

AP English Literature and Composition Course Syllabus

Overview of AP English Literature and Composition Course

The course overview and objectives are based on guidelines established by The College Board in *The AP English Course Description*. This college-level course requires high performance, a challenging work load, and commitment to extensive work outside of the classroom. The choice of texts is representative of the authors list found in *The AP English Course Description*. In addition, the state AP English IV course description requires a survey of British and World authors. Consequently, authors chosen also fulfill this requirement. (American authors are the focus of a pre-requisite 11th-grade survey course.) The focus of the course is on reading strategies to support critical analysis of literary texts in a variety of genres from the sixteenth century to the present day. Since the purpose of the course is for students to “deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure for their readers,” reading selections provide models for students’ own writing. Students are regularly assessed on finished written product, on-demand writing, homework, tests and quizzes, and response journals. The school system standard is a 7-point grading scale, ranging from an A to F. This course is taught in a one-semester block.

Core Texts:

Anaya, Rudolfo A. *Bless Me, Ultima*. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 1994.
Arp, Thomas R., and Greg Johnson. *Perrine’s Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense*. 9th ed. Boston: Thomson-Wadsworth, 2006.

Areas of Focus:

Writing About Literature, esp. Explication, Analysis, Documentation, Stance and Style

The Elements of Fiction, esp. Humor and Irony, Evaluating Fiction

The Elements of Poetry: Denotation and Connotation, Imagery, Figurative Language,

Tone, Musical Devices, Meaning and Idea, Pattern, Evaluating Poetry

The Elements of Drama: Tragedy and Comedy, Realistic and Non-Realistic Drama

Beowulf. Trans. Burton Raffel. New York: New American Library-Signet, 1999.

Bronte, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Canterbury Tales*. Trans. Neville Coghill. New York: Penguin Putnam, 1977.

Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*. New York: Signet, 1997.

Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*. New York: Random House Publishing, 1995.

Foster, Thomas C. *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*. New York: HarperCollins Publishing, 2003.

Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*. New York: Penguin Group, 1999.

Peterson, Linda H., Gen. Ed. *The Norton Reader: An Anthology of Nonfiction*. Shorter 11th ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2004.

Price, Marie, Ed. *Elements of Literature: Essentials of British and World Literature*.

Sixth Course. Austin, TX: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 2005.

Shakespeare, William. *King Lear*. New York: Washington Square Press-Folger Shakespeare Library, 1992.

Supplemental Texts:

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. New York: Penguin Books, 2005.

Beckett, Samuel. *Waiting for Godot*. New York: Grove Press, 1982.

Bronte, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. New York, Penguin Books, 2006.

Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Crime and Punishment*. Trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. New York: Everyman’s Library, 1993.

Faulkner, William. *As I Lay Dying*. New York: Vintage, 1991.

Huxley, Aldous. *Brave New World*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1989.

Ibsen, Henrik. *An Enemy of the People*. Trans. Arthur Miller. New York: Penguin, 1979.

Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesmen*. New York: Penguin, 1977.

Orwell, George. 1984. New York: New American Library-Signet, 1977.

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. New York: Washington Square Press-Folger Shakespeare

Library, 1992.
----. *Macbeth*. New York: Washington Square Press-Folger Shakespeare Library, 1992.
Wilder, Thornton. *Our Town*. New York: HarperCollins Publishing Group, 2003.
Williams, Tennessee. *A Streetcar Named Desire*. New York: The Penguin Putnam Group, 1975.

Resources:

College Board AP Central. AP English Literature and Composition Course Description. 2006. 13 July 2006. <<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/>>.
Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6th ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2004.
Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*. 6th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007.
Sebranek, Patrick, et al. *Writers Inc: Student Handbook for Writing and Learning*. Wilmington, MA: WRITE SOURCE-Houghton Mifflin, 2001.
Trimmer, Joseph F., and Maxine Hairston. *The Riverside Reader*. 4th ed. Princeton: Houghton Mifflin, 1993.
Yagelski, Robert P. and Robert K. Miller. *The Informed Argument*. 6th ed. Boston: Thomson-Wadsworth: 2004.

