

ACT Prep
Semester Syllabus
Cosby High School
English Room — Cohort Clash: ACT Prep

Syllabus

Part 1: Course Information

Instructor Information

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Note: This course is co-taught with a Math Room instructor. This syllabus documents the English Room portion of the course.

ParentSquare App Directions

PARENTSQUARE

Parents and Students,

ParentSquare is the new app that our school will be using to communicate with you at the school, in the classroom, and individually. Please make sure to download the ParentSquare app on your phone and accept the invite once you have received one. This could be through your school email and or text. Students can access ParentSquare on their chromebooks without using their phones in class.

NOTE: Parents, teachers have the ability to message you individually about your student on this app without you receiving messages that they send their class as a group. So, please make sure to sign up. I know that I will be using this app to communicate specifically with my students' parents.

Google Classroom Code

To be provided in class.

Course Description

ACT Prep is a full-year, 45-minute daily course designed to prepare juniors for the official ACT test date of Tuesday, March 9, 2027. The course is co-taught in two rooms — the English Room (ACT English and Reading Test strategy) and the Math Room (ACT Math and Science Test strategy) — and organized around two student cohorts, Cohort A and Cohort B.

Cohorts switch rooms every nine weeks, at each quarter boundary (Weeks 10, 20, and 31). The English Room sees Cohort A in Quarters 1 and 3, and Cohort B in Quarters 2 and 4. Because each cohort's two English quarters aren't both before the test, the pacing differs by cohort: Cohort A gets a full, uncompressed, one-domain-per-week pace spread across two connected pre-test quarters (Q1 and Q3, 18 weeks total), while Cohort B's only pre-test English exposure is the single 10-week stretch in Quarter 2, so that quarter delivers a compressed full arc — foundational through capstone, with domains combined per week — culminating in the Week 19 Mid-Term Exam, which also serves as Cohort B's capstone assessment for the room.

The course uses a light gamification structure (“Cohort Clash”) to build engagement: both cohorts are scored every week on their quiz average, with a +500 point bonus awarded to the higher-scoring cohort each week. Roughly once

per quarter, a designated “Cohort Clash Day” combines a game or physical competition (drawn from a rotating format bank — e.g. a basketball shootout, a balance-and-coordination relay, or a multi-station obstacle course) with that week’s academic content, with the leaderboard updated during the last five minutes of that day’s quiz block.

Instruction in the English Room follows the official ACT English and Reading Test content domains, including Topic Development (TOD), Organization (ORG), Knowledge of Language (KLA), Sentence Structure and Formation (SST), Usage/Grammar (USG), and Punctuation (PUN), building toward a full-length ACT-style diagnostic in Week 2 and a matching post-test in Week 38.

Prerequisite

- Open to Juniors (11th grade) preparing to take the ACT.

Course Requirements

- 3 Ring Binder
- Notebook Paper
- Pencil
- Highlighters (Pink, Blue, Orange, and Yellow)
- Blue/Black Ink Pen
- Colored Pencils/Markers (optional)

Course Structure

The course runs in 45-minute daily blocks across 38 instructional weeks (Cocke County Schools 2026–2027 calendar), organized into four roughly nine-week quarters. Cohorts swap rooms at each quarter boundary (around Weeks 10, 20, and 31), so each cohort alternates between the English and Math rooms every grading period rather than staying in one room for a full semester. Course structure is based on a mix of direct instruction, guided and independent ACT-style practice, error-log review, weekly quizzes, quarterly Cohort Clash Days, and full-length benchmark and diagnostic exams.

Online Resources

- Purdue OWL online writing lab (learning tool for any and all types of writing)
- ACT website (official ACT preparation materials)
- Google Classroom (used for handouts, practice sets, and announcements)

Part 2: Student Learning Outcomes

OBJECTIVES FOR ACT PREP — ENGLISH ROOM

- Raise ACT English and Reading Test scores through targeted, standards-aligned practice.
- Master the ACT English Test content domains: Topic Development (TOD), Organization (ORG), Knowledge of Language (KLA), Sentence Structure and Formation (SST), Usage/Grammar (USG), and Punctuation (PUN).
- Apply evidence-based reading strategies to ACT Reading Test passages, including inference and dual-passage synthesis.
- Develop and practice ACT-specific timing and pacing strategies for a full-length, timed exam.
- Use error-log review and targeted practice to close individual skill gaps identified on quizzes and benchmark exams.

