

Hialeah Gardens High School's Cambridge English Language - Syllabus

Ms. E. Ceballos (*Ms. C.*) & Ms. M. Gonzalez (*Ms. Go*)

* miscandmogo@gmail.com * www.aicegladiators.com *



Cambridge Principles

Cambridge qualifications develop successful students. They not only build understanding and knowledge required for progression, but also learning and thinking skills that help students become independent learners and equip them for life. This course, Cambridge English Language (AICE EL), is accepted by universities and employers worldwide as proof of understanding and ability to communicate in English. The course is multi-disciplinary, with subject matter drawn from across the curriculum. In broad terms, this class enables students to:

- * use appropriate styles and registers for different contexts;
- * analyze a variety of complex texts in different forms and styles;
- * better understand language and its use to inform and persuade;
- * to read with understanding written material in a variety of forms, and to comment on its effectiveness;
- * write clearly, accurately and effectively for a particular purpose or audience.

Our AICE Approach:

Throughout the year, students will be charged with amalgamating the skills needed to succeed on not only the Cambridge English Language exam, PERT, SAT and ACT, but also at the university level and beyond. Since the aforementioned exams are crucial to college-readiness, students will have opportunities for growth in all of them concomitantly. Moreover, the lessons, and the knowledge and skills gleaned from them, will be applicable to and will transcend these exams to the themes and activities that will emerge in college coursework, as well as the challenges life presents. Therefore, AICE English Language will focus on the following objectives:

* *Relevant & Rigorous Readings* – Students will read works from various genres, time periods, and authors that are relevant to the world, other readings, and their own experiences and observations. Readings will require a critical approach and will include non-fiction, fiction, news articles, short stories, poems, novels, plays, speeches, essays, song lyrics, film, and even non-print text.

* *Wide-Ranging Writing* – Students will write several types of papers: descriptive, persuasive, comparison/contrast, narrative, and, most importantly, analytical, argumentative, creative, descriptive, and perspective pieces. Not all writing assignments will be academic in nature; some writing activities will require students to share their fears, successes, and beliefs.

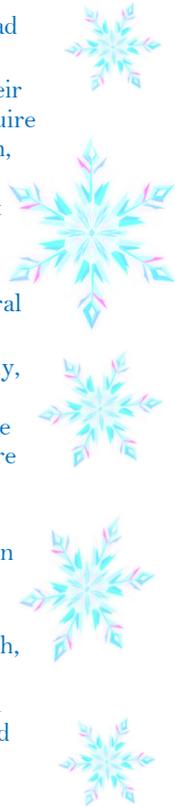
* *Investigative Inquiry* – Students will be involved in their learning by asking and presenting questions, engaging in discourse, and seeking answers and resolutions to their queries. Through inquiry, research, and collaboration, students will construct new knowledge. In searching for knowledge, students will learn to seek resources and data on current events and past incidents that shape our history and world, their thoughts and ideas. This inquiry-based learning will encourage students to think outside the box and give

them the confidence to attack complex ideas and issues that arise in the curriculum, college, community, and the global society.

* *Engaging Elocution* – Students will learn to use rhetoric effectively (logos, ethos, and pathos) in delivering persuasive, informative, formal and informal speeches/presentations. They will also be trained to recognize when a speaker employs rhetoric and how they and audiences are being manipulated by it.

* *Gainful Grammar* – Students will study and develop a mastery of grammar, punctuation, and spelling (GPS). Writing gets lost when GPS is not calibrated! Fine-tuned GPS will help students succeed in a myriad of areas, including writing, the AICE English Language exam, the SAT, ACT, and PERT, as well as future employment applications.

* *Valuable Vocabulary* – Students will increase their word power by learning Greek and Latin roots/prefixes, as well as other descriptive words. An extensive vocabulary will aid students' writing and speeches by making them come "alive" and will open doors down the road. Our words will be extracted from our various readings as well as SAT and ACT resources.



