

Syllabus: 12th Grade AP English Literature and Composition

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 requirements as outlined in the *AP English Course Description* and takes its primary content from the canon of English Literature. [C-1]

In this respect, the course is taught chronologically, beginning with reading selections from the 16th century and ending in the Modern period. Though not a Comparative Literature course, selections from American and World Literature are used as catalysts for formal literary analysis, writing, and discussion. [C-2]

The evaluation and study of writing includes invention and the artistic proofs (ethos, pathos and logos), structure and style (diction, syntax, figurative language and mechanics). [C-5]

Student writing in this course includes writing to understand, to explain and to evaluate. Annotations, quick-writes and dialectical notebook entries are required as are in-class timed essays and out-of-class polished compositions that utilize the writing process. [C-4] [C-5]

Textbooks and Readings:

Additional supplementary materials may be used to enhance each unit of study, including the materials covered during summer and during the introductory period of the class.

- McDonnell, Helen et al. *England and Literature*. Scott, Foresman and Company, 1987.
- Perrine, Laurence. *Sound and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry* Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich, 1985.
- Casson, Allen. *Cliffs AP English Literature and Composition*. Wiley Publishing, Inc. 2001.
- Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet and MacBeth*
- Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver's Travels*
- Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*
- Bronte, Charlotte. *Wuthering Heights*
- Woolf, Virginia. *Orlando and A Room of One's Own*
- Wilde, Oscar. *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- Joyce, James. *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*
- Dickens, Charles. *Bleak House*
- Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*
- Orwell, George. *1984*
- Hemingway, Ernest. *The Old Man and the Sea*
- Stoppard, Tom. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*
- Beckett, Samuel. *Waiting for Godot and Krapp's Last Tape*
- Malamud, Bernard. *The Fixer*
- Hwang, David Henry. *Yellow Face*

Summer Reading:

- Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Canterbury Tales*
- Campbell, Joseph. *The Power of Myth*
- (Seamus Heaney translation) *Beowulf*
- (Raffel translation) *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*
- *Everyman*
- Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman*

Reading Assignments:

Reading assignments are selected to reflect the breadth and depth of the canon. Literary criticism is frequently assigned adjacent to the study of literature. In this course the student will:

- Analyze any element of style: diction, point of view, organization, tone, syntax, imagery, figurative language and irony.
- Answer multiple-choice questions efficiently and quickly.
- Gain a working knowledge of literary terms, tropes and schemes.
- Show a grasp of major trends in English Literature.
- Connect literature to social and political trends. Relate literature to the individual as well as to the universal experience.
- Analyze any poem, showing understanding of the form and elements that create expression.

Writing Assignments:

Writing assignments are designed to elicit a deep understanding of both poetry and prose and to demonstrate a student's ability to understand, evaluate and explain the texts.

Writing assignments that enhance understanding include personal annotations, in-class quick-writes, in-class timed-writes, dialectical notebooks and a classroom blog. [C-5]

Writing assignments that demonstrate the ability to analyze and evaluate texts include in-class timed-writes, polished compositions and multi-media presentations.

Timed in-class essays are based on previous AP examinations and are scored using the aligned AP scoring rubric.[C-4]

Polished compositions generally ask the students to focus on form, style and the socio-historical contexts from which particular texts have sprung. They require the utilization of the writing process as defined in the AP English Course Requirements, and they are evaluated using an appropriate scoring rubric. [C-5]

Final drafts of compositions are to be formatted according to current MLA guidelines and are expected to be two to three pages in length. Students will:

- Show mastery of concrete detail, sentence variety, parallel structure, figurative language, sophisticated vocabulary and the integration of quotes into writing.
- Demonstrate mature and insightful analysis, displaying a mature and nuanced interpretation, which manifests in the form of detailed yet clear exposition.

Term 1

September: Summer Reading and Introduction to Course

In the first two weeks of the course, students will:

- Look at common themes among the summer reading texts
- Connect Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World Picture* to *Macbeth*
- Write an in-class essay and a formal analysis/literary composition that utilizes the writing process. Students will write, revise and edit the latter with emphasis on word choice, details, syntax and incorporating quotes as support. [C-3, C-4, C-5]
- Receive general information about the format of the AP Literature and Composition Exam. This will include memorization of general definitions used in AP Literature Exams, terms used in multiple-choice questions and also significant and pertinent literary and grammatical terms.

- Be introduced to the various ways in which writing will be employed to enhance student thinking (annotations, dialectical journals, quick-writes and class blog). [C-5]

October to Mid November: The Early Modern Period (16th-17th Century)

- The focus of this unit is on English literature from 1500-1660. Works by authors such as William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Edmund Spenser, Sir Francis Bacon, John Donne and John Milton will be critically read and analyzed. Additional selections to enhance study include Sylvia Townsend Warner, e.e. cummings, Tom Stoppard and Samuel Beckett. [C-2]
- A partial list of literary terms to be covered in this unit include the following:

tragedy, soliloquy, climax, essay, metaphysical poetry, existentialism, carpe diem, dramatic monologue, blank verse, alexandrine, allegory, paradox, allusion, sonnet, iambic pentameter, and in medias res.