You will meet the objectives listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

- Attend class on a regular basis.

- Complete all classwork/homework, quizzes, and benchmark exams.
- Participate in class regularly, in all class discussions, in pair and group work, and independent work.

Part 3: Unit Works/Pacing Guide

This course follows the Cocke County Schools 2026–2027 official calendar. Because Fall Break falls later than in most districts and Thanksgiving is only a 3-day break, the calendar includes one extra instructional week, for a total of 38 labeled instructional weeks. The official ACT test date, Tuesday, March 9, 2027, falls in Week 29.

Cohort Clash: Room Rotation (Every ~9 Weeks)

Quarter	Weeks	Dates	Cohort A Room	Cohort B Room
Q1	1–9	Aug 3 – Oct 2, 2026	English	Math
Q2	10–19	Oct 5 – Dec 18, 2026	Math	English
Q3	20–30	Jan 4 – Mar 19, 2027	English	Math
Q4	31–38	Mar 29 – May 21, 2027	Math	English

Swaps happen at each grading-period boundary (Week 10, Week 20, Week 31). Each cohort still competes on the shared leaderboard regardless of which room it's physically in.

Because only one cohort is in the English Room during Q3 (the quarter ending right before the March 9 test), that cohort's other pre-test stint in the room is a single, isolated quarter (Q1) rather than two connected quarters. To make sure nobody hits test day without full foundational-through-capstone coverage, the cohort visiting the room only once before the test (Cohort B, in Q2) gets a compressed full arc — domains combined per week — instead of the slower one-domain-per-week pace Cohort A gets across its two connected quarters (Q1+Q3).

Scoring is based on weekly quiz average in both rooms, with a +500 point bonus to the higher-scoring cohort each week. Roughly once per quarter, a Cohort Clash Day pairs a game or physical competition — drawn from a rotating bank that includes a basketball shootout (“Purpose/Precision Points”), a vision-distorting balance relay, and a multi-station obstacle course with academic checkpoints — with that week’s content, and the leaderboard is updated during the last five minutes of that day’s quiz block.

Assessment Cadence

Assessment	Week	Dates
Pre-Test — Diagnostic Baseline (English & Math)	Week 2	Aug 10–14
Mid-Quarter Unit Exam / Chapter Test (Q1)	Week 5	Aug 31–Sep 4
Quarter 1 Exam / Chapter Test (end Q1)	Week 9	Sep 28–Oct 2
Mid-Quarter Unit Exam / Chapter Test (Q2)	Week 15	Nov 16–20
MID-TERM EXAM — true midpoint of the year-long course	Week 19	Dec 14–18
Mid-Quarter Unit Exam / Chapter Test (Q3)	Week 24	Feb 1–5
Quarter 3 Capstone / Final ACT Benchmark	Week 28	Mar 1–5
OFFICIAL ACT TEST DAY	Week 29	Tue, Mar 9, 2027
Mid-Quarter Unit Exam (Q4)	Week 34	Apr 19–23
Post-Test — Summative Growth Measure	Week 38	May 17–21
Cumulative Final Exam (end of year)	Week 38	May 17–21

Quarter 1 (Weeks 1–9) — Aug 3–Oct 2, 2026

Cohort A: English Room (foundational pace) | Cohort B: Math Room

Cohort A's first of two connected English quarters (Q1 + Q3) — full, uncompressed, one-domain-per-week pace.

