

AP Literature and Composition Syllabus

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Course Description

An AP English Literature and Composition course engages students in the careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature. Through the close reading of selected texts, students deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure for their readers. As they read, students consider a work's structure, style and themes, as well as such smaller-scale elements as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism and tone.

Goals

Reading

Students in this course are not just expected to read, but to engage critically a wide variety of literature from multiple genres, time periods, and cultures including, but not limited to: short fiction, novels, classical and modern drama, and poetry. We will explore each piece of literature for its deepest meanings, themes, its reflection of society and ourselves, the author's use of language, syntax, symbolism, and other rhetorical and literary devices. As important as well, we shall seek to find enjoyment and pleasure from the depth and complexity that great literature has to offer.

Note: In this course, we will be reading adult literature that may contain adult themes, ideas, and language. It is the responsibility of the student to handle such themes and ideas as adults in both discussion and writing.

Writing

A main component of this course is to be able to write analytically about literature in a way that is thoughtful, clear, logical, and relatively free of grammatical and mechanical errors. We will examine and employ elements of style and structure to compose, through assigned prompts, literary analysis essays that are worthy of collegiate merit. We will also focus on employing these techniques in on-demand, timed writing as per the AP Literature and Composition exam.

About the Exam

The AP Literature and Composition exam is scheduled toward the end of the school year, usually early May. Students are not required to take the exam; however, I encourage everyone to sign up. A score of 3 or higher can earn you credit hours at most colleges and universities. Refer to the website of your college or university of choice for their specific requirements for credit based upon AP scores.

The test will consist of two parts:

A. **Multiple choice:** You will have one hour to read from a variety of reading selections and answer 55 multiple choice questions about meaning, comprehension, use of language, grammar, etc. Scoring for the multiple choice section is calculated on the total number of correct answers. Incorrect and unanswered questions will not count against you; however, it is advised to complete as much of the first section as you can.

Part A will make up 45% of your overall score.

<<10 minute break>>

B. **Free response:** You will have two hours to respond to three prompts:

- Literary analysis 1 – poetry: You will be provided a poem or an excerpt from a longer work (this can include dramatic verse) and a prompt.
- Literary analysis 2 – prose: You will be provided an excerpt of a work of prose fiction and a prompt.
- Open response: You will be given a prompt which you will respond to referring to any work of literary merit. You may be provided with a list from which you can select, but you do not have to choose from the list.

Each response will be scored on a scale of 0-9. Part B will make up 55% of your total score.

For more information on the exam, see the AP website.

http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/exam/exam_information/2002.html

Required Texts

DiYanni, Robert, ed. *Literature: Reading Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2007. Print.*

Kesey, Ken. *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. New York: Signet, 1991. Print.

Salinger, J. D. *The Catcher in the Rye*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1991. Print.

Wilhelm, Jeffrey D., ed. *Literature Texas Treasures: British Literature*. Columbus, OH: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 2011. Print.

* Copies to be checked out from front office Supplemental resources to be provided

Required Materials

- College ruled paper
- 3-ring binder & dividers
- Composition book
- Blue, black, & red pens
- Highlighters
- Post-it notes
- Flash drive or other portable data storage device

Course Outline

The following outline is tentative and subject to change.

Introduction (1 week)

- Overview of course and expectations
- Vocabulary & quizzes
- Novels & independent reading
- The AP exam
- Novel 1 - *The Catcher in the Rye* - J. D. Salinger (in-class discussion)
- Novel 2 - To be selected from a predetermined list (independent)

Unit I - Short Fiction - Introduction to Literary Analysis (2 - 3 weeks)

Analyze short fiction for elements of plot, style, tone, theme, diction, syntax, rhetorical & literary devices, and social/historical commentary. Begin analytical essay writing.

“Rocket Summer” - Ray Bradbury (imagery, diction, & tone)

“Cat in the Rain” - Ernest Hemmingway (character analysis, setting, social/historical/cultural elements)

“The Necklace” - Guy De Maupassant (character analysis, setting, social/historical/cultural elements, plot, irony)

“The Storm” - Kate Chopin (irony, symbolism, figurative language, point of view, social/historical/cultural elements, & style)

“Desiree’s Baby” - Kate Chopin (irony & social/historical/cultural elements)

“Flowers for Algernon” - Daniel Keyes (point of view, character analysis, & ethics)

“By the Waters of Babylon” - Stephen Vincent Benét (crossover: Psalm 137) (ambiguity, setting, & allusion)

Unit II – Modern Drama (3 weeks)

Analyze modern drama for plot, character analysis, theme, symbolism, and tone.

Death of a Salesman – Arthur Miller (*Applied Practice*)

The Sunset Limited – Cormac McCarthy

Unit III – Poetry I (1850 – present) (3 weeks)

An in-depth analysis of poetry from 1850 through the present, focusing on theme, imagery, symbolism, rhythm, structure, use of language, and various literary and rhetorical devices. AP exam practice. TP-CASTT

Selected authors include (but not limited to): Robert W. Chambers, Sandra Cisneros, Countee Cullen, Emily Dickenson, T. S. Elliot, Robert Frost, Thomas Hardy, A. E. Houseman, Langston Hughes, Randall Jarrell, Alistair Reid, Carl Sandburg, Dylan Thomas, & William Carlos Williams.

