words and phrases, author’s purpose and choices, and analytical reading and writing to their novel study and literary analysis essay.

Key Concepts and Skills

Featured in the Unit 4 lesson set:
- Critical reading of novels
- Literary analysis
- The writing process
- Analytical writing
- Meanings of words in context
- Precise language
- Conventions of standard English
- Collaborative conversations
Pre-AP English 1 Sample Lessons

“An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge”
Part 1: Perspective

This lesson is situated in the last week of the lesson set, providing a chance for students to apply what they've learned and practiced to a more challenging short story, “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge.” Students begin by working with unfamiliar vocabulary through the interactive list-group-label strategy. Then, they encounter this lesson that emphasizes the significance of narrative perspective and how it shifts, guiding students to the cliffhanger (well, plankhanger) moment of the story—when the reader suddenly inhabits the condemned man's view.

The opening writing prompt and discussion ask students to imagine the narrator as if he or she has a physical presence within the story, like a character. This exercise in imagination equips students to later compare the omniscient narrator's magical power to navigate narrative perspectives with the cinematographer’s artistic moves that convey similar shifts in perspective in the film version of “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge.”

Part 1: Observing the Narrator

Ask students to respond independently to an opening writing prompt:

Read the first seven paragraphs of “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge,” and imagine the narrator being physically present in the setting.

Where is the narrator positioned as he or she portrays the scene in each of the first seven paragraphs?

Is he or she moving around or staying in one place? What are your clues? Underline them or make annotations in the margins next to each paragraph in Part I.

Read-aloud and discussion

Read paragraphs 1-7 aloud, pausing after each paragraph to invite students to try to envision where the narrator is positioned and to reference specific words and phrases that they underlined.

- Establish that the narrator’s position during the first two paragraphs is close enough to the “temporary platform” on the railroad bridge to see the man in the noose, the two executioners, the captain, and the two sentinels (have students recall meaning from LGL), but also with a vantage wide enough to see the forest, fort, and crowd of spectators.

Sentence to Unpack

These are key places to slow down and unpack meaning by reviewing key vocabulary and determining meaning in context.

“Death is a dignitary who when he comes announced is to be received with formal manifestations of respect, even by those most familiar with him. In the code of military etiquette, silence and fixity are forms of deference.”

Possible translation: Death is like an important person, so when you know in advance death is coming, you treat him with respect. In the military, silence and rigidity are ways to show respect.
The perspective then shifts in the third paragraph, when the narrator seems to be standing right in front of the man's face. (evidence: “straight nose, firm mouth, broad forehead,...”)

As you read paragraph four, slow down to translate the signal sentence describing the mechanism that is being used to hang the man. Establish that the perspective in this paragraph makes an even greater shift after the phrase “nor his eyes bandaged.” After that point, the reader sees from the perspective of the condemned man on the plank. It’s as if the narrator has passed the camera to the condemned man. The reader can follow his gaze from his feet to the “swirling water” to “the dancing driftwood.”

This shift in perspective also allows the reader to peer into the man’s thoughts: “How slowly it appeared to move! What a sluggish stream!” Paragraphs 5-7 remain within the internal realm of the man’s mind until “the captain nods to the sergeant and the latter steps aside.”

**Sentence to Unpack**

“This plank had been held in place by the weight of the captain; it was now held by that of the sergeant. At a signal from the former the latter would step aside, the plank would tilt and the condemned man go down between two ties.”

**Possible translation:** The wooden plank had been held down by the captain; it was now held steady by the sergeant. At a signal from the captain, the sergeant would step off the plank, the plank would tilt, and the condemned man would fall between the railroad ties.

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**Part 2: Observing the Narrator in Film**

Before presenting the film clip from Enrico’s *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*, explain the meaning of “shot” in film jargon as one continuous piece of film that is seen on-screen until it is replaced by another image. Allow students to create “paper cameras” by rolling up a piece of paper like a tube and looking through that “lens” to envision what a cinematographer sees while filming a shot.

Show just the first seven minutes of Robert Enrico’s 1962 film version of *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*.