Recursive Strategies:

Reading and Analysis: Although there is no required reading list for the AP English Literature and Composition course, students focus on both poetry and prose analysis. Students must read actively, deliberately and thoroughly. Selected texts require close reading in order to understand and interpret the ways writers use language to provide the highest effect on their readers. Students must learn to invest the time needed to appreciate and understand a work's complexity, to absorb richness of meaning, and to analyze how meaning is embodied in a particular literary form through literary devices such as figurative language and symbolism. Reflection on social and historical values underlying a text is also necessary for in-depth interpretation and analysis. Close reading is reinforced through individual student experience, textual interpretation, and evaluation of the literature. Interpretation involves focus on the way an author makes structural and stylistic choices to create tone and reveal theme. **Grammar and Syntax:** AP standards focus on review of the conventions of language by employing appropriate grammar and mechanics, utilizing a variety of sentence structures, including appropriate use of coordination and subordination in order to demonstrate mastery of standard written English and to exhibit stylistic maturity. Instruction focuses on the authorial choices of syntactical and stylistic devices to establish purpose, meaning and the desired effect on the reader. Students analyze authors' uses of transition, repetition, parallelism, and other emphatic techniques, with the objective of transferring these skills to their own writing. Grammar and syntax is infused with analysis of literature and effective writing techniques.

Writing: Ongoing writing instruction focuses on the critical analysis of literature, teaches and requires students to write in a variety of forms, including informational, analytical, and argumentative essays. Critical analysis is the primary writing focus of the course, with some well constructed creative writing to facilitate student understanding of how literature is written from the inside out. These assignments are designed to deepen understanding and appreciation of literary artistry, while promoting a transfer to the student's own development of style and voice. Writing to understand a literary work may involve textual annotation, free writing activities, journal entries, and response/reaction papers. Students engage in close reading of texts as stimuli to analyze and interpret in written products. Written analysis will also focus on language and structure as employed by an author to establish purpose and the desired effect on the reader. Writing to evaluate literary texts includes making and explaining inferences about its artistry and exploring underlying contextual social and cultural values. Such analysis lends itself to interpretive, analytical, and argumentative writing products. Instructional strategies include emphasis on writing as an organic process, developing and organizing ideas in clear, coherent, and persuasive language, and balancing generalization with specific evidence in both extended formal analyses and timed in-class responses. Evaluation of process and product is given through self-assessment, peer review, and instructor feedback.

Vocabulary: Throughout the course, students draw on foundational vocabulary as they build AP-level expertise with vocabulary related to literary and rhetorical analysis. Instructional strategies include direct instruction of college-level terminology, as well an expectation of students' application to analytical reading and writing.

Course Plan

Unit Focus	Essential Questions	Representative Print and Non-Print Texts	Projected Learning Activities
Ongoing grammar and vocabulary study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does a writer—whether professional or student—make the right choices of syntax and diction to create the intended effect upon his/her audience? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student essays Literary works throughout the course Non-fiction essays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis charts of diction and syntax choices in target readings. Interpretation of the effects of these choices on tone, purpose, and theme of the work as a whole
Ongoing rhetorical analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does a writer—whether professional or student—make choices of organization and evidence that appeal to <i>logos</i>, <i>pathos</i>, and <i>ethos</i>? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student essays Literary works throughout the course Non-fiction essays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis charts of organization and evidence Interpretation of the logic of progression, the balance of generalization and specific evidence, and the clarity and coherence of the essay as a whole
Co-curricular Round-Robin Readings (2 weeks of instructional time, given at intervals throughout course)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does an author's choices of literary form, strategies, and devices manipulate the reader to accept the author's universal purpose? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dostoevsky, Crime and Punishment Ellison, Invisible Man Golding, Lord of the Flies Ibsen, An Enemy of the People Shakespeare, King Lear Williams, A Streetcar Named Desire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal reading response journals responding to personal reactions to text while reading, and noting evidence of the use of an assigned literary device. A Blackboard Discussion Board is useful here. Individual formal written analyses of the relationship of a literary element to the work as a whole. Each student in the collaborative group focuses on a different literary device (symbol, figurative language, tone, imagery), so that the group as a whole collects evidence on all. Collaborative presentations reflecting a synthesis of student understanding of the connections between authorial purpose, authorial choices of

