Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition

This AP English Literature and Composition course is characterized by all those things you were wishing for last year when you signed up for it: lots of reading from books that will challenge you and cause you to truly think about what you are reading. There will be a great deal of writing, on the average a composition every two weeks, lots of vocabulary, grammar instruction as needed, and practice writing college application essays. We will discuss with verve and insight every provocative question brought up during discussions. Throughout the course, we will go over old AP exams, so you will not be surprised when you take the exam in early May.

Every day, we will discuss some vital aspect of writing, including: intent, organization or structure, and style (diction, syntax, figurative language, mechanics). We will also be using a large amount of literary criticism to help students use different lenses to analyze literature. This class will be difficult; it will require a lot of work. However, I want you to think of this class as a workshop, not a rhetoric manual—a place where you will test certain kinds of writing and attempt to recover your own recollections to make your writing your own. To help us understand literature and the way that authors convey meaning, we will study essays written by several notable authors as taken from several anthologies. We will also supplement with different schools of thought of literary criticism, ranging from New Criticism to Marxism and Feminism.

You will be asked to keep a notebook for vocabulary, notes, grammar, and class discussion of literature. You will also be asked to read regularly outside of class and to report on that reading in a book project twice a semester. The intent of this assignment is to broaden your reading and to improve your fluency.

What I expect most of all from our class is hard work on the part of the individual writer, careful reading and discussion on the part of the class.

Reading Assignments

The most important requirement for this course is that students read every assignment. Students will complete a great deal of reading at home. Students unused to literature courses will need to plan time in their schedule for more reading than most courses require. Poetry, though usually not long, is dense and complicated and should always be read several times. Novels in particular require time-management.

Texts used in this class:

Summer Reading

Hawthorne, *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zorah Neale Hurston, *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, or *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte (Throughout the year, students will choose at least two other books to read independently).

☑ Optional readings— *The Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Job, and Matthew* and *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster

**Textbooks/Anthologies/Resources**


**Novels/Drama/Novellas**

☑ Selections from *Beowulf*, and/or *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer
☑ Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness.*
☑ Dickens, Charles. *Great Expectations.*
☑ Wilde, Oscar. *The Importance of Being Earnest.*

**Additions to Independent Reading List for 1st & 2nd Semester**


**Books to Review or Reread**


**Several books of choice from approved list.**

Novels may be eliminated or replaced at the instructor’s discretion.
Writing Assignments

The kinds of writings in this course are varied but include: writing to understand, writing to explain, and writing to evaluate. We will have a writer's journal used only for this class. In this journal, we will reflect on information we have already learned, plan for the class period, and reflect on what we have already written. Journal will also be a creative writing project where we can respond to artwork, photographs and writing prompts in creative ways such as poetry response, shorts stories, and memoir writing. Your formal writings will be examined for effective word choice, inventive sentence structure, effective overall organization, clear emphasis, and above all, excellence of argument, including exhaustive supportive evidence (i.e., quotations) and clear, persuasive, elegant connection of this evidence to your overall argument. Lesser “papers” will be written regularly in class to spur thinking, stimulate discussion, and focus on issues of plot, characterization, and theme. These may or may not be handed in.

In order for this class to help students progress as writers and polish their own style, students will write a good deal and will revise certain pieces of writing into polished final drafts. This is what the longer writing pieces will accomplish. These pieces will allow you to revise and edit for a polished piece of writing. Revising and re-writing will be done through process papers, which will allow for revision through peer edit, self edit, and conference. In the process of these revisions, you will be exposed to your conscious choice of diction and the appropriate use of words, your ability to create varied and effective sentence structures, your capacity for coherence and logical organization, your ability to balance generalizations with specific and illustrative details, and, overall, your ability to combine rhetorical processes into an effective whole. This is hard to do, and that is why we will be writing constantly.