Replay the clip, this time pausing at the 3:18 mark, with the shot from the perspective of the condemned man gazing at his boots on the plank and the swirling water below. Pose the discussion questions:

*Where is the camera being held to capture this image? How do you know?*
Part 3: Applying Perspectives

Hold a brief closing discussion prompted by this question:

*How would the story be different if the man’s eyes were bandaged?*

- Have students write a response to the discussion prompt, beginning their sentences with “if”:
  
  *If the man’s eyes were bandaged, then...*

*Suggested response:* If the man’s eyes were bandaged, then the reader would never be allowed to see the story from his perspective.

- Establish that the narrative shift to seeing from the condemned man’s perspective allows the reader to suddenly empathize with the man, literally seeing his side of the story—and feeling the sensation of what it must have felt like to stand on that plank about to die.

- Further the discussion to consider how the shift to the gaze upon the water affects the overall tone of the story in Part I. The story goes from a rather cold, mechanical account to a much more intimate and surreal vision. Before this point, the reader was just bearing witness to the precision of a military execution; everything was going according to a well-organized plan. After this point, the story shifts from precision to the unpredictable nature of thought as we see the man’s “unsteadfast footing” and how he becomes entranced with the “dancing driftwood” and thinks, “How slowly it appeared to move! What a sluggish stream!”

*Remind students that if they begin a sentence with the subordinating conjunction “if,” they will need a comma before the “then” clause.*

**Student Practice**

Sentence-Level Writing Practice:
[https://quill.org/activity_sessions/anonymous?activity_id=420](https://quill.org/activity_sessions/anonymous?activity_id=420)

Vocabulary Practice:
[https://www.vocabulary.com/lists/1888160](https://www.vocabulary.com/lists/1888160)
An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge

by Ambrose Bierce

from The Millennium Fulcrum Edition, 1988

1 A man stood upon a railroad bridge in northern Alabama, looking down into the swift water twenty feet below. The man's hands were behind his back, the wrists bound with a cord. A rope closely encircled his neck. It was attached to a stout cross-timber above his head and the slack fell to the level of his knees. Some loose boards laid upon the ties supporting the rails of the railway supplied a footing for him and his executioners—two private soldiers of the Federal army, directed by a sergeant who in civil life may have been a deputy sheriff. At a short remove upon the same temporary platform was an officer in the uniform of his rank, armed. He was a captain. A sentinel at each end of the bridge stood with his rifle in the position known as "support," that is to say, vertical in front of the left shoulder, the hammer resting on the forearm thrown straight across the chest—a formal and unnatural position, enforcing an erect carriage of the body. It did not appear to be the duty of these two men to know what was occurring at the center of the bridge; they merely blockaded the two ends of the foot planking that traversed it.

2 Beyond one of the sentinels nobody was in sight; the railroad ran straight away into a forest for a hundred yards, then, curving, was lost to view. Doubtless there was an outpost farther along. The other bank of the stream was open ground—a gentle slope topped with a stockade of vertical tree trunks, loopholed for rifles, with a single embrasure through which protruded the muzzle of a brass cannon commanding the bridge. Midway up the slope between the bridge and fort...
were the spectators—a single company of infantry in line, at “parade rest,” the butts of their rifles on the ground, the barrels inclining slightly backward against the right shoulder, the hands crossed upon the stock. A lieutenant stood at the right of the line, the point of his sword upon the ground, his left hand resting upon his right. Excepting the group of four at the center of the bridge, not a man moved. The company faced the bridge, staring stonily, motionless. The sentinels, facing the banks of the stream, might have been statues to adorn the bridge. The captain stood with folded arms, silent, observing the work of his subordinates, but making no sign. Death is a dignitary who when he comes announced is to be received with formal manifestations of respect, even by those most familiar with him. In the code of military etiquette silence and fixity are forms of deference.