Wk	Dates	English Focus (Cohort A)	Week Type	Assessment
1	Aug 3–7	Onboarding & culture	Culture-building	None
2	Aug 10–14	PRE-TEST + TOD 201–303	Cohort Clash Day (Basketball: “Purpose Points”)	Pre-Test + Quiz #1
3	Aug 17–21	ORG 201–302: transitions, logical sentence placement	Routine	Quiz
4	Aug 24–28	ORG 401–404: intros & conclusions	Routine	Quiz
5	Aug 31–Sep 4	MID-QUARTER UNIT EXAM	Exam week	+500 bonus
6	Sep 8–11 (Labor Day Mon off)	KLA 201–302: wordiness, tone deviation	Routine	Quiz
7	Sep 14–18	SST 201–302: fragments, fused sentences, tense shifts	Routine	Quiz
8	Sep 21–25	USG 201–305: agreement, confused words	Routine	Quiz
9	Sep 28–Oct 2	QUARTER 1 EXAM — comprehensive, end of Q1	Exam week	Leaderboard checkpoint

Quarter 2 (Weeks 10–19) — Oct 5–Dec 18, 2026

Quarter Swap: Cohort A → Math Room | Cohort B → English Room

Cohort B's only pre-test English stint is this quarter, so it delivers their entire pre-test arc — foundational through capstone — compressed into 10 weeks by combining domains per week.

Wk	Dates	English Focus (Cohort B — compressed full arc)	Week Type	Assessment
10	Oct 5–9	Swap orientation + TOD 201–303 (compressed)	Routine	Quiz
—	Fall Break: Oct 12–16	No class	—	—
11	Oct 19–23	ORG 201–404 — transitions, placement, intros/conclusions, all combined	Routine	Quiz
12	Oct 26–30	KLA 201–302 + SST 201–302 combined — wordiness/tone + fragments/fused sentences/tense shifts	Routine	Quiz
13	Nov 2–6	USG 201–305 + PUN 201–302 combined — agreement/confused words + comma basics	Cohort Clash Day (Drunk Goggles Relay)	Quiz
14	Nov 9–13	Advancing practice — higher-band (20–27) mixed items across all domains covered so far	Routine	Quiz
15	Nov 16–20	MID-QUARTER UNIT EXAM — comprehensive, foundational + advancing combined	Exam week	+500 bonus
16	Nov 23–24 (Thanksgiving Wed–Fri)	Flex/catch-up + capstone-level practice continues	Short week (2 days)	No quiz
17	Nov 30–Dec 4	Capstone-level practice — full mixed passages, exam-pace drilling	Routine	Quiz
18	Dec 7–11	Cumulative review — all domains, exam-pace, error-log-driven	Routine	Quiz
19	Dec 14–18 (1pm dismissal Dec 18)	MID-TERM EXAM — cumulative, true midpoint of the year-long course; serves as Cohort B's full capstone assessment	Exam week	Mid-year wrap-up, leaderboard reset

Christmas Break: Dec 21–Jan 1 (no class)

Quarter 3 (Weeks 20–30) — Jan 4–Mar 19, 2027

Quarter Swap: Cohort A → English Room | Cohort B → Math Room (reverts to Q1 pairing)

Cohort A returns for their second English quarter — advancing/capstone content, since Q1 already covered foundational. Full, uncompressed pace since they have Q1+Q3 (18 weeks total). Ends right at the Week 28 capstone mock ACT, the week before the real test.

