

Course Description

This course will follow the curricular requirements outlined by the College Board in the *AP English Literature and Composition Course Description* which focuses on building skills necessary for college-level reading and writing. The texts include works from a variety of time periods and genres, and the writing assignments include in-class essays as well as formal essays with several opportunities for revision. This is considered a college-level course; this means that you will be asked to read and analyze challenging, provocative, dense and sometimes controversial material.

The course design is based on the premise that AP English Literature exam measures those skills that students need in order to be successful in college. Students will work together and explore a variety of reading and writing strategies preparing for success on the Advanced Placement English Literature exam. The course will focus on improving skill sets related to confidence and facility with language, skill in critical reading, writing and thinking and success in academic endeavors.

Students will come away with an appreciation for fine literature and a passion for reading. We will learn to read and write about literature, as Harold Bloom explains in his book, "How to Read and Why," to know more about the world and its people more profoundly; to know ourselves better; and to better understand why things are the way they are.

Course texts

We will read from a variety of genres in different periods. You can expect to read at least one short story per week, analyze one poem per week, and one book (fiction and nonfiction) per month. We will read both British and American authors. You may expect to read poetry, novels, short stories, drama, essays, and creative non-fiction. We will begin with early British literature (Beowulf, Chaucer, Shakespeare) and end with contemporary American literature (N. Scott Momaday, Rudolfo Anaya, Arthur Miller). We will also introduce ourselves to local authors, such as Levi Romero and Jimmy Santiago Baca. The majority of our study material will be provided for you in class. However, there will be some materials you will be expected to either purchase or borrow.

Curriculum Requirement 2

The course includes an intensive study of representative works such as those by authors cited in the AP English Course Description. (Note: The College Board does not mandate any particular authors or reading list.) The choice of works for the AP course is made by the school in relation to the school's overall English curriculum sequence, so that by the time the student completes AP English Literature and Composition she or he will have studied during high school literature from both British and American writers, as well as works written in several genres from the sixteenth century to contemporary times. The works selected for the course should require careful, deliberative reading that yields multiple meanings.

Curriculum Requirement 2

The course teaches students to write an interpretation of a piece of literature that is based on a careful observation of textual details, considering the work's:

- Structure, style, and themes
- The social and historical values it reflects and embodies
- Such elements as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone

Curriculum Requirement 5

The course includes frequent opportunities for students to write and rewrite formal, extended analyses and timed, in-class responses. The course requires:

- Writing to understand: Informal, exploratory writing activities that enable students to discover what they think in the process of writing about their reading (such assignments could include annotation, free-writing, keeping a reading journal, and response/reaction papers)
- Writing to explain: Expository, analytical essays in which students draw upon

The following materials are available in class.

Memering, Dean and William Palmer. *Discovering Arguments, an Introduction to Critical Thinking and Writing with Reading*. 2002.

Schweibert, John E. *Reading and Writing from Literature*. 2nd Ed. 2001

Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes: The British Tradition. Prentice Hall Literature. 2002.

Important Disclaimer

Much of the material we read in this course is written for the student at the college level. This means that the content may include mature, even controversial, themes, language or ideas. Every student is expected to handle the material responsibly and maturely.

Course Writing Overview

AP College board curriculum requirement: ***The course teaches students to write an interpretation of a piece of literature that is based on a careful observation of textual details, considering such elements as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism and tone.***

The majority of the writing assignments will take a critical approach to literature. However, students will also engage literature in a variety of creative ways, as well. We will focus on developing voice, organization, diction, and rhetorical strategies. These important principles of writing will be enforced through the process of planning, drafting, revising, editing and proofreading. Throughout the year students will have many opportunities to engage in writing workshops and conferences, both with their peers and one-on-one with the instructor. A conference outside of class time may be scheduled with the instructor to discuss any areas of concern.

The instructor will provide regular feedback on writing assignments, both before, during, and after a student revises his/her work. The revision process is an opportunity to look at diction, structure, style and theme. Students will be expected to reflect in their writing an understanding of the social and historical values of the text, as well as an understanding of literary elements such as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone.

The students will be given past AP response questions regularly as prompts for essay assignments

Curriculum Requirement 7

The AP teacher provides instruction and feedback on students' writing assignments, both before and after the students revise their work, that help the students develop:

- A wide-ranging vocabulary used appropriately and effectively
- A variety of sentence structures, including appropriate use of subordination and coordination
- Logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques to increase coherence, such as repetition, transitions, and emphasis
- A balance of generalization and specific, illustrative detail
- An effective use of rhetoric, including controlling tone, establishing and maintaining voice, and achieving appropriate emphasis through diction and sentence structure

http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/english_lit/samp.html?ennglit). The student will use the provided scoring guidelines to inform their approach to the development of the essay. These essays will be assigned as timed in-class essays, over-night homework assignments, and as extended homework and in-class work.

Students will be given opportunities to experiment with figurative language through the process of creative writing. We will participate in poetry workshops modeled after the process developed and practiced by Levi Romero, a New Mexican poet and teacher.

A journal, preferably a composition notebook, will be required in class every day. Daily journal writing will take place during the first ten minutes of every class, unless otherwise noted by the instructor. The journal will be used to respond to and expand on our studies. The journal will be a safe place to explore and experiment with ideas and techniques. And it will be used as an important tool for annotation. It will be a vehicle for identifying with literature in a powerful and meaningful way.

Assignments and Assessments

Class assignments and assessments will be a mix of reading assignments, writing assignments, multiple choice quizzes, literature analysis reports, summative exams and one final research paper.

We will spend at least two days a week studying a major work of literature. You will be expected to read a book outside of class each month—these books will be chosen from a list of recommended reading for AP students. We will learn to annotate literature to move beyond a superficial reading of the text and into a powerful and meaningful interpretation.

During the week we will read, annotate and analyze a minimum of one short story and one poem (SPOTTTS). We will practice a multiple choice question taken from past AP exams once a week. Every assignment is designed to aid the student in developing skills that will be helpful on the AP Exam.

Student will be expected to prepare for summative exams at the end of each quarter. These exams will include multiple choice questions, true/false questions, short answer questions, and an essay.

Absences/Late Work/Make-Up work:

Due to the nature of our school, students will on occasion be out of class for performances, auditions, and rehearsals; however, it is expected that

students stay on top of coursework so they do not fall behind. If a student knows he/she will be absent, students may get work ahead of time (24 hour notice needed). If the absence is due to illness or emergency, students may get the work immediately after the absence, and in both cases, have as many days as they were absent to make up the assignment. For example, if the student missed three days, he/she has three (consecutive) days to make up the work. Other situations may be discussed with me and will be looked at on a case-by-case basis; otherwise, *no late work is accepted*. **No exceptions.**