Midterm

- Novel 1 – *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* – Ken Kesey
- Novel 2 – To be selected from a predetermined list

Unit IV – Classical Drama (3 weeks)

Oedipus Rex – Sophocles

The Tragedy of Macbeth – William Shakespeare

Unit V – Poetry II (1500 – 1850) (3 weeks)

An in-depth analysis of poetry from 1500 through 1850, focusing on theme, imagery, symbolism, rhythm, structure, use of language, and various literary and rhetorical devices. Poetic units will be broken up in the following categories:

Pastorals – Marlowe & Raleigh (crossover: Houseman)

Sonnets – Shakespeare, Spencer, & Petrarch

Cavalier Poets & the early 17th century – Donne, Herrick, Marvell, & Milton

The Restoration – Dryden & Pope (crossover: Swift)

The Romantic Period – Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, & Poe

Unit VI – Research (2 – 3 weeks)

The Beat Goes On – A researched critical analysis & explication of Kerouac & Ginsberg.

Final Exam

Essays - Students will be expected to write in-depth literary analyses and major essays approximately every two weeks. Topics, guidelines, & rubrics will be provided in advance. On-demand, in-class writing will also make up a considerable portion of your written work as it is a requirement of the AP Literature and Composition exam. Rubrics for on-demand writing may or may not be provided in advance.

Novels - Each 9 weeks, you will be required to read 2 novels. One will be predetermined and will be the subject of in-class discussions, written responses, and a final in-depth literary analysis. The second novel will be chosen by you from a preselected list of works as represented on previous AP exams. An alternative novel of equal literary merit may be substituted at my discretion. A final analysis will be submitted before the close of the 9 weeks.

Quizzes - A vocabulary list of literary and rhetorical devices will be provided in the first week of class. Quizzes on these terms will begin in week two and will cover between 10 and 20 terms. A pre-quiz vocabulary assignment will be submitted prior to that week's quiz. Quizzes will be on Fridays and terms for the following week will be provided upon completion.

Pop quizzes on covered materials can happen randomly and at any moment.

AP Exam Preparation - Throughout the course, we will cover various strategies regarding the multiple choice and free response sections of the AP Literature and Composition exam. We will review released materials and scored student responses to familiarize ourselves with the form, structure, and required skills of the exam. At least once in the course, you will be required to take a released test, including the free-response section. Supplemental materials from the *Applied Practice* series will be provided to test and hone your skills for the multiple choice section.

Research Paper - While a research paper is not required by College Board for the AP Literature and Composition course, it is certainly a requirement of collegiate study. We will cover MLA requirements for format and citations, how to access and search through databases and scholarly journals, and how to synthesize a variety of sources into a logical and coherent research paper.

Summer Reading Assignment - The summer reading assignment will vary from year to year and can be found at: www.thiesmeyer.net/aplit/summer

The summer reading assignment will be due on the first day of class in the fall semester, regardless of whether you are taking this course in the fall or in the spring.

Rules, Expectations, & Classroom Comportment

As this course is designed at the collegiate level, students enrolled in this course are expected to comport themselves accordingly.

- The number one rule in my class is respect: for yourself, myself, & others.
- Be in class, on-time, & prepared.
- Cellphones & electronic devices are prohibited during instructional time unless otherwise noted.

Attendance: This course will not stop because of your absence. You are encouraged to miss as few days as possible. You are responsible for any missed materials, lectures, readings, assignments, quizzes, tests, or essays on the days you are absent. If you have an extracurricular activity (U.I.L. event, tournament, etc.), you need to notify me in advance. Excessive absences may result in failure, loss of credit, and/or removal from the AP course.

Grading: As this is a composition course, the majority of your grades will come from written responses of various lengths, forms, & topics. Shorter responses (such as study questions, short answer responses, reader's journals, etc.) will count as daily grades. All quizzes will be daily grades. All projects, essays, & exams will make up your test grade average. The midterm and final exam will make up 20% of your overall grade.

Late work: As per collegiate expectations, none will be accepted. Exceptions will be made for extenuating circumstances.

Academic honesty: Academic honesty is absolutely critical in this course. Plagiarism or cheating, of any form, will not be tolerated. Instances of plagiarism and/or cheating will be dealt with swiftly and severely and may result in loss of credit, disciplinary action, and/or removal from the AP course.

Classroom Contract

AP Literature and Composition

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I _____ have read and understand the rules,
(student's printed name)
expectations, and guidelines as set forth by this syllabus. As well, I understand the
responsibilities and expectations of the student as set forth by this syllabus.

Student's Printed Name: _____

Student's Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Parent or Guardian's Printed Name: _____

Parent or Guardian's Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Parent or Guardian's Contact Phone Number: () _____ - _____

Parent or Guardian's Contact Email Address: _____

Preferred Method of Contact:

Phone (AM or PM)

or

Email