

AP English Literature and Composition Syllabus

Course Overview:

Students in this college-level course read and carefully analyze both English and American literature written in a variety of time periods, from 16th Century through the contemporary period. This course will provide students with the intellectual challenges and workload consistent with a typical sophomore undergraduate English Literature class. At the culmination of the course, the students will take the AP English Literature and Composition Exam given in May. Based on their scores, they may be granted advanced placement, college credit, or both at colleges and universities throughout the United States.

Writing Assignments:

Throughout the year students will write, demonstrating an understanding and mastery of standard, written English. They should have a broad vocabulary which will indicate that they can use words appropriately to show denotative accuracy and connotative resourcefulness. AP Literature students write for a variety of reasons: 1) Students will write creatively to indicate knowledge of the organization, structure, and style techniques of poetry and prose. 2) Students will write to inform their reader that they understand passages from poetry, and longer works like novels and plays. 3) Students will write to explain complex ideas and issues that require research and development. 4) Students will write to analyze various pieces interpreting the author's meanings based on careful observation, use of extensive textual support, and an understanding of historical and social values. 5) Students will write under time constraints, producing papers that show both complexity and sophistication.

Reading Assignments:

This course includes an intensive study of rich and representative works such as those authors cited in the *AP English Course Description*. The works selected require a careful, deliberative reading that yields multiple meanings. (Note: The College Board does not mandate any particular authors or reading list).

However, because this is a college-level course, expectations are appropriately high, and the reading workload is challenging. Students are expected to come to class with the works read and annotated. Because of the length of some pieces, careful planning and time management is essential to success in the class. Careful reading leads to in-class discussion which reveals a student's in-depth understanding and evaluation of the piece and contributes towards the strengthening of his/her own composition ability.

Primary Course Textbooks:

The Little Brown Handbook (Fowler and Aaron, Longman)

The Prentice Hall Reader (Miller, Prentice Hall)

Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama (Kennedy, Longman)

Perrine's Sound and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry (Thomas R. Arp)

This course is constructed in accordance with the guidelines described in the *AP English Course Description*.

First Quarter: Close Reading and Annotation of Text. Evaluation of summer reading assignment. Examination of AP Literature and Composition exam. Poetry pairings. Definition and expository essays.

Texts:

Catch 22, Joseph Heller

Beowulf, Translated by Burton Raffel

Grendel, John Gardner

Frankenstein, Mary Shelley

The course opens with an evaluation of the summer reading assignment, *Catch-22*. Students do a close reading for stylistic elements, satire, and humor.

Major Assignment: After the close reading, student prepare for the in-class graded discussion. They prepare questions on the literal and interpretive levels which lead to a higher level of critical thinking on the novel as a whole. After discussion, they write a brief documented expository essay on existentialism and prepare for the in-class timed writing essay using AP quality prompts on the “work as a whole” in preparation for Question 3 on the AP Exam.

Additional Assignments: In conjunction with every major piece, students analyze and interpret poetry. They review the TPCASTT method and review the literary devices poets use to convey tone. The Focus Statement and TAGS introductions are reviewed, as well as denotation and connotation. The focus is lyric and narrative poetry.

Students work on an extended definition essay outside of class in conjunction with the *History of the English Language*.

After reading *Beowulf* and *Grendel* students write a compare/contrast essay using researched, documented critical reviews of the works and authors.

Students read *Frankenstein* as an independent read. They prepare questions for the in-class discussion at the end of the book and they have an in-class timed writing with an AP quality prompt. Extensive textural support is the foundation of an independent reading section.

During the quarter, students are working on an independent “Grammatical Structures” notebook which reviews grammar and writing techniques (syntax, punctuation, parallelism) which they find in AP quality works and which they document with MLA citations. They utilize these structures in their writing during the quarter.

Also during the quarter, students are presenting Biblical and mythological allusions weekly to aide in the recognition and understanding of allusions in literature and in their own writing.

AP Exam Assignments: The students are given a chance to practice the multiple choice segment of the AP test. Discussion of techniques to facilitate high scores are discussed and practiced. The students are also given a chance to practice the Question #2, close reading and Question #3, open-ended AP prompts with their current readings or using selections from the AP prompts.

Second Quarter: Continued close reading and annotating. Drama Unit focus. Introduction to Shakespeare, the Modern Period and Poetic Elements.

Texts:

Hamlet, William Shakespeare
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Tom Stoppard
Brave New World, Aldous Huxley
The Picture of Dorian Gray, Oscar Wilde

This quarter the focus is on reading and responding to Drama.

