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# English 1A

# Composition & Reading

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## Required Books

- John Trimble, *Writing with Style*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Prentice Hall
- Eric Weiner, *The Geography of Genius*, Simon & Schuster
- David Denny, *The Gill Man in Purgatory*, Shanti Arts
- Donald Margulies, *The Country House*, TCG

## Materials

- Blue or black ink pens
- Composition Book (lined)
- One large (8½ x 11”) blue exam booklet

## Course Description

This is a transfer-level course in reading, thinking, and writing.

The reading for this course exposes students to three literary genres: non-fiction, fiction, and drama. Reading is central to this course: everything we do is based on it. The surest way to improve your writing skills is to become a careful reader. In this class, you will become a careful reader, learning to value and interpret a diverse selection of contemporary American literature.

The writing textbook for this course is Trimble; however, all of the books you read this quarter model high quality composition techniques, as well as a range of topics that encourage critical and creative thought. Writing assignments follow a sequence of increasing length, depth, and complexity, building rhetorical skills that will serve you in your academic, business, and creative pursuits.

The overall goal of English 1A is to prepare you to read, think, and write at the level necessary for success at the university and beyond; however, not everyone who enrolls in English 1A is prepared to succeed at this level. If you find yourself struggling or falling behind, please take advantage of the many opportunities on campus for tutoring or individually-paced skills courses in reading, grammar, or writing. You will find this course particularly challenging if English is not your native language, or if you have a learning disability that causes difficulty in reading and/or writing. If so, seek help early and often from Disability Support Services (<http://www.deanza.edu/dsps>) or the Student Success Center (<http://www.deanza.edu/studentssuccess/wrc>).

## Assignments

3 out-of-class papers—a sequence of essays based on course reading materials, increasing in length, complexity, and rhetorical variety. 300 points possible.

1 in-class essay—a two-hour in-class open book essay exam, focused on critical and rhetorical skills learned to that point and based on assigned reading. 100 points possible.

Journal—includes all in-class and out-of-class exploratory writings, class notes, small group projects, etc. 100 points possible.

Quizzes—occasional “pop” quizzes on reading and lecture materials. There are *no make ups* for missed quizzes. 100 points possible.

Participation—your regular, mature, positive contributions to our class atmosphere will not go unnoticed. 100 points possible.

## Grades

669-700	A+	478-509	C+
637-668	A	447-477	C
605-636	A-	415-446	D+
574-604	B+	383-414	D
542-573	B	351-382	D-
510-541	B-	0-350	F

## Policies

Classroom Behavior Expectations: Please set your cell phones on “silent” while you are in class. For obvious educational reasons (not to mention common courtesy) you may not play games, listen to music, or text message during our class session. If you receive an emergency call during class, please walk outside to take the call. Also, please limit your private conversations during our class sessions. You may not eat during class; however, you may drink water as needed. I expect you to bring your personal copy of the book we’re currently studying, your Journal, and a blue or black ink pen to every class session. I also expect you to be a fully engaged, active participant in this class while you are enrolled in it. Your credibility as a college student, not to mention your grade, will suffer if you violate these expectations.

Participation: This is a very important part of the class. I really expect you to be reading and thinking actively, critically, and creatively. This is not a class in which you can cruise along in neutral gear for long. I will call on you regularly and keep track of your responses. When you’re in class, be prepared, focused, on task. I will note your progress in my roll book. When called upon to read, speak loudly and clearly, reading word-for-word what you have written. Done correctly, you will learn more from this activity than almost any other single activity we do in this class.

## **Policies (cont.)**

Web Access: You must have regular access to the internet to be successful in this class. Among other things, I use my De Anza web site to post assignments and deadlines. Also, you must have a regular, working email account. Take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with my campus web site, especially the page entitled, “English 1A”. In fact, you may want to Bookmark it –at least for the next 12 weeks.

Paper Business: Paper topics will be announced and described on my web site one week prior to the due date. Check the web site regularly for details. Late papers will receive a 5-point deduction per day.

Turnitin.com: You will submit your out-of-class papers for this course to this web site. Another Bookmark? Visit the site in advance of our first due date and click on the “Training” link on the top menu banner. Then click on “Student Training” and watch the video tutorials on how to set up your account and upload a paper. If you’re already familiar with Turnitin.com, you may go straight to the “Student Quickstart Guide” button under the Resources menu near the bottom of the page for a quick review of the process. Our course ID number and password can be found on the first paper assignment instructions on my De Anza web site.

After you have set up your account, scroll down to the blue bar at the bottom of the page and click on the “Plagiarism.org” link for a definition of plagiarism, tips for preventing it, and guidelines and suggestions for proper citation methods, etc. I will hold you responsible for the information found there. Among other things, Turnitin.com will search the web for language matches with your paper once you upload it, issuing an “originality report” to me, which tells the percentage of language your paper shares with other similar writings found on the internet. A certain low-level amount of shared language is possible, considering brief quotes, etc. But whether intentional or accidental, if your originality report on any given paper that you submit to this class climbs above 20%, you will receive an ‘F’ on that assignment. One chief purpose of this class is to help you with your writing. If you present somebody else’s writing as your own, you will defeat that purpose.

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