Wk	Dates	English Focus (Cohort A — advancing/capstone)	Week Type	Assessment
20	Jan 4–8 (students start Jan 5)	Second-half kickoff — data review, goal-setting	Short week/goal-setting	No quiz
21	Jan 11–15	PUN 201–302 — comma basics (new domain for Cohort A)	Routine	Quiz
22	Jan 18–22 (MLK Mon off)	TOD 401–403 + ORG 401–405 — advancing Topic Development & Organization	Cohort Clash Day (Basketball: “Precision Points”)	Quiz
23	Jan 25–29	KLA 401–404 + SST 401 — advancing Knowledge of Language & Sentence Structure	Routine	Quiz
24	Feb 1–5	MID-QUARTER UNIT EXAM — full 4-section mock	Exam week	+500 bonus
25	Feb 8–12 (Feb 12 SE Day, abbreviated)	USG 401–404 + PUN 401–404 — advancing Usage & Punctuation	Routine	Quiz
26	Feb 15–19 (Presidents Day Mon off)	Capstone-level mixed practice — full passages, all domains, exam pace	Routine	Quiz
27	Feb 22–26	Cumulative review — error-log-driven, final ACT strategy consolidation	Routine	Quiz
28	Mar 1–5	QUARTER 3 CAPSTONE — final full-length mock ACT	Exam week	Pre-test rally
29	Mar 8–12	Mon: light review. TUE MAR 9: OFFICIAL ACT TEST DAY. Wed–Fri: decompression, reflection	Test week	—
30	Mar 15–19	Post-test bridge week — debrief, light content	Light/routine	Light or no quiz

Spring Break: Mar 22–26 (no class; Good Friday Mar 26 falls within)

Quarter 4 (Weeks 31–38) — Mar 29–May 21, 2027

Final Quarter Swap: Cohort A → Math Room | Cohort B → English Room

Post-test, so this room runs its own CCR/life-skills content independently of the Math Room's Block 4.

Wk	Dates	English Focus (Cohort B)	Week Type	Assessment
31	Mar 29–Apr 2	Swap orientation + score-report breakdown, retake goal-setting	Data/reflection	No quiz
32	Apr 5–9	Enrichment TOD/ORG 601–702 (retake band)	Routine	Quiz
33	Apr 12–16	Reading strategy + grammar retake drills	Cohort Clash Day (Obstacle Gauntlet Run)	Quiz
34	Apr 19–23	MID-QUARTER UNIT EXAM — retake-simulation	Exam week	+500 bonus
35	Apr 26–30	CCR Week 1 — Career & College Exploration	Routine	Light/skipped quiz
36	May 3–7	CCR Week 2 — Resume, Cover Letter & Interview Skills	Routine	Light/skipped quiz
37	May 10–14	CCR Week 3 — Financial Literacy & FAFSA	CCR/life-skills	Light/skipped quiz
38	May 17–21 (1pm dismissal, last day)	POST-TEST + CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM + portfolio close-out	Exam week	Cohort Clash Champion Ceremony + portfolio close-out

Part 4: Grading Policy

Graded Course Activities

Basis for grading for each semester:

Points	Description
100	Daily Classwork/Homework
100	Weekly Quizzes
100	Mid-Quarter/Mid-Term Unit Exams
100	ACT Benchmark Exams
100	Pre-Test / Post-Test Diagnostics
100	Cumulative Final Exam

Viewing Grades in ASPEN (optional)

Points you receive for graded activities will be posted to the ASPEN Grade Book. Click on the My Grades link on the left navigation to view your points.

Your teacher will update the online grades weekly. You will see a visual indication of new grades posted on your ASPEN home page under the link to this course

Letter Grade Assignment

Final grades assigned for this course will be based on the total points earned and are assigned as follows:

- Classwork/Homework and Quizzes: will count once in the grading system
- Unit Exams and ACT Benchmarks: will count twice in the grading system
- Pre-Test/Post-Test diagnostics: recorded for growth tracking; graded for completion

GRADING SCALE

Letter Grade	Percentage	Performance
A	90-100%	Excellent Work, Quality of the work is above expectation, Shows above average understanding of the subject matter learned
B	80-89%	Very Good Work, Quality of the work met expectations, Shows an understanding of the subject matter learned
C	70-79%	Average Work, Quality of the work is average, Shows some understanding of the subject matter learned
D	60-69%	Poor Work, Quality of the work is below average, Shows lack of understanding of the subject matter learned
F	0-59%	Failing Work, Quality of the work is poor, Shows no understanding of the subject matter learned or did not attempt the assignment at all

Part 5: Course Policies

Course policies are subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to check for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be posted in the classroom.

