

AP English Course Overview

****Summer Requirements Highlighted****

The AP English Literature and Composition course is designed and taught thematically with an emphasis on core readings along with modern and contemporary selections that illuminate and expand upon a variety of themes. AP English Literature and Composition closely follows the requirements described in the AP English Literature and Composition Course and Exam Description (CED), including the fundamentals of literary analysis and introductory college composition.

Each week students discuss and engage in a variety of writing activities focusing on argumentation, interpretation, analysis, rhetorical strategies, exposition, structure, and style. Students read and study a variety of novels, plays, poems, and short stories from the 16th century to the present. In addition to approved novels, students read shorter works and drama from Prentice Hall Literature: The British Tradition Perrine's Literature: Structure, Sound, & Sense.

The course focuses on the experience of literature, the interpretation of literature, the evaluation of literature, and writing to develop stylistic maturity and sophistication. Students practice their writing via numerous timed essays, which are revised several times, as well as longer essays that require outside research and MLA formatting. Students also practice oral communication skills, through poetry presentations, regular classroom discussions and acting as discussion facilitators.

Student Practice

Throughout each unit, Topic Questions from AP Classroom will be provided to help students check their understanding. The Topic Questions are especially useful for confirming understanding of difficult or foundational topics before moving on to new content or skills that build upon prior topics. Topic Questions can be assigned before, during, or after a lesson, and as in-class work or homework. Students will get rationales for each Topic Question that will help them understand why an answer is correct or incorrect, and their results will reveal misunderstandings to help them target the content and skills needed for additional practice.

At the end of each unit or at key points within a unit, Personal Progress Checks will be provided in class or as homework assignments in AP Classroom. Students will get a personal report with feedback on every topic, skill, and question that they can use to chart their progress, and their results will come with rationales that explain every question's answer. One to two class periods are set aside to re-teach skills based on the results of the Personal Progress Checks.

Writing Obligations

In-class writing: Timed writing assignments are given approximately every two to three weeks. Topics usually arise from the readings and relate to questions of character, setting,

structure, narration, figurative language, and literary analysis. Sometimes, these focus on works not previously studied in class, such as those found on the AP poetry and prose question prompts.

Essays

Student essays are two to four pages in length. All essays prepared outside of class must be typed. Students are expected to submit their thesis statements two weeks prior to the due date. Thesis statements are based on student choices of any of the literature studied within the marking period. This critical essay challenges the student to develop a sophisticated literary argument about a selected work. The student may focus on a thematic topic, but the essay should also emphasize the effect of one to two literary elements and techniques. A first draft is typically due one week prior to the due date. Drafts are returned with suggestions and comments that are expected to be incorporated in the final draft. Individual writing conferences will be arranged on a case-by-case basis. Essays are evaluated on their strength of argument, depth of literary analysis, originality of thought, style, and mechanics.

Essay Revisions

Students submit drafts to the instructor on a regular basis, as well as participate in peer revision and editing reviews. Longer essays are revised at least once, and Essay #2 must be revised at least twice. Students may schedule revision conferences with the instructor at any time.

Literature Reviews

For each novel and drama studied in the course, students must complete a review sheet. This review sheet requires that students write on the following topics: main characters, minor characters, main settings, plot, two symbols and references, style, author's dominant philosophy, and four quotations that are representative of the work as a whole. These reviews are valuable in preparing students for in class writing and exams, as well as for the AP English Literature and Composition exam in May. Literature Review sheets are due on the reading completion date of each work. (Credit or no credit)

Quizzes

There are approximately five unannounced reading quizzes per semester. Midterm Exams: Students take midterm exams at the end of quarters 1 and 3. These exams consist of timed essay responses. As with all timed essays, scoring will be based on the AP English Literature and Composition six-point rubric for the relevant free response question. Students will practice using these rubrics to score sample essays, as well their own and peers' essays.

Final Exams

Students take final exams at the end of quarters 2 and 4. These exams consist of timed essay responses with some multiple-choice questions from the

AP Classroom Question Bank.

Oral Obligations

Students lead one formal class discussion during the year following a modified Socratic Seminar format. Students present/facilitate a literature discussion on a work that the class has been reading in the course. The instructor presents a list of reading assignments at the beginning of the year, and students will sign up for a facilitation date.