Writing Assignments—Critical

We will do a great deal of critical writing as is reflected on the AP exam. All critical writing asks that you evaluate the effectiveness of a literary piece, but, to be an effective evaluator, one must understand and explain. Critical and analytical writing will take place in the form of poetry responses, which must reference the text in at least three places, in timed essays done on a biweekly basis in class, and in process writing which is made up of a developed piece that will follow the writing process with pre-writing activities, rough drafts, revisions, and peer and self edits. Each student will write several short critical papers, explicating poetry and drama and perform a close reading of novels. These papers will be done in the form of timed essays and essays of longer length. Each paper will use specific and well-chosen evidence to articulate an argument about poems, drama, and fiction. Specifically, these critical essays are based on close textual analysis of structure, style (figurative language, imagery, symbolism, tone), theme and social/historical values. They will reflect what was learned in Socratic Seminars, discussions, lectures, activities and projects done in class. Students will also have to examine a work for the artistry and quality of the piece through social and historical values. An example of this can be seen through the poetry analysis essays which are done on a weekly basis. In these poetry essays, students use close reading of textual pieces in the essay to reflect the social and historical value of the poem and how this attributes to the artistry and quality of the piece. We will also analyze texts such as Heart of Darkness, The Crucible, and several short stories for social, historical and cultural values in which students will draw upon the textual details to make and explain judgments on these values.
**Writing Assignments- Creative**
Students will be asked to write creative assignments—poems, dramatic scenes, and short stories that take on the rhetorical forms and styles of the literature we’re studying. I will be looking for the student’s knowledge and application of appropriate structures and styles as outlined within the assignment’s parameters; that is, the student’s capacity to understand, then apply the techniques of art used in the literature we’re studying. These techniques include structure, theme, and style (diction, syntax, figurative language, symbolism, and tone). This will be done in the writer's journal and in poetry reflections, as well as in independent reading projects, which will be completed outside of class.

**In-class Writing, Quizzes and Exams**
We will practice in-class writing, multiple-choice practice, and analyzing for the AP Exam once a week. Students will be asked to free-write their responses to the reading on a regular basis. Students should bring their journal to class each day, so they are prepared for this informal writing exercise, which is designed to explore what they learn as they read. These will be timed.

In-class writings will primarily be AP-based examinations, though there will also be quick-response, in-class writings as a basis for discussion. I will not always announce quizzes ahead of time, and we will have a number of them, both straightforward reading ones and ones that ask you to engage an idea.

**Grading**

Students will be graded on:
- Poetry Responses
- Multiple Choice Practice
- Essay Writing
- Process Paper (Research Paper)
- Quizzes
- Tests
- Discussion
- Class Participation
- Homework.
- Independent Reading Projects

**Feedback-** I strive to provide feedback on all writing assignments, regardless of whether they are reflective, critical, analytical or process papers. This class is workshop-based, meaning that analyzing and understanding feedback to revise is fundamental. I will look for the use of a wide range of vocabulary appropriate and effectively, a variety of sentence structures, including appropriate use of subordination and coordination, logical organization to increase coherence, and an effective use of rhetoric, maintaining voice and achieving appropriate emphasis through diction and sentence structure.

If you have any questions about what is expected from this class, please feel free to contact me. Any questions, concerns and suggestions will be appreciated and are encouraged. This will be a challenging course, but it will also be enjoyable if students are prepared to work hard and put in 100% of their effort into turning in quality work. It is not expected that students will have the skills taught in this class right away, on the contrary, students are expected to grow and learn and develop. By working together with their instructor, students can master the skills required for this course.
Reading and Writing Schedule

First Semester:

Week One: Introduction to the Course & Follow-up on Summer Reading
   Mythology & Literary Term Quiz 1 from summer reading
   AP Vocabulary- Worked on throughout the year, online
   What does literary merit mean?
   Literary device, one-page essay project, using summer terms
   Syllabus/reading lists
   Literary History Timeline
   Class discussion on heritage & connections between Song of Solomon
      and book of choice from summer reading
   Review study guide- Handout and Socratic discussion of Song of Solomon
   Handout on Myths & Allusions- Research references in library

Week Two: Personal Essay/Continued Follow-up on Summer Reading
   Reading journal entry on novel of choice: Focus on character
   Discussion of significant allusions in Song of Solomon and analysis of author’s purpose
   Biblical Allusions handout
   Explanation of personal essay due week 3- Students will choose actual personal essay prompt
      from a college to which they may apply
   Timed essay writing: Allusions in Song of Solomon
   Completion of review study guide
   Writing workshop for essay- peer input
   Poetry Response- Paul Laurence Dunbar, “Sympathy”
   Voice lessons on diction
   Literary terms & devices handout 2