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenge Code (1½ weeks) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shakespeare, Hamlet or Macbeth • Hughes, “Cross” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative analysis of the relationship of sociohistorical context to the definition of heroism in a work of literature • Argumentative response to Routh’s assertion of the literary value of the Beowulf epic • Timed responses for sample AP multiple choice questions and analysis of response • Timed responses for sample AP essay questions and analysis of rhetorical techniques • Rubric-based teacher formative and summative evaluation on all thinking and writing assignments.
<p>Unit II: Affecting Change A. Revealing the Irony of Love</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Romantic Code (1½ weeks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the influence of the medieval romance tradition domesticate the heroic ideal? • How does satiric tone reveal the complementary emotions of pleasure and pain of romantic love? • How do authorial choices of tone, voice, and persona rescue the audience from the emotional despair of love? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chaucer, Canterbury Tales • Selected poems by Raleigh, Shakespeare, Herrick, Donne, Bronte, Tennyson, Browning, MacLeish, and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the connections between the context, literary form, and purpose in selected works • Timed responses for sample AP essay • questions and analysis of rhetorical techniques • Chart Assertion-Evidence-Commentary in texts • Narrative response to a fine art print • Rubric-based peer review and student-led writing conferences during formative process • Rubric-based teacher formative and summative evaluation
<p>B. Exposing the Failings of Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Moral Code (2½ weeks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the codes of heroism and romance “ripe” for satire? • How does an author use elements of satire in order to foment social change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -current political cartoons • -current <i>Opinion</i> articles • Excerpts from • -current satiric oped columnists • -current film and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timed responses for sample AP essay questions and analysis of rhetorical techniques • Self-analysis of student writing to focus on rhetorical analysis of diction and syntax choices for maximum

		<p>TV media, such as that by Michael Moore, The Simpsons, Jon Stewart</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swift, "A Modest Proposal" • Swift, excerpts from Gulliver's Travels • Selected satiric poems by writers such as Martial, La Fontaine, Blake, Burns, Soyinka, • Moliere, Tartuffe 	<p>argumentative effect on peer and teacher readers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-print satiric response to current social problem (song, artwork, graphics, performance...)
<p>Unit III: The Nature of Good and Evil (3 weeks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we make moral choices? • What is the definition of good? Of evil? • Are good and evil absolute or relative concepts? • What happens when moral systems collide? • What is the difference between ignorance, sin, and crime? • Is inaction as morally wrong as evil action? • What is the relationship between form and context in revealing the author's theme about good and evil? • Is all literature by nature didactic? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stoppard, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead • Orwell, 1984 OR • Huxley, Brave New World • Milton, Paradise Lost, "Book I" • Orwell, "Shooting An Elephant" • Coleridge, "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" • Shaffer, Equus • Fussell, "Thank God for the Atom Bomb" • Machiavelli, from The Morals of the Prince • Levin, "A Case for Torture" • Ivins, "Get a Knife, Get a Dog, But Get Rid of Guns" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles on similar topics with opposing viewpoints • Other essays and poems • Summaries of opposing viewpoints articles • Persuasive essay developed into persuasive speech arguing the morality of a controversial action • Timed responses for sample AP multiple choice questions and analysis of response • Timed responses for sample AP essay questions and analysis of rhetorical techniques
<p>Unit IV: The Role of Culture and Context on Authorial Perspective (2 weeks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do social norms of cultural eras change the perspective of the writer? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three to five works on the same thematic topic drawn from varying historical/cultural periods • One original creative work on the same thematic topic from the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-designed end-of-course synthesis project • components: comparison of treatments of a similar thematic topic from the authorial point of view of differing socio-cultural periods

		<p>student's perspective of current American mores</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One non-print text of student's choice on same thematic topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comparison of tones and purposes, including satire, didacticism, choices of humor • literary analysis with a literature-to-self connection through student creative writing • products: student's creative writing; written essay; multi-media oral presentation
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