

# English Composition I

## Course Text

Langan, John. *College Writing Skills*, 7th edition. McGraw-Hill, 2008. ISBN 9780073384092  
[This text is available as an etextbook at purchase or students may find used, new, or rental copies at [this link](#)]

## Course Description

This course helps students develop quality writing skills by explaining and identifying the steps involved in the writing process. Six types of writing are examined: argumentative, compare/contrast, descriptive, narrative, persuasive, and summary. Students will write a minimum of 20 pages as a requirement for the course. The importance of proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling is highlighted, as emphasis is placed on editing and revising pieces of writing. Students also learn proper research techniques, utilizing the Modern Language Association (MLA) style.

## Course Objectives

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Explain and identify the steps involved in the writing process.
- Compose a strong thesis statement.
- Organize an essay into a well written introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Evaluate the different types of fictional and non-fictional readings.
- Successfully identify and apply the use of analogy.
- Identify and compose the following types of writing: argumentative, compare/contrast, descriptive, narrative, persuasive, and summary.
- Employ proper research techniques.
- Analyze and judge the validity of the various kinds of reading materials.
- Correctly use the MLA style of citing.
- Summarize and paraphrase without plagiarizing.
- Successfully revise and edit all aspects of an essay.
- Construct grammatically correct sentences.
- Compose sentences and paragraphs with correct spelling and punctuation.

## Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites to take English Composition.

## MLA Research Guidelines

This course follows the research guidelines of the Modern Language Association (MLA). These guidelines are reflected in the [MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers](#) (6th ed.). A summary of these guidelines is provided in our [MLA Tutorial](#) and at the [Purdue Online Writing](#)

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[Lab \(OWL\)](#).

## Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is expected of all students. For StraighterLine's complete Academic Honesty policy please refer to the [StraighterLine Student Handbook](#).

To reflect academic honesty, students must:

- Submit only their own work.
- Use quotations and citations to indicate words taken from another source.
- Cite instances of paraphrasing (rewording) information.
- Cite ideas or examples that are not general knowledge.

## Important Terms

In this course, different terms are used to designate tasks:

- **Assignment\***: A written piece that will be submitted for a grade when the final draft is complete. Your final grade for each assignment is calculated from the raw score provided from. If you have any questions about your calculated Assignment grade please contact your course advisor.
- **Practice Exercise**: A non-graded quiz or writing piece that provides practice using skills discussed in a topic.
- **Graded Quiz**: A graded online assessment.
- **Project**: A process spanning multiple topics that results in a written essay.

\*Each Graded Writing Assignment must be completed to complete this course.

## Writing Submissions

Writing exercises and assignments may only be submitted as .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .txt files.

Macintosh users should add an extension (.doc or .rtf) to the file name before uploading. If you have questions on saving files, please contact [advisor@straighterline.com](mailto:advisor@straighterline.com).

## Course Evaluation Criteria

StraighterLine provides a percentage score and letter grade for each course. See [Academic Questions](#) section in FAQ for further details on percentage scores and grading scale. A passing percentage is **70%** or higher.

If you have chosen a Partner College to award credit for this course, your final grade will be based upon that college's grading scale. Only passing scores will be considered by Partner Colleges for an award of credit.

All required assignments must be submitted in order to be issued a transcript.

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There are a total of 1000 points in the course:

Topic	Assessment	Points Available
A1	Graded Quiz: Plagiarism	10 <sup>1</sup>
1	Graded Quiz: Transitions	30
1	Graded Quiz: The Kris Chronicles, Part 2: Banana Bread Brainstorm	60
2	Graded Quiz: Good Word Choices Positively Affect Your Writing...Or Is It Effect?	30
2	Graded Quiz: Homonyms	40
2	Graded Quiz: Grammar at Dinner	75
2	Graded Quiz: Grammar and Punctuation	100
3	Graded Quiz: Writing to Your Audience	90
5	Writing Assignment: Final Draft of the Descriptive Paragraph	10
5	Graded Quiz: Building a Better Paragraph	15
5	Graded Quiz: Website Validity	20
6	Writing Assignment: Final Draft of the Comparison/Contrast Writing Assignment	50
7	Writing Assignment: Final Draft of the Personal Narrative Writing Assignment	40
8	Graded Quiz: Text Analysis	30
8	Graded Quiz: A Different Look at the Mail	30
8	Writing Assignment: Final Draft of the Persuasive Writing Assignment	50
9	Graded Quiz: Works Cited	30
9	Writing Assignment: Final Draft of the Argumentative Writing Assignment	100
10	Graded Quiz: Different Perspectives	20
10	Final Graded Quiz: Be an Editor	30
Review	Writing Assignment: Final Draft of the Research Writing Assignment	150
Total		1000

<sup>1</sup> The Graded Quiz A-1: Plagiarism must be completed with at least a 7/10 to unlock course. These points will be counted as extra credit towards your final grade.