Week Three: Poetry
   Fun “Introduction to Poetry” by Billy Collins
   Critically evaluating a poem- “A Psalm of Life” by Longfellow, “Trees” by Kilmer, “The Sick Rose” by Blake, and “Flower in the Crannied Wall” by Tennyson; focus on use of
      understatement and symbolism
   Focus on close reading, Literature & Composition, p. 19
   Exploration of poetic techniques used in visual poetry- “l(a” by e.e. cummings
      Modeling annotating
   In-class conference on personal essay writing and revision
   Literary terms & devices quiz 2
   Poetry Response on “The Gift” by Li-Young Lee
   Mini lesson: Theme statement (TPR), using Li-Young Lee’s A Story
   Voice lessons on detail
   Take home multiple choice practice: “The Collar” by George Herbert
   1st personal essay for college applications due
Week Four: Poetry
Review elements of style: diction, figurative language, imagery, syntax, tone & mood
Focus on tone with James Weil’s “A Coney Island Life”; handout- words to describe tone
Tone & speaker- Compare/contrast “A Barred Owl” by Richard Wilbur & “The History Teacher” by Billy Collins
Timed in-class essay on above poems
Creative writing: poetry from pictures
Poetry presentation preparation- focus on one poem by Emily Dickenson, E.A. Poe, John Donne, Langston Hughes, William Wordsworth, Robert Frost, William Shakespeare, Carl Sandburg, or Samuel Coleridge
Reading journal entry
Voice lessons on imagery
Literary terms and devices handout 3

Week Five: Poetry
“World Enough, and Time”: Marvell’s Coy Mistress
Minilesson: carpe diem, hyperbole, ironic allegory, allusion
Writing a close analysis essay, p. 41 Literature and Composition
Focus: allusion, hyperbole, imagery, & symbolism; analyze Browning’s “My Last Duchess,” p. 432 & Coleridge’s “Kubla Khan,” p. 766 in Literature: An Introduction to Fiction…;
also look at rhyme, meter, form, & sound
Poetry presentations
Literary term quiz
Voice lessons on syntax
Literary terms and devices quiz 3

Week Six: Heart of Darkness
Reading Quiz- handout
Minilesson: Symbols
Poetry Response (“White Man's Burden”- Kipling, p. 535, Literature and Composition)
Timed essay practice (Theme and Symbolism)
Reading Guide on notable excerpts- Handout
Voice lessons on tone
Literary terms & devices handout 4

Week Seven: Heart of Darkness
Frame story and plot- handout
Racism in Heart of Darkness? (An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness- Achebe)
Minilesson: Organization in writing
Discussion and response writing to Achebe Essay where students analyze the components of the composition such as structure and authorial style in a close examination and respond in their own essay.
Poetry Response- Donne’s “Death Be Not Proud”
Mini-Lesson: organization in writing
Reading journal on title of Heart of Darkness
Voice lessons on diction
Literary terms & devices quiz 4
Week Eight: *Heart of Darkness*
   Socratic Seminar: Symbolism in Heart of Darkness
   Light vs. Dark (Read “Allegory of the Cave” - Plato)
   Persuasive techniques
   Practice essay writing (Feminine role in HOD)
   Writing a strong thesis
   Poetry Response: *Heart of Darkness* poem, available on-line
   Voice lessons on detail
   Literary terms & devices handout 5

Week Nine: Short Story Analysis
   Minilesson: Irony, p.163 *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction*...Irony in the Short Story (*The Gift of the Magi*, O. Henry)
   Historical Criticism - notes and discussion
   Use of literary devices in Kate Chopin’s *The Story of an Hour*
   Unlocking the prompt exercise - handout
   Write your own prompt
   Literary terms & devices quiz 5
   Voice lessons on imagery
   Take home multiple choice practice

Week Ten: Essay Analysis
   Tone in essays (*You are Free to be Me, You, Stupid and Dead*)
   Discussion and dissection of diction in tone
   Brainstorming of Tone and Mood descriptors
   Mini lesson: Avoiding Generalizations
   Timed essay practice (from previous AP prompt)
   Mini Lesson- Analyzing the Persuasive Essay (*50 Essays: An Anthology*)
   Voice lessons on syntax
   Literary terms & devices handout 6

