

**Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition**  
**Summer Reading Assignment**  
**2009**

**Course Description**

AP English Literature and Composition is a college level course designed to prepare students for the rigors of college English and the AP English Literature exam. The course follows the curricular requirement outlined in the *AP English Course Description* and takes its primary content from the canon of English literature. In this respect, the course is taught chronologically, beginning with reading selections from the medieval period and ending in the modern era. Though not a comparative literature course, selections from American and world literature are used as catalysts for formal literary analysis, writing, and discussion. Student writing supports the focus of the course and will include writing to understand, to explain and to evaluate. Timed in-class essays and process compositions are assigned regularly.

**Summer Reading Assignment**

The summer reading assignment is a prerequisite for AP English Literature. Students are to read the following selections in the order listed, and to provide “postit responses” every 2-4 pages. The completion of this assignment will result in a grade, which will be separate from the test on the readings. You are responsible for securing the books, and a special table at Barnes and Noble in Glendale will have them on display.

1. *The Power of Myth* by Joseph Campbell
2. *Beowulf*, the Seamus Heaney translation
3. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Burton Raffel translation
4. *Everyman* (anonymous), a medieval morality play

**Suggested foundational reading:** Many important religious texts have symbolic and thematic value in understanding English literature, and some knowledge of them is useful, although not required:

- *Book of Genesis* and *Book of Job*, King James Bible (Judeo-Christian teachings)
- *Qur'an* (Islamic teachings)
- *Tao Te Ching* (Taoist teachings)
- *Bhagavad Gita* (Hindu teachings)