## Course Topics and Objectives

Topic	Lesson Topic	Subtopics	Objectives
1	Proper Grammar: Friend or Foe?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Most Common Grammatical Errors</li> <li>• Correcting Sentence Fragments</li> <li>• Subject Verb Agreement</li> <li>• Use of Jargon in Essays</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the common grammatical errors and apply the rules of correction to edit effectively.</li> <li>• Apply the rules of correcting sentence fragments when editing an essay to eliminate them.</li> <li>• Apply the rules of subject/verb agreement when editing an essay to eliminate agreement errors.</li> <li>• Add to the understanding and use of a basic vocabulary of literary items.</li> </ul>
2	Punctuation and Spelling: The Finer Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Comma</li> <li>• The Apostrophe and Quotation Marks</li> <li>• Other Types of Punctuation</li> <li>• Improve Your Spelling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate how effectively to use commas.</li> <li>• Effectively use apostrophes and quotation marks.</li> <li>• Employ the correct use of other types of punctuation.</li> <li>• Identify common errors in spelling and apply various strategies to eliminate</li> </ul>

			spelling errors.
3	The Writing Process: You Can Do It!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define Composition</li> <li>• Roadblocks to Effective Writing</li> <li>• Audience and Purpose</li> <li>• The Reading and Writing Link</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop topic sentences that clearly support the thesis and the essay.</li> <li>• Identify the audience and purpose before beginning the process of writing an essay.</li> <li>• Explain and demonstrate the direct link between successful writing and comprehensive reading.</li> <li>• Explain the standard process involved in writing an essay.</li> </ul>
4	Thesis Statements: What's the Point?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak Versus Strong Thesis Statements</li> <li>• Importance of Thesis Statements</li> <li>• Supporting Your Thesis Statement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure an essay using a strong beginning, middle, and end.</li> <li>• Select and narrow an essay topic and formulate a strong, effective thesis statement.</li> <li>• Organize the supporting</li> </ul>

			<p>details and specific evidence in the essay.</p> <p><i>Research Paper Objective:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a strong thesis statement for the research paper project.</li> </ul>
5	Writing a Good Paragraph & Researching Your Topic: Half the Battle!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Introduction</li> <li>• Body of Work and Detail</li> <li>• The Conclusion</li> <li>• Utilizing Good Research Skills</li> <li>• Your Local Library</li> <li>• Proper Internet Research</li> <li>• Other Means of Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show appropriate development of the essay and the thesis using sentence variety and specific, coherent, relevant, and interesting details.</li> <li>• Make good use of topic sentences, transitions, and concluding statements within the essay.</li> <li>• Develop and compose a strong introductory paragraph.</li> <li>• Develop and compose a strong concluding paragraph.</li> <li>• Utilize proper researching and note-taking techniques for the research paper project.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively research a topic in the library and online.</li> <li>• Evaluate sources on a given topic.</li> <li>• Explain the importance of maintaining integrity while researching.</li> <li>• Write a summary for the research paper project.</li> </ul>
6	Popular Types of Writing: Who Knew?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare/Contrast Technique of Writing</li> <li>• Persuasive Technique of Writing</li> <li>• Descriptive Writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write a paragraph or essay using the comparison/contrast method.</li> <li>• Write a paragraph or essay demonstrating the use of persuasion as a writing strategy.</li> <li>• Develop skills in the use of the following strategy: descriptive writing.</li> </ul>
7	Types of Readings: Can This Really Influence my Writing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrative Writings</li> <li>• Non-Fiction Writings</li> <li>• Writing Using Analogy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze and explain the link between comprehensive reading and successful writing.</li> <li>• Apply critical thinking to reading and writing.</li> <li>• Differentiate among the</li> </ul>

			<p>different types of analogies and use them in a narrative paragraph.</p> <p><i>Research Paper Objective:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an outline for the research paper project.</li> </ul>
8	Analysis of Reading and Writing: Now What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehension of the Subject Matter</li> <li>• Retaining the Subject Matter</li> <li>• Forming Opinions</li> <li>• Real-World Application</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand main ideas of a text used to write a research paper with an awareness of audience and purpose.</li> <li>• Interact with and summarize the text effectively.</li> <li>• Evaluate the text using critical and analytical skills to identify common logical fallacies.</li> <li>• Effectively write the first draft of an essay with an awareness of audience and purpose.</li> </ul>
9	Using Evidence and Reference Materials Properly: Give Credit Where It's Due!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How Evidence Adds Legitimacy to an Essay</li> <li>• Proper Use of Citations</li> <li>• Plagiarism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the importance of quality evidence in essay writing.</li> <li>• Write an essay following proper standard MLA guidelines.</li> <li>• Demonstrate the importance of maintaining</li> </ul>



			<p>integrity while researching and writing an essay or a longer paper.</p> <p><i>Research Paper Objective:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a Works Cited page for the research paper project using MLA format.</li> </ul>
10	The Process of Revising and Editing: You're Almost There!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Revision Process</li> <li>• Revising Sentences</li> <li>• Revising Word Choices</li> <li>• The Editing Process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise your essay to ensure appropriate development of the essay with specific attention to cohesion, support, and organization.</li> <li>• Revise the first draft to include varied, interesting, and accurate sentences.</li> <li>• Edit and proofread the first draft to eliminate grammatical, spelling, and typographical errors.</li> <li>• <i>Research Paper Objective:</i></li> <li>• Apply revision, editing, and proofreading techniques to rough draft of research paper project.</li> </ul>
11	Checking Your Final Essay: You've Come	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong Thesis</li> <li>• Development of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check that the final draft</li> </ul>

	This Far!	<p>Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proper Grammar</li> </ul>	<p>contains a strong, well-written thesis statement that is directly linked with the main point of the essay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check that the final draft demonstrates clear organization, strong development through the use of a variety of sentence types, smooth transitions, and proper citing techniques.</li> <li>• Edit to ensure the final draft is free of grammatical and spelling errors.</li> </ul> <p><i>Research Paper Objective:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review your research paper to ensure it is ready for submission and grading.</li> </ul>
12	Submission of the Final Draft of the Research Paper and Final Review		<p><i>Research Paper Objective:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turn in research paper project.</li> </ul>