

CAHSEE English

Course Description

CAHSEE English is designed to help students master basic English Language Arts concepts in preparation for the English portion of the California High School Exit Examination; its foundational approach is of value for other exit or entrance exams as well. This course will enable students to demonstrate competency in vocabulary, informational reading, literary reading, writing strategies, applications, and conventions. It also provides students an opportunity to practice their writing skills by responding to a specific topic or a literary or informational passage. Helpful test-taking tips are interspersed throughout the course.

Overview

Unit 1 – Reading: Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

Lesson 1: Identify Literal and Figurative Meanings and Word Derivations

Lesson 2: Identify Denotative and Connotative Meanings and Interpretations

Unit 2 – Reading: Comprehension

Lesson 1: Read Consumer Materials to Gain Meaning

Lesson 2: Analyze Workplace Documents

Lesson 3: Synthesize Materials on a Single Subject

Lesson 4: Extend Ideas from Expository Critical Sources

Lesson 5: Critique Logic in Functional Documents

Unit 3 – Reading: Literary Response and Analysis

Lesson 1: Identify the Author's Purposes as They Relate to the Written Form

Lesson 2: Evaluate the Impact of Literary Techniques

Lesson 3: Recognizing and Understanding Literary Devices

Unit 4 – Reading: Literary Response to and Analysis of the Narrative

Lesson 1: Analyzing Narrative Literature

Lesson 2: Analyzing Expository Literature

Unit 5 – Writing: Standard English Conventions

Lesson 1: Grammar: Parts of Speech

Lesson 2: Grammar: Sentence Elements

Lesson 3: Grammar: Phrases

Lesson 4: Grammar: The Clause

Lesson 5: Sentence Structures

Lesson 6: Levels and Conventions of Usage

Lesson 7: Mechanics

Unit 6 – Writing: The Foundations of Writing

Lesson 1: The Paragraph

Lesson 2: The Essay

Lesson 3: The Writing Process: Prewriting

Lesson 4: The Writing Process: Drafting

Lesson 5: The Writing Process: Revision

Unit 7 – Writing: Writing Applications

- Lesson 1: Write a Biographical Narrative
- Lesson 2: Write a Response to Literature
- Lesson 3: Write an Expository Composition
- Lesson 4: Write a Persuasive Composition
- Lesson 5: Write a Business Letter

Objectives

Students completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following skills:

- Practice steps to better reading comprehension of consumer materials and workplace documents.
- Determine the specific intent/purpose of the text and recognize the ways in which an author's intent affects the structure and tone of the text.
- Critique the relationships between the generalizations and the supporting evidence.
- Judge the credibility of details that writers use to elaborate on their ideas by analyzing those details against the following criteria: authenticity, adequacy, and appropriateness.
- Examine the development of an explanation from a functional document and discover that the sequencing of information and procedures must be logical to prevent misunderstandings.
- Articulate the connections between the expressed purposes and the characteristics of each form of literature: prose (fiction and nonfiction), poetry, and drama.
- Identify the conflicts, both internal and external, that trigger the action or plot of the story and motivate the characters' interactions, and examine details in dialogue and narration to determine character traits.
- Recognize and analyze literary devices like figurative language, allegory, imagery, and symbolism in literature, and explain their appeal.
- Interpret and evaluate the impact of subtleties, ambiguities, contradictions, ironies, and incongruities in a text.
- Analyze and compose paragraphs of description for depiction of a dominant image or impression through specific, concrete details about a person, place, object, event, or experience, applying word imagery and a vantage point.
- Analyze and compose paragraphs of argumentation for justification of a claim. Arguments should recognize contradictory or alternative positions and provide all or some of the following: convincing evidence, valid reasoning, and ethical and emotional appeals.
- Identify the four common arrangement patterns best suited for the organization of topics in an informative or persuasive expository essay and explain their differences: compare/contrast, analysis, problem/solution, or cause/effect.
- Develop the main ideas through adequate supporting evidence appropriate to expository, narrative, descriptive, and argumentative modes.
- Develop and strengthen writing by prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing/proofreading written text.
- Produce written text displaying the distinct characteristics of the personal/biographical narrative: relate a sequence of events and communicate the significance of those events to the audience; locate scenes and incidents in specific places; describe with concrete sensory details (sights, sounds, smells, and sensations) a scene and the specific actions, gestures, and feelings of the characters; use interior monologue to depict the characters' feelings; place the presentation of actions to accommodate time and mood; and make effective use of descriptions of appearance, shifting perspectives, and sensory details.
- Produce written text displaying the distinct characteristics of a business letter: provide clear and purposeful information and address the intended audience appropriately; use vocabulary, tone, and style appropriate to the nature of the relationship with, and the knowledge and interests of, the recipient; highlight central ideas or images; and follow a conventional style with page formats, fonts, and spacing that contribute to the document's readability and impact.

- Produce written text displaying the distinct characteristics of the persuasive essay: structure ideas and arguments in a sustained and logical fashion; use specific rhetorical devices to support assertions (e.g., appeal to logic through reasoning, appeal to emotion or ethical belief, or relate a personal anecdote, case study, or analogy); clarify and defend positions with precise and relevant evidence, including facts, expert opinion, quotations, and expressions of commonly accepted beliefs and logical reasoning; address readers' concerns, counterclaims, biases, and expectations.
- Produce written text displaying the distinct characteristics of the expository essay: marshal evidence in support of a thesis and related claims; convey information from primary (firsthand) and secondary (newspaper) sources accurately and coherently; make distinctions between the relative value and significance of specific data, facts, and ideas; anticipate and address readers' misunderstandings, biases, and expectations; use technical terms and notations accurately.
- Evaluate written text to determine its effectiveness using a provided rubric or scoring guide.
- Demonstrate command of standard English conventions, including proper English usage and control of grammar, syntax, and diction as applied to sentence and paragraph structure.

Activities and Assessments

- **6 Writing Assignments** – Students demonstrate their understanding of the information presented by completing six writing assignments: an editing assignment, a biographical narrative, a response to literature, an expository composition, a persuasive composition, and a business letter. The teacher grades these assignments and provides feedback.
- **10 Quizzes, 6 Unit Exams, and 1 Final Exam** – Along with numerous practice sets and self-check activities throughout the course, students periodically take a computer-graded quiz over topics presented in the lessons. There is also an evaluation at the end of each of the six units. At the conclusion of the course, students are given one opportunity to complete a comprehensive final exam. All of these assessments are computer-graded and provide students with instant feedback on their work.