

Cal State University, Northridge  
Summer Academic Enrichment Program  
Middle School Composition  
Summer 2005  
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### Course Overview

Philosophy: "There is nothing more practical than learning to think, read and write."

- Jack W. Meiland

Students will be challenged to grow in their ability to develop sentences that complete the steps of the paragraphing and, in turn, a standard five paragraph essay. The focus of this five-week course will be to develop correct composition grammar, well-structured paragraphs and the five paragraph essay.

### Course Description

Class time will be spent on learning grammar (parts of speech, punctuation and sentence structure and types), vocabulary, paragraph development with emphasis on topic sentence formulation; as well as organizing the paragraphs, through the writing process of revising and editing, into a comprehensive essay.

### Course Goals and Objectives

**Goal: Improve each student's understanding of English grammar.**

Objective: Learn the different names for parts of speech and be able to identify each purpose in a sentence.

Objective: Be able to structure a sentence differently because of an understanding of the role different words can play.

Objective: Learn when to use the correct punctuation and be able to manipulate the meaning of a sentence based on varying punctuation uses.

**Goal: To increase the repertoire of each student's vocabulary.**

Objective: Build a vocabulary list based upon encountered words that he or she does not recognize.

Objective: Learn the skill of understanding a sentence or passage, based on the context, even if a word is unknown.

**Goal: Learn the importance and power of a well-structured paragraph.**

Objective: Learn and use a well-written topic sentence.

Objective: Understand the purpose of a paragraph.

Objective: Be able to focus information in paragraph form.

Objective: Utilize paragraphs effectively for clear presentation.

**Goal: Learn the importance and power of a well-structured essay**

Objective: Learn and use a well-written topic sentence.

Objective: Understand the purpose of an essay.

Objective: Be able to focus information in paragraph form and be able to transition each paragraph into the next.

Objective: Utilize paragraphs effectively for clear presentation of an essay.

Objective: Learn the different editing symbols and use them on other students' essays.

**Goal: Learn how to revise and edit a paragraph.**

Objective: Understand the importance of self, as well as peer, proof-reading.

Objective: Gain ideas for his or her paper based on the reading of another's.

Objective: Take student comments and make revisions accordingly.

Objective: Understand that writing and re-writing is an important, yet often times tedious, process.

Homework, Classwork and Test policy

Each student can expect 45-60 minutes of homework each night, either reading or writing or both. Weekly quizzes will be given on material covered in the week.

Every essay is to be typed, MLA format (1 inch margins, double-spaced, last name and page number in upper right hand corner) font size 12, Times New Roman.

I expect student participation and respect for all opinions. Because this is a persuasive writing class, differing views will be expressed and this is to be a safe environment to share opinions. We will be looking at the weaknesses of students' premises and giving opposing viewpoints.

There will be several quizzes. They will be on grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension.

The bulk of the grade will be on the five major paragraphs you will be composing.

Cheating

“taking someone's words or ideas as if they were your own” – dictionary.com

The Internet makes it tempting (convenient and easy) to plagiarize. We will be spending some time at the beginning of the course learning what plagiarism is and how to avoid doing it. However, as a rule, if there are three words in a row that someone else can claim, cite it. Plagiarism is illegal. Don't do it!

The consequence of the first offense will be a student-teacher conference, a call home, notification to the SAEP office, and a zero on the assignment. The second offense will be a drop from the course.

Also, considered cheating is copying from a fellow student, whether on a homework assignment or a quiz. The consequences are the same as above.

### Course Materials

Each student needs a one-inch binder with five dividers, plenty of white lined paper (not the notebook kind with the fuzzy edges) and writing utensils (pens in blue or black only). Also very helpful, but not mandatory, is a dictionary.

### Student/ Parent Agreement

Please have the bottom portion returned to your teacher tomorrow with all necessary signatures.

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We have read and understand the contents of this syllabus.

Student name \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_