

Background

English pedagogues and students of English alike disagree about how to teach grammar or even if it should be taught in high schools. At Agoura High School we have decided to focus on the aspects of grammar which will help students master standard, written English at a level that is appropriate for writing papers in college and on the job after high school graduation. What taxonomy we do teach is selected to help with critical, analytical reading, writing, and thinking, tools which will stand students in good stead in or out of the classroom.

Identifying basic parts of speech, a skill high school students learned in middle school, is the foundation for all other grammar lessons taught in AHS English classes. Some review will be provided at the beginning of the year; however, students should take time to review the basics on their own if necessary.

Study Plan

1. Review the parts of speech and the parts of a sentence at the beginning of the school year.
2. Make sure to do grammar homework and class exercises yourself. These assignments help you make sure you understand the principles involved.
3. Try to use your understanding of the principles of grammar to help you write better. When you learn about introductory prepositional phrases, try using such phrases in some of the sentences in your writing in order to provide a variety of sentence openers. When you learn about parallel construction, try using parallel structure to make your ideas more easily understood and more sophisticated rhetorically.
4. Pay special attention to the particulars of agreement (pronoun-antecedent and subject-verb). Sometimes a potential employer or college admissions officer will be impressed by the quality of your education when he or she discovers that you have learned proper, standard, spoken and written English.
5. Take the time to carefully proofread your written papers for errors in grammar, usage, organization, and logic.