The student's primary goal is to orchestrate a rich, fruitful discussion. Students read the selection and then create thought-provoking questions or "talking points" to guide, nurture, and stimulate what in rural Ireland is called "craic," or "a good chat," one of the most valued of all social skills. Students turn in a typed outline of their discussion plan and questions prior to the presentation. Being a discussion leader does not mean one has to be a class expert on the selection or guide students to a particular interpretation. Rather, the facilitator's role will be to ask questions and follow-up questions, bring up troubling issues, keep the conversation going, and generally ignite and extend sophisticated thinking. Students are evaluated on their preparation, ability to engage the class, quality of questioning techniques, and appropriate use of the time requirement (45 minutes). Poetry Recitations: Students memorize 40 lines of poetry once each semester and provide a brief synopsis of the poem, including an explanation of how the poem's structure contributes to the development and relationship of ideas in the poem prior to their recitation. Poetry recitations are staggered throughout the course and students sign up for recitation dates.

Other Requirements (Including Summer Reading & Assignments)

These include participation in class discussions, two summer reading texts (which may be a combination of a novel, short stories, and/or a drama) and accompanying assignments, and a summer Biblical allusion assignment. Summer assignments are due upon entering the class on the first day.

Class discussions are conducted in the Socratic Seminar format. Students are expected to regularly contribute their thoughts and impressions of writing and literature. We write. A lot. Students engage in the writing process through writing thesis statements, paragraphs, and full-length essays that incorporate textual evidence and commentary. Students have multiple opportunities to revise their writing.

We frequently score student samples from previous AP English Literature and Composition exams using the six-point rubrics. We review and discuss the rubrics, and students score essays individually and in groups. In addition, students are required to locate model sentences that demonstrate the accurate use of literary terms, effects of terms, supporting quotations, and overall sophistication. Students are also required to locate sentences in their own essays that require revision and use the high-scoring sample essays as models for revisions. We also use these samples in conjunction with the

students' own writing to improve writing technique, vocabulary development, variety of sentence structure, use of transitions, and effective organization.

We use Nancy Dean's Voice Lessons on a regular basis at the beginning of class to informally write about elements such as diction, tone, syntax, use of detail, voice, and imagery. CR7 Students work on these assignments individually, in small groups, and as a class.

Practice multiple-choice questions from both the PPCs and Question Bank on AP Classroom are given regularly especially as we get closer to the AP English Literature and Composition exam in May.

Required Texts and Materials

In AP English Literature and Composition, I recommend that students purchase their own novels so that they may write in their books as we probe and analyze them. Kindle editions are considered but must receive instructor approval prior to use. The school library checks out novels to all students who require them. If using school editions, students need to keep sticky notes in the texts for regular annotation during reading.

Preliminary list of novels, dramas, and texts

For Summer Reading pick two novels/plays from the following list. The rest we will read in class.

Native Son, Wright

Macbeth, Shakespeare

Frankenstein, Shelley

*The Glass Menagerie, Tennessee Williams

(*The Glass Menagerie is an older play that does contain some language that should not be used, but is a College Board required text. For these same reasons, we have chosen not to have students read the Catcher in the Rye, also required by the College Board.)

Anthologies

Perrine's Literature: Structure, Sound, & Sense

Prentice Hall Literature: The British Tradition

Short stories will include the following among others

"The Necklace," Guy de Maupassant; "The Pardoner's Tale" from The Canterbury Tales, Chaucer; "Interpreter of Maladies," Lahiri; "Desiree's Baby," Chopin; "Where Are You Going, Where Have you Been?" Oates; "The Under Graham Railroad Box Car Set" from Five-Carat Soul, McBride; "Geese," Packer; "Battle Royal," Ellison; "A Good Man is Hard to Find," O'Connor; "The Tell-Tale Heart," Poe

Poetry selections will include the following among others

"That Time of Year," Shakespeare; "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night," Thomas;

“The Man He Killed,” Hardy; “Dulce et Decorum Est,” Owen; “Crossing the Bar,” Tennyson; Psalms; “Out, Out –“ Frost; “The Author to Her Book,” Bradstreet; “Paradise Lost” (excerpts), Milton; “Convergence of the Twain,” Hardy; “The Chimney Sweeper” (1789) and “The Chimney Sweeper” (1793), Blake; “Much Madness is Divinest Sense,” Dickenson; “Those Winter Sundays,” Hayden; “On Her Loving Two Equally,” Behn; “Digging,” Heaney; “For Julia, In the Deep Water,” Morris; “To a Daughter Leaving Home,” Pastan; “My Last Duchess,” Browning

Note: In addition to the works studied in AP English Literature and Composition, works from a broader range of time periods are studied in prerequisite courses.