Week Eleven: *Crime and Punishment*
   Poetry Response- “This is Just to Say” by William Carols Williams)
   Discussion of themes, motifs, and symbols
   Character Analysis
   Literary term quiz
   Voice lessons on tone
   Literary terms & devices quiz 6

Week Twelve: *Crime and Punishment*
   Novel quiz
   Discussion on translations
   Multiple choice test practice
   Journal writing on justice
   Voice lessons on diction
   Literary terms & devices handout 7
Week Thirteen: *Crime and Punishment*
- Using process to write an essay - Confidant’s in literature
- Major Works Data Sheet/Review study guide
- Assign 2nd personal essay for college applications, RD due week 14, final due week 15
- Voice lessons on detail
- Literary terms & devices quiz 7
- Take home multiple choice practice

Week Fourteen: Short Story and Essay Analysis
- Historical Context of Faulkner’s “Barn Burning,” Literature: An Introduction to Fiction…(151), pair with Barreca’s “Nighttime Fires,” The Compact Bedford (587)
- Analyzing character (Ab Snopes)
- Mini-lesson- Analysis
- Chunking Exercise- How to be Effective in Analysis
- Process writing- students will plan, draft, revise, and edit an essay that analyzes the significance of the historical context in Faulkner’s “A Barn Burning,” while also examining theme. The revision process will include a peer review and conference with the instructor.
- Continued workshopping on college essay
- Voice lessons on imagery
- Literary terms & devices handout 8

Week Fifteen: Short Story and Essay Analysis
- Historical Context and Symbolism in “A Good Man is Hard to Find”- O'Connor, Literature: An Introduction to Fiction… (238)
- Theme- discussion + handout
- Hemingway’s Shades of Silence: Chiaroscuro Technique in “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place”
- 2nd personal essay for college due.
- Poetry Response Plath’s *Lady Lazarus,* Literature: An Introduction To Fiction… (655)
- Multiple Choice Test Practice
- Literary terms & devices quiz 8
- Voice lessons on syntax
- 2nd College Essay due

Week Sixteen: Short Story and Essay Analysis
- Allegory in “Young Goodman Brown” by Hawthorne & Through a Woods Darkly
- Mini-lesson: Organizing your essay- Handout
- Poetry Response: Blake’s “The Chimney Sweeper,” The Compact Bedford (723)
- Persuasive Techniques- Anecdotes, evidence etc.
- Creative Writing: Poetry (Photography into poems)
- Timed In-Class Essay
- Voice lessons on tone
Week Seventeen:
Independent reading presentations
Minilessons- Syntax & embracing ambiguity
Literary term review- game
Journal entry on independent reading focused on setting & character
Building background for Great Expectations (placing it in historical context)
Christmas Break assigned reading: Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

(Our semesters are unequal, so we can end first semester before Christmas Break)

Reading and Writing Schedule
Semester Two

Week One: Great Expectations
Reading response due
Novel quiz
Character influences
Mini-lesson: Point of view
Discussion of themes and symbols
Journal entry connecting to theme
Voice lessons on diction

Week Two: Great Expectations
Reading response due
Major works data sheet/ Review study guide
Timed Writing- Write a well-organized three page persuasive essay for GREAT EXPECTATIONS on the following prompt:
In some works of literature, childhood and adolescence are portrayed as times graced by innocence and a sense of wonder; in other works, they are depicted as times of tribulation and terror. Focusing on a single novel or play, explain how its representation of childhood or adolescence SHAPES THE MEANING OF THE WORK AS A WHOLE. Do not merely summarize the plot.
Literary term quiz
Voice lessons on detail

Week Three: Shakespeare, Macbeth, Act 1 & 2
Diction in Shakespeare (The Story and Its Writer)
Medieval Lit: Selections from Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales
Focus on use of similes and metaphors
Motif: appearance vs. reality
Guided questions
Timed writing: Characterize Lady Macbeth or Macbeth using citations from the text to support your characterization. (After Act 1)
Voice lessons on imagery
Week Four: Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act 3 & 4
Analysis of “To Be Thus” soliloquy
Motifs: sleep, night, & blood
Interpretive essay- Macduff: Is Macduff a coward for leaving his family? Consider his viewpoint and assess Lady Macduff’s viewpoint. Why would he leave his wife and son behind and travel to Scotland? What does Macbeth gain from killing Macduff’s family?