Cambridge International Examinations and the Cambridge Diploma

Although an awareness of the wider implications of particular issues will improve the quality of students' learning, AICE EL is not a test of general knowledge. It evaluates students' abilities to communicate through written expression, the organization of their argument, the relevant details they use to support their argument, their level of GPS (grammar, punctuation, and spelling), their analyses, their freshness of expression, their creative flair, and their use of vibrant and vivid vocabulary, to name a few.

Cambridge AICE involves the selection of subjects from three curriculum groups – Mathematics and Science, Languages, and Arts and Humanities, in addition to the required Global Perspectives. AICE EL falls under the Language tier (and is, therefore, a requirement for the Cambridge diploma explained below). There are AICE tests offered during the year, and when students earn a passing score, they can earn AICE credits. AICE credits can be used in college and are applied to the Cambridge Diploma (in which they need a total of seven, with at least one from each curriculum group). This diploma entitles students to the 100% Bright Futures scholarship along with enriching experiences in high school, in college, and in the workforce.

Being in a Cambridge class, STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED to take the AICE exam in May or June! It is up to the teacher's discretion, nonetheless, whether or not to order an exam for a student. In the rare case that a student's grades and/or effort are not reflective of a prepared, mature literary critic, the teacher *will not* order an exam. Otherwise, a student who is scheduled to test but does not will have a financial obligation of \$120. There are no make-ups for this exam, so once the dates are solidified, plan on being there! Absences are unacceptable.

As an AICE student, you are required to pay a one-time fee of \$10 to assist with costs related to the program (despite the number of AICE courses in which you have enrolled). In other words, Juan who is enrolled in one AICE class will pay \$10 while Gabriela who is enrolled in four AICE courses will also pay \$10. Please pay the fee before the end of the month, and *keep your receipts* for later reference.

Summer Assignments

Summer work is not only a requirement for Cambridge students; it is a requirement for EVERY Gladiator. In addition to the school-wide summer reading of Sean Covey's *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, we assigned summer reading for EL students. If you did not read Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* and Arthur Miller's *Death of A Salesman* or complete the work as outlined on EdModo, you have a *one-time courtesy* to submit your work late for a 15% point deduction. Specifics can be found at www.aicegladiators.com. These assignments must be uploaded no later than 10:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 29th.

Furthermore, if you intend to take Cambridge next year, rest assured, there will be summer reading and weekly assignments. Remember, by being in Cambridge, you receive three FREE college credits if you pass the exam (that the school pays for...unless you do not show up for the exam); you receive TWO bonus points for your GPA; and you have the potential to receive an AICE Diploma which also affords you more scholarship opportunities. As Uncle Ben so wisely advises Peter Parker in Spider-Man, "With great power, comes great responsibility"...and, oftentimes, more labor! You need to understand this, and you need to explain this to your parents, as opposed to whining about it.

The Importance of PSAT' and PERT'

In addition to the AICE EL exam in May/June, our class will take the PSAT in October, and the PERT in April or May. We will use data from these various measures to drive instruction, which is why it is IMPERATIVE that you take these assessments seriously. For one, you will receive a grade for each assessment, even if you think it does not count. Besides, we will not know where to go if we do not know where we have been. And we cannot fix what is broken if we do not know what is wrong. The PSAT will gauge your readiness for the SAT and your readiness for advanced classes your senior year, and PERT scores will also be used for your placement for senior year and for college course placement at smaller, community-type colleges. Though passing these tests is not required for graduation, it is pertinent that you achieve high marks. Since your scores are linked to your course selections for the 2019-2020 school year and, possibly, your college courses in 2020-2021, you must do your very best!

Readings

Most of our reading is done from novels, articles, and other prose and poetry passages. We rarely give "packets," as we believe the best way to improve your comprehension skills is to read in real-world situations. Therefore, we recommend you do some reading on your own time, whether it is reading articles from your favorite magazine or the latest best seller.

When we assign a novel that is not in our school's book inventory, you will have to retain your own copy. Typically, these novels ranger from \$5-\$12. You can buy your own copy, bring in the money and we will order one for you, borrow one from a friend or a library, or find and print a PDF version; it is up to you!