- Students will write three to four in-class essays and two literary analysis compositions that utilize the writing process. Students will write, revise and edit the latter with emphasis on diction, details, syntax and quotes. [C-3, C-4, C-5]
- Write a personal narrative in the style of Sir Francis Bacon's *Of Studies*.
- Write an English sonnet.
- Practice answering multiple-choice questions effectively and quickly.
- Continue to annotate texts, write in double-entry journals and participate in quick writes. [C-5]

Mid November to Mid December: Poetry

In this three-week unit, Perrine's *Sound and Sense* is used for the comprehensive study and analysis of poetry from the canon of English and American Literature. Poets such as John Milton, William Blake, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Browning, Emily Dickinson, William Wordsworth, Rudyard Kipling, Robert Frost, T.S. Elliot, Sylvia Plath, Maya Angelou and Nimah Nawwab are used to enhance study. [C-2]

In this unit, students will:

- Identify poetic terms and analyze its effect on poems. A partial list of poetic terms to be covered includes the following: symbol, allegory, metonymy, tone, allusion, overstatement, understatement, irony, tone, paradox, rhythm, meter, musical devices, and pattern.
- Practice answering multiple-choice questions on poetry selections from an AP Examination.
- Write one or two in-class essays that respond to a poetry selection from an AP Examination. [C-4]
- Write a formal analysis/literary composition that utilizes the writing process. Students will write, revise and edit the latter with emphasis on word choice, details, syntax and incorporating quotes as support. [C-4, C-5]
- Write several poems that effectively use poetic devices.
- Keep a dialectical journal and maintain a Web-based poetry blog. [C-5]

Mid-December/Winter Break Reading

Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* is assigned reading. In addition, students receive an informational handout on the Open Question of the AP Exam (including prompts used in previous years). Upon return, students will write an in-class essay to an Open Question suggestive of themes present in the assigned text. [C-2, C-5]

January: The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century

- The focus of this unit is on English literature of the 1700's. Works by authors such as Jonathan Swift, Samuel Pepys, Alexander Pope, Samuel Johnson and Thomas Gray are read, discussed and

analyzed. Additional selections to enhance study include works by George Orwell and contemporary satirical articles from *The New Yorker* and *The Onion*. [C-2]

- A partial list of literary terms to be covered in this unit include: satire, irony, tone, epic, mock epic, epistle and narrative.
- Practice answering multiple-choice questions on selections from an AP examination.
- Write one or two in-class essays that respond to a poetry or prose selection from an AP examination. [C-4]
- Write a “Modest Proposal” in the style of Jonathan Swift.
- Write a formal analysis/literary composition that utilizes the writing process. Students will write, revise and edit with emphasis on diction, syntax, details and incorporating quotes. [C-4, C-5]
- Continue to annotate, to keep a double-entry journal and maintain the class blog. [C-5]

Term 2

February to May: Romanticism

- The focus of this unit is on English literature from the late eighteenth through twentieth centuries, with proper time allotted to significant British writers of the Romantic, Victorian and Modern Ages.
- Students will read a approximately one novel a month: February is devoted to Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*, March to Mary Shelly’s *Frankenstein*, April to Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights*, and May to Virginia Woolf’s *Orlando*, which will be complemented by a reading of her essay *A Room of One’s Own*.
- Authors such as Anne Bradstreet, William Blake, Thomas Hardy, Christina Rossetti, T.S. Eliot, Wilfred Owen, and Vera Britain are read, discussed and analyzed. Other selections to enhance study include excerpts from Wollstonecraft’s *Vindication of the Rights of Women* and Gilman’s *Yellow Wallpaper*. [C-2]
- A partial list of literary terms to be covered in this unit includes: novel, Gothic novel, Byronic hero, dramatic monologue, sprung rhythm, villanelle, and elegy. [C-3]
- Students will write at least three in-class essays each month that respond to a prompt from an AP examination. [C-4]
- Students will write at least two formal analysis/literary compositions each month that utilize the writing process. Students will write, revise and edit with emphasis on diction, syntax, details and incorporating quotes. [C-4, C-5]
- Students will extensively review in preparation for the AP English Literature Exam, which begins in April and ends in May. Students will be encouraged to attend Saturday morning tutorials during this period in order to practice taking the entire exam and to receive additional instruction and feedback.
- Students will continue to develop their processing skills by means of annotating texts, keeping dialectical journals and maintaining the class Web-based blog. [C-5]

Late Spring

As spring is a time for burgeoning, students will give life to their own burgeoning literary voices. Students will write a series of short stories and “portraits” of their lives, which they will be encouraged to share with the class.

The focus will be on the Modern Period, and literary works discussed will include James Joyce’s *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Beckett’s *Krapp’s Last Tape*, Frank McCourt’s *Teacher Man* and additional works from contemporary Chicano writers. [C-2]

Because the over-arching theme of this year is *The Hero’s Journey*, students will do all the aforementioned while pondering the connection between the heroes in literature and the heroes within themselves.

Grading

Grades are determined by balancing effort and achievement. The formula is as follows: 25% class participation; 25% homework; 25% exams and 25% essays.