Major Assignment: The students read *Hamlet* and do Reading Logs, responding to literary elements, stylistic devices, characterization, etc. They practice close reading with an AP quality prompt twice during the reading. At the end of the play, they write an in-class timed writing on the work as a whole. The Shakespearean play is followed with the reading of the modern Absurd Theater play of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*. At the end of this unit the students write a comparison and contrast paper over both plays using an AP quality prompt.

Additional Assignments: In conjunction with every major piece, the students read poetry and analyze various poems, using the TPCASTT method. The focuses of this unit are the ode, the elegy, the Villanelle, blank and free verse . Tone and Theme development are stressed.

Students also read *Brave New World*. The unit begins with discussion of the dystopian/utopian philosophy. Multiple Choice passages are practiced several times during this read. Several topics for writing assignments are provided, including the journey of a character, point of view, and the development of motif. Modern Period values, research and documentation, and the persuasive essay are the focuses.

The students read *The Picture of Dorian Gray* on the own. They keep a reader's response journal addressing stylistic elements, diction, detail, imagery and how they contribute to tone. Extensive textural support is required in an independent reading. The final writing assignment emphasizes period values and the importance of paradox.

The students continue with the Grammatical Structures notebook and practice writing with the elements of the second quarter.

The students continue with activities using Biblical and mythological allusions.

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Third Quarter: Continued Close Reading and Annotating. The Victorian Era, Satire, irony, comedy, Contemporary Era.

Texts:

The Awakening, Kate Chopin

Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen

The Importance of Being Earnest, Oscar Wilde

Catcher in the Rye, J. D. Salinger

Master Harold and the Boys, Athol Fugard

Major Assignment: The students read *The Awakening* and focus on character analysis in connection to the literary period. Various philosophies are researched and the character reactions based on history and culture are explored in the culminating AP quality in-class write. Motif development and importance to the work as a whole is also a part of the unit.

Minor Assignments: In conjunction with every major piece, the students read poetry and analyze various poems, using the TPCASTT method. The focuses of this unit are the dramatic monologue and a summary of important poetic elements of rhythm, rhyme, and recognition of how figurative language contributes to the purpose of the piece.

Students read *Pride and Prejudice* as an independent reading. The syntax, vocabulary and narrative technique of the Nineteenth Century are their major focuses. Close reading practices and Reader's Response entries allow the students practice on short responses to various prompts. Students are given chances for peer review prior to turning in essays and chances for re-writing after grading. Graded discussion ends unit.

To continue the study of Nineteenth Century material and drama, the students read *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The study of satire, irony, and comedy is the focus. Culture and values of the time provide the backdrops for the writing of this piece. In conjunction with the study of irony, the students read *Master Harold and the Boys* and/or *Catcher in the Rye*. This allows them to relate the culture and values of the Modern Period to that of the earlier periods. The writings focus on two things, close reading assignments and AP style prompts. Graded discussion follows the unit.

The students continue their use of the Grammatical Structures notebook, with an emphasis this semester on clauses and phrases. Finding these structures in pieces of quality writing and then working with those same structures in their own writing elevates the quality and varies the style of their work.

Allusions continue to be emphasized, with the historical allusions of the various cultures and time periods as the focus.

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Fourth Quarter: Introductory Chapters. AP Test Review and Preparation. Documented Essay (Senior Research Paper).

Texts: During this quarter, students work on quality AP works to review various aspects of literature. They also choose an independent reading of their own.

Major Assignment: The final major assignment is the Senior Research Paper. This paper requires all the major steps in writing, prewriting (graphic organizing), outlining, rough draft writing, peer review prior to due date, teacher conferencing during the writing process, and final evaluation of the process. The subject is a Triple Document. The students choose one quality book to read. They also find another piece of literature (poetry, short stories, or plays) and one more medium (art, sculpture, film—non print) that relate to their novel in theme. They make connections in a five to six page, MLA documented essay.

The final book for the quarter is *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad. The final graded discussion centers on the individual and his/her philosophy, reflecting Conrad's self-examination of dark vision of Western civilization. Graded discussion after close reading is the unit's focus.

During this time, the students review major works of literature. They compare and contrast the opening chapters to the works, and review style and theme. They prepare book review cards and write book summaries to prepare for Question 3 of the AP test.

This is also the final MC review and the last close reading practices.

This is also the final poetry review time. Students prepare one page analysis of the major elements of poetry (imagery, figurative language, sound, tone and theme) and how the poet uses these for his/her purpose(s).

AP Testing: Students take the AP Literature and Composition Test in May.