

Welcome to AP English Language and Composition- Due August 10, 2026

We're excited that you've chosen to take AP Language! The goal of the course is to help you become a savvier reader and writer. If you bring a positive attitude and a strong work ethic, we know you will find success in the course; your choice to take AP Lang already demonstrates that you are on the road to a successful college career. With that in mind, we want to help you learn "to write effectively, argue persuasively, solve problems creatively, and adapt and learn independently" (Falk qtd. in Turkle 247). If you have any questions about the assignment or the class, please email Beth.Morgan@cobbk12.org. We'll see you soon—

~Lassiter AP Language Team

The Overview:

One key part of AP Language requires students to complete a rhetorical analysis of a text. To prepare for this, your instructors ask that you secure a copy of [4th Edition of Thank You for Arguing by Jay Heinrichs](#) AND evaluate the three essays listed below. You do not need to read the book before you come to school, but if you want to get started, you may. For the essays, use the information below to direct your learning. The expectation is that you spend time with each essay. Reading an essay once would not meet this requirement. On the first reading, you may grasp the general message or tone. That understanding allows you then to read the text more carefully to discover *how* the author crafted their message for their intended purpose. Your final goal will be to complete a rhetorical analysis using the SPACECAT framework for each essay.

The Essays:

- (1) ["The Ways We Lie" by Stephanie Ericsson](#) (2) ["Consider the Lobster" by David Foster Wallace](#) (3) ["Once More to the Lake" by E. B. White](#)

The Process:

First Read: Understand the text by getting a general sense of the context and message.

- Read the text straight through without stopping.
- As you read, star (*) any sentence, phrase, or moment that stands out as especially important or meaningful—even if you aren't sure why yet.
- After reading, write a brief summary of the main idea at the top or in the margin.
 - Ask yourself: What is the text mostly about? What is the author trying to say?

Second Read: Mark the rhetorical situation by identifying key elements.

- As you reread, use highlighting, underlining, and margin notes to mark evidence for:
 - Speaker – Who is communicating the message? What role, background, or authority do they bring?
 - Purpose – What does the author want to achieve? (To convince, inform, inspire, question?)
 - Audience – Who is the intended audience? How can you tell from the language or references?
 - Context – What events, time period, or social conditions surround this text?
 - Exigence – What motivated the author to speak or write when they did?

Third Read: Identify how the author builds a connection with the audience and strengthens their message. Labeling the strategies is less important than noting *how* the author uses them to shape the audience's thinking or feeling.

- Mark or comment on:
 - Places where the audience tries to earn the audience's trust or seem credible
 - Places where the author tries to stir an emotional reaction or create a personal connection.
 - Places where the author uses reasoning, examples, or evidence to support their claims.
- Look also for:
 - Repeated words or patterns
 - Figurative language (metaphors, similes, imagery)
 - Specific diction or syntax that helps to generate tone

Final Step: Complete the attached SPACECAT graphic organizer

Submission Requirements: DUE- August 10, 2026

- fully annotated article (per above instructions)
- completed SPACECAT for each article
- staple the graphic organizer on top of each article; paperclip them together in the order labeled above



SPACE CAT

Name: _____ Period: _____

S	Speaker: Who is the speaker/writer? What do we know about them? What can you tell or what do you know about the speaker that helps you understand the point of view expressed?	
P	PURPOSE: What is the speaker/writer hoping to accomplish? What is the reason behind this piece? What do they want the audience to do after having listened?	
A	AUDIENCE: Who is the speaker/writer trying to reach? How do we know? Do they indicate a specific audience? What assumptions exist in the text about the intended audience?	
C	CONTEXT: What is the time and place of this piece? What is happening in the world as it relates to the subject of the speech or the speaker/writer?	
E	EXIGENCE: What was the spark or catalyst that moved the speaker/writer to act/write? How did that event impact the speaker/writer?	
C	CHOICES: What are the rhetorical choices that the speaker/writer makes in the speech? Think about overall structure, devices, diction, syntax, etc.	
A	APPEALS: Which of the three rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos, pathos) are present in the text? Where? Why?	
T	TONE: What is the speaker/author's attitude toward the subject? Is the tone the same throughout the whole piece? Where does it shift? What evidence is there to demonstrate the tone?	