Materials

For our English class, you will only need a one-inch binder with five dividers titled: Literary Lessons, Writing Activities, GPS Lessons, Valuable Vocab, and Data. The first page of your binder will be an ASSIGNMENT TRACKING SHEET, second will be THIS SYLLABUS, and third will be the CLASS RULES. We will do UNANNOUNCED periodic binder checks. Your binder should be free of clutter, and all pages should be bound. You should also have plenty of paper, a few pens (blue or black) and pencils, and a set of highlighters or colored pencils: yellow, pink, blue, and green are musts. These items should be brought to class DAILY...and it would not hurt to have a supply of index cards and post-it notes at home.

We also need—and greatly appreciate—your assistance with classroom supplies. Please contribute ONE item listed below based on the first letter of your last name:

A-E: one ream of white copy paper

F-H: one pack of colored copy paper

I-K: one bottle of hand sanitizer

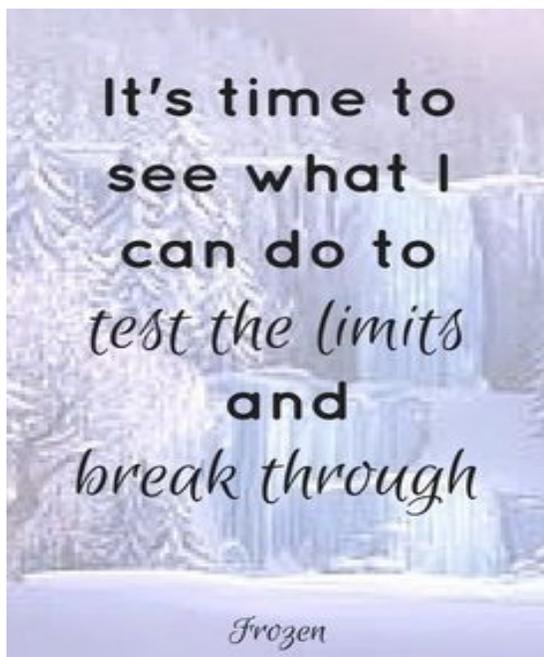
L-N: two packs of blue or black ink pens

O-Q: one box of disinfecting wipes (*not* baby wipes)

R-T: one pack of colored paper

U-Z: one ream of white copy paper

Our class website is the best way to stay informed of our goings-on. It is your RESPONSIBILITY to check it every day (or at least every other day) and that includes weekends! Be advised that our site is an extension of our classroom. The rules that apply in class also apply online. Furthermore, our class site is for all of our AICE English classes, but we have tabs for each level –Literature, Language, and Thinking Skills. The tab for our class can be found under the menu and is titled “Language.” Anything that pertains to EL alone will be found there. Anything that is for the good of ALL our AICE English courses will be on the homepage. While Remind is a great tool, do not rely on it to inform you of due dates or responsibilities.



Making the Grade

All grading is done on a point scale. Within a nine-week period, you will have 9-10 grades that make their way into the grade book. And each term, you will receive an assignment log identifying the specific assignments that will be graded so that you can read, study, and learn with the end in mind. Understand, nonetheless, that regardless of an assignment's point value, the value of the assignment does not change. Every assignment is vital for you in our classroom (or we would not assign it); as such, one grade will count as a “Preparation, Productivity, and Participation” grade comprised of daily goings-on, ranging from attentive involvement in class discussions to timely completion and submission of homework assignments.

There are no extra credit opportunities—with the exception, this year, of 2 no-restroom-bonus points. We will discuss this further in class Wednesday/Thursday.

Please keep in mind, if you end up with a grade that is at the high end of the scale, do not even think of asking to *up* your grade. With all the assignments and the support offered, if you do not earn a certain grade, you will not get it. It is not helping you at all if a teacher bumps-up your grade when you did not truly earn it. Sometimes, the greatest lesson you will learn comes from making a B or C! Avoid zeroes to make the most of the graded opportunities you have.