3 The man who was engaged in being hanged was apparently about thirty-five years of age. He was a civilian, if one might judge from his habit, which was that of a planter. His features were good—a straight nose, firm mouth, broad forehead, from which his long, dark hair was combed straight back, falling behind his ears to the collar of his well fitting frock coat. He wore a moustache and pointed beard, but no whiskers; his eyes were large and dark gray, and had a kindly expression which one would hardly have expected in one whose neck was in the hemp. Evidently this was no vulgar assassin. The liberal military code makes provision for hanging many kinds of persons, and gentlemen are not excluded.

4 The preparations being complete, the two private soldiers stepped aside and each drew away the plank upon which he had been standing. The sergeant turned to the captain, saluted and placed himself immediately behind that officer, who in turn moved apart one pace. These movements left the condemned man and the sergeant standing on the two ends of the same plank, which spanned three of the
cross-ties of the bridge. The end upon which the civilian stood almost, but not quite, reached a fourth. This plank had been held in place by the weight of the captain; it was now held by that of the sergeant. At a signal from the former the latter would step aside, the plank would tilt and the condemned man go down between two ties. The arrangement commended itself to his judgement as simple and effective. His face had not been covered nor his eyes bandaged. He looked a moment at his “unsteadfast footing,” then let his gaze wander to the swirling water of the stream racing madly beneath his feet. A piece of dancing driftwood caught his attention and his eyes followed it down the current. How slowly it appeared to move! What a sluggish stream!

He closed his eyes in order to fix his last thoughts upon his wife and children. The water, touched to gold by the early sun, the brooding mists under the banks at some distance down the stream, the fort, the soldiers, the piece of drift—all had distracted him. And now he became conscious of a new disturbance. Striking through the thought of his dear ones was sound which he could neither ignore nor understand, a sharp, distinct, metallic percussion like the stroke of a blacksmith’s hammer upon the anvil; it had the same ringing quality. He wondered what it was, and whether immeasurably distant or near by—it seemed both. Its recurrence was regular, but as slow as the tolling of a death knell. He awaited each new stroke with impatience and—he knew not why—apprehension. The intervals of silence grew progressively longer; the delays became maddening. With their greater infrequency the sounds increased in strength and sharpness. They hurt his ear like the thrust of a knife; he feared he would shriek. What he heard was the ticking of his watch.
He unclosed his eyes and saw again the water below him. “If I could free my hands,” he thought, “I might throw off the noose and spring into the stream. By diving I could evade the bullets and, swimming vigorously, reach the bank, take to the woods and get away home. My home, thank God, is as yet outside their lines; my wife and little ones are still beyond the invader’s farthest advance.”

As these thoughts, which have here to be set down in words, were flashed into the doomed man’s brain rather than evolved from it the captain nodded to the sergeant. The sergeant stepped aside.
In the English 1 course, all four performance tasks are written responses to sources. While the sources represent new texts not studied in class, they mirror the genres students studied throughout each unit. In keeping with the scaffolded approach to writing, the first two performance tasks require well-organized paragraphs, while the later two move from paragraphs to essays.

### Sample Performance Task Prompt

#### Unit 4: Analyzing a Literary Passage

Carefully read the following passage. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how the author introduces and establishes the setting or main character.

### Scoring Rubrics

Rubrics contain scoring guidance for three distinct categories: **Reading, Analysis, and Writing.** Recognizing that some students read well but have difficulty expressing their understanding in writing, while other students have a good command of language but lack sufficient skills in analysis, these separate criteria allow for targeted scoring and provide more precise feedback to indicate students' skills.

- **Reading** criteria measure comprehension, including the identification of important details, accuracy of interpretation, and use of textual evidence.

- **Analysis** criteria measure the ability to offer a well-reasoned account of specific components of the text (e.g., literary elements, precise diction) and their significance. These consider not just the presence of textual evidence, but the relevance and value of that evidence as support for the claim or point being made.

- **Writing** criteria measure command of language, organizational structure, clarity, cohesion, and conventions of standard English.
The information included in this sampler is still subject to change, as Pre-AP courses are still being developed with teacher feedback. Pre-AP course materials, including the course framework, lessons, and unit assessments will be finalized in spring 2018. Pre-AP courses will launch in fall 2018.