Attend Class

- Students are expected to attend class on regular basis.
- Be on time, on task, and prepared to learn everyday.
- 3 tardies to class equals 1 day absent.
- Don't be late or skip class because I will check to see where you were.
- If you're not in school, it is your responsibility to acquire your makeup work.

Build Rapport

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let Mrs. Holt know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming a successful student. Make sure that you are proactive in informing Mrs. Holt when difficulties arise during the semester so that a solution can be found. This is being responsible for your own learning.

Complete Assignments

Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline or special permission must be requested from the instructor before the due date. Extensions will not be given beyond the next assignment except under extreme circumstances.

Arrange to come promptly and take missed tests and quizzes. If you do not complete missed work, quizzes, or tests in 3 days, then that missed work will go down as a zero in the grade book.

NOTE: If you're not in school, it is your responsibility to acquire your makeup work.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Academic dishonesty includes such things as cheating, inventing false information or citations, plagiarism and helping someone else commit an act of academic dishonesty, for example, the copying of homework/classwork when instructed to complete the work on the student's own. It usually involves an attempt by a student to show possession of a level of knowledge or skill that he/she does not possess.

Plagiarism

According to Harbrace Handbook, 15th edition:

Plagiarism is defined as "presenting someone else's ideas, research, or opinions as your own without proper documentation, even if it has been rephrased."

This includes, but not limited to:

- Copying verbatim all or part of another's written work.
- Using phrases, figures, or illustrations without citing the source.
- Paraphrasing ideas, conclusions, or research without citing the source.
- Using all or part of a literary plot, poem, or film without attributing the work to its creator.

Consequences of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of stealing and academic fraud. Students who are found guilty of plagiarism have the option of either redoing the assignment, within a specified time period and accept a letter drop OR taking a zero on the assignment. Parents are to be involved in making the decision.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Technology is ever-changing and has a tremendous impact on our global society, local community, and classrooms. Artificial intelligence (AI), including generative forms of AI, is becoming more a part of our everyday lives. It is our responsibility to educate and train students to utilize AI in an ethical and educational way. Therefore, each student will need to be aware of the limitations and guidelines of its usage:

Teachers may allow students to use approved AI programs for instructional purposes. Access to specific websites will be granted on an as needed basis, while taking all reasonable precautions to ensure the security of private student data when utilizing AI programs

If a teacher should incorporate the use of AI in the classroom, students will be instructed on the responsible use standards which include but not limited to the following:

- Effective use of generative AI;
- When it is appropriate to use AI in assignments;
- How to determine whether AI responses are accurate
- Users assume responsibility for incorporating AI content responsibly; and the difference between cheating and seeking support.
- The use of AI could be subject to the Academic Dishonesty Policy.

Students must acknowledge the use of AI in any capacity related to their school work: text, image, multimedia, etc.

Dual Enrollment classes may have additional restrictions and limitations regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence based on the college AI policy in place for that institution.

Religion in the Classroom

The Board affirms that it is essential that the teaching about religion-and not of a religion –be conducted in a factual, objective, and respectful manner in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Religious themes may be a part of the curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs provided it is essential to the learning experience in the various fields of study and is presented objectively;
- The inclusion of religion shall be for educational purposes only;
- The emphasis on religious themes should be only as extensive as necessary for a balanced and comprehensive study of the curriculum. Such studies shall never be used to proselytize, establish, foster, or demean any particular religion, religious tenets, or beliefs; and
- Student-initiated expressions to questions or assignments which reflect their beliefs or non-beliefs about a religious theme shall be accommodated.

Parents and Guardians,

I want to thank you for sharing your children with me for the school year. To be honest, I learn from them, just as much as they learn from me and it makes my job so rewarding.

If there is any content you would like to review with me and/or do not want your student to read, there will be an alternative reading/assignment provided to the student.

If I can do anything for you and/or your child, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Lynna Holt

English Teacher

Cosby High School

Student/Parent Agreement

"We have read and understand the ACT Prep course syllabus and all of its components." Please sign and return.

Student Name (Print) _____ Date _____

Parent or Guardian Signature _____ Date _____