Literary term quiz
Journal writing on recurring motifs
Guided questions
Voice lessons on syntax

Guided questions
Socratic Seminar- Analysis of “Out, damned spot” speech
Aristotle’s *Poetics* and *Macbeth*
Analyzing *Macbeth*
Mini Lesson: Conclusions
Creating a timed writing prompt
Major Works Data Sheet/Review study guide
Voice lessons on tone

Week Six: Shakespearean Poetry & Other writers of sonnets
*Sonnet 138* by Shakespeare and *Holy Sonnet #9* by John Donne
Structure of the Sonnet- handout
Socratic Seminar on Poetic Device
Timed- In Class Poetry Writing
Meter and Structure- Critical Analysis
Group Sharing of Poems (Donne, Petrarch, Spencer)
Mini-Lesson: Sentence Fluency
Literary term quiz
Voice lessons on diction
Multiple choice practice (take home)

Week Seven: Poetry
*The Lanyard* by Billy Collins
Creative writing- writing a sonnet
Poetry & Parody- “Footprints on the Sand of Dover Beach,” “A Psalm of Life,” “To His Not-So-Coy Mistress”; Parody & Poe
Creative writing: Parody of Frost’s “Road Not Taken”; then read Farley’s “Lover Not Taken,” pp. 880 & 905 in *The Compact Bedford*
Prompt writing- Interpretation of piece based on the author’s use of stylistic techniques and poetic devices
Voice lessons on detail

Week Eight: *The Crucible*
Reader's Theater
Reading Quiz
Mini Lesson: Voice in Writing
Background on the Salem Witch Trials
Researching the Salem Witch Trials: Inference and Evidence Chart
Multiple Choice Test Practice
Literary term quiz
Voice lessons on imagery

Week Nine: The Crucible/Introduction to The Importance of Being Ernest
Major themes/motifs
Reading response/Major works data sheet
Journal entry- Connections to issues revealed in The Crucible
Timed writing- According to Webster’s New World Dictionary, a “crucible” is defined as a severe trial or test. After reading Arthur Miller’s The Crucible, write an essay discussing the symbolic significance of the “the crucible” in the play and what changes it brings about in a specific character or characters.
Voice lessons on syntax

Week Ten: The Importance of Being Ernest
Focus: Comedy- farce & parody
Tea party lines
Reading response/Major works data sheet
Voice lessons on tone

Week Eleven: Short Story Analysis
Photo Analysis and creative writing for symbolism
What is symbolism? (Young Goodman Brown- Hawthorne)
How do Authors play with perception?(An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge- Bierce)
Poetry Response (miss rosie by Lucille Clifton)
Literary term quiz
Multiple choice test practice
Voice lessons on diction

Week Twelve: Paradise Lost by John Milton
Voice lessons on detail
Poetry connection: Wordsworth’s “The Prelude”
Examine literary elements such as metaphor, metonymy, apostrophe, pun, characterization, and flashback

Week Thirteen: Paradise Lost by John Milton
Reading response/Major works data sheet
Discussion of key themes, such as the consequences of wrong choices, power of envy, and destructiveness of pride
Journal writing- consequences of wrong choices
Voice lessons on imagery
Week Fourteen: Non-Fiction & Short Story
   Socratic discussion: complex relationships & arranged marriages
   Jain’s *Is Arranged Marriage Really Worse than Craigslist?* Literature & Composition (701)
   Gilman’s *The Yellow Wallpaper*
   Timed In-Class Essay Practice from previous AP prompt
   Literary term quiz
   Voice lessons on syntax

Week Fifteen: Review and Preparation
   Review of literary terms
   Timed In-Class Essay Practice from previous AP prompt
   Timed In-Class Essay on Poetry from previous AP prompt
   Voice lessons on tone

Week Sixteen: Review and Preparation
   Review of reading response/major work data sheets
   Multiple choice test practice
   Timed writing
   Choose pieces to include in end of the year portfolio (due week eighteen)

Week Seventeen:
   Revise and edit pieces for portfolio (Thursday)
   Multiple choice test practice (Tuesday)
   Open question practice (Monday)
   Scheduled AP test

Week Eighteen:
   Portfolio due

Attachments: Summer reading assignment