

# SYLLABUS FOR THE TRANSFORMERS OF AICE ENGLISH LANGUAGE



Ms. M. Gonzalez (MoGo)

\* [www.aicegladiators.com/aice-language.html](http://www.aicegladiators.com/aice-language.html) \*

\* [aicelang2017@gmail.com](mailto:aicelang2017@gmail.com) \* [msmogo4parents@gmail.com](mailto:msmogo4parents@gmail.com) \*

## THE AUTOBOT APPROACH

The approach for this course is to amalgamate the skills needed to succeed on the Cambridge English Language exam, the PERT, the SAT and ACT, and to thrive 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. Our readings will require a critical approach and will include non-fiction, fiction, news articles, short stories, poetry, novels, dramas, 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 uses 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 both SAT prep books as well as our various readings.

## 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 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; and write clearly, accurately and effectively for a particular purpose or audience.

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 requires completion and passing of subject exams from three curriculum groups—Mathematics and Science, Languages, and Arts and Humanities, in addition to the required Global Perspectives—for a total of 7 points toward the AICE Diploma. AICE EL and Spanish EL are the only classes that fall under the Language tier (and is, therefore, a requirement). This diploma entitles students to increased opportunities for Bright Futures, scholarships, and enriching experiences in high school, in college, and in the workforce.

Being in this class, STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED to take the AICE EL 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 \$130. 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 for costs related to the program (despite the number of AICE courses in which you have enrolled). In other words, Maria who is enrolled in one AICE class will pay \$10 while Gabriel who is enrolled in four AICE courses will also pay \$10. Please pay the fee by August 31<sup>st</sup>, and *keep your receipt* for reference.

### **SUMMER WORK**

Summer work is not only a requirement for Cambridge students; it is a requirement for EVERY Gladiator. In lieu of the school-wide summer reading, I assigned summer reading for EL students: SAT and ACT practice tests, short stories from the Cambridge Anthology, *Stories of Ourselves*, and creative writing assignments. If you did not read the stories or complete the work as outlined on the website, you have a *one-time courtesy* to submit your work late for a 15% point deduction. The information about the stories and the assignments can be found at [www.aicegladiators.com](http://www.aicegladiators.com). These assignments must be uploaded by 10:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 31<sup>st</sup>.

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. "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 & 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 tests seriously. For one, you will receive a grade for each assessment, even if you think it doesn't count. And, besides, we don't know where to go if we don't know where we've been, and we can't fix what's broken if we don't know what's 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 2016-2017 school year and, possibly, your college courses in 2017-2018, you should do your very best!

### **EXTRA READING, FIELD TRIPS, AND CURRENT EVENTS**

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's reading articles from your favorite magazine, the latest best seller, or the newspaper.

When we assign a novel that is not in our school's book inventory, and you will have to retain your own copy. Typically, these novels are \$5-\$12. You can buy your own copy, bring in the money and I will order it for you, or you can borrow one from a friend or a library; it is up to you. I will also plan a fieldtrip (or two) during the course of the year, which might also have a slight cost. I will do my best to write grants, request funds from administration, and keep costs down; however, if there is a fieldtrip, and you do not have the funds to pay for it, please let me know! We have some funds set aside for students who are struggling.

### **MATERIALS AND RESOURCES NEEDED FOR CLASS, AND CLASS FEES**

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 THIS SYLLABUS, and the second will be the CLASS RULES. I 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. 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.

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 - English Lit, English Language, Thinking Skills, and Global Perspectives. The tab for our class can be found under the LANG & LIT drop down menu and is titled "AICE 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 20-25 grades that make their way into the grade book. Some exercises are worth more than others. For example, tests and projects range from 30-100 points, while a homework assignment's point value will range from 5-30. However, 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 I wouldn't assign it).

There are no extra credit opportunities—with the exception of the 2 no-restroom-bonus points. We will discuss this further next class.

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.