

AP Literature and Composition
Syllabus
University City High School
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Course Description: Advanced Placement Literature and Composition is a college-preparatory course designed for college bound students who plan to take the AP Exam. In preparing students to take the exam, the teacher will select reading materials from a variety of sources and genres that reflect the rigor of an introductory college-level English course. Daily instruction, discussion, and writing assignments will focus on identification and analysis of rhetorical devices and strategies employed by writers to affect (and effect) meaning. Written communications will include both informal and formal responses to literature and at least one major paper per quarter. Students will be assessed on how well they use the language of rhetoric in analysis of texts, and their ability to produce college-level compositions (a 7 or higher on the College Board's 9 point scoring guide—*see attached*).

Objectives:

1. Prepare and strongly encourage students to take the AP Examination (8 May- 8:00 am)
2. Expose students to the rigors and demands of a college-level English course.
3. Enrich student's skill in identifying the variety of rhetorical devices and strategies chosen by writers of various genres (novel, short story, essay, and poetic forms).
4. Develop the student's ability to articulate and write about the rhetorical effects of a writer's choices across all genres.
5. Inspire and challenge the students to effectively use these rhetorical devices in their own essays and creative writing.
6. Challenge the students to read closely and synthesize across texts critical ideas, strategies, structures, and techniques used.
7. Provide students with opportunities to practice a variety of techniques used in discussion of texts and in the writing process.
8. Train the student how to take the AP Exam, and use AP Holistic Scoring Rubric on self and peer evaluation. (www.collegeboard.com)
9. Nurture each student's critical thinking ability.
10. Offer additional assistance to struggling students on an as-needed basis.

Projected Reading:

Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*; Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*; Bronte, *Jane Eyre*; Chopin, *The Awakening*; Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*; Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*; Ellison, *Invisible Man*; Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*; Foster, *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*; Gibbons, *Ellen Foster*; Hesse, *Siddhartha*; Joyce, *Dubliners & Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*; Kafka, *Metamorphosis*; Melville, *Billy Budd*; Morrison, *Beloved*; Shakespeare, *Hamlet*; Shelley, *Frankenstein*; and other novels, plays, short stories, essays, and poetry as deemed necessary.

Textbook: *Responding to Literature* (Judith Stanford, ed.)

Instructional Methods: Socratic Seminars, Large and Small Group Discussions, Peer Response, Smart Board Presentations, Individual Presentations, One-on-One Conferences with Teacher, Portfolios

Grading:

Grades do NOT reflect your intelligence, potential, or worth as a human being. Focus on LEARNING as much as you can, which will be the true reflection of your achievement.

- ☑ All formal writing, whether processed or timed, will be graded on the AP writing scale.
- ☑ Quick-writes, journals, and other informal writing will be graded according to content and/or completion.
- ☑ Quizzes, tests, and other objective assessments will be graded on accuracy.
- ☑ Discussion will be graded on participation.

Term Grading:

70% Summative

30% Formative

Explanation of Letter Grades:

“A” is the highest academic grade possible, an honor grade which is not automatically assigned to essays that rank highest in the course, but one that is reserved for accomplishment that is truly distinctive and demonstrably outstanding. It represents superior mastery of the assignment, and is a grade that demands a very high degree of understanding as well as originality or creativity as appropriate to the nature of the task. Student works independently with unusual effectiveness, and often takes the initiative in seeking new knowledge outside of class.

“B” is a grade that denotes achievement considerably above acceptable standards. Good mastery of course material is evident and student performance demonstrates a high degree of originality, creativity, or both. Student works well independently and often demonstrates initiative. Analysis, synthesis, and critical expression are considerably above average.

“C” indicates a satisfactory degree of attainment and is the acceptable standard for passing a class. It is the average grade that may be expected of a student of average ability who gives to the work a reasonable amount of time and effort. This grade implies familiarity with the content of the course and acceptable mastery of course material. Student displays some evidence of originality/creativity, or both. Student works independently on an acceptable level and completes all requirements in the course.

“D” denotes a limited understanding of the subject matter, meeting only the minimum requirements for passing the assignment. It signifies work which in quality and/or quantity falls below the average acceptable standard for the course. There is little or no evidence of originality, creativity, or working independently.

“F” indicates unsatisfactory attainment and an inadequate understanding of the assignment.

PLEASE NOTE the difference between “B” and “A” work: The latter (“A”) calls attention to itself; it is the kind of work that mirrors the qualities of examples provided by the teacher. It merits high marks in all areas of the scoring rubric. The former (“B”) is work of considerable merit, but does not stand out as an especially exceptional piece of work. If you get a “B” or even a “B-”, please remember that this is not an insult or an indication of failure in any way. These grades signal above average work and successful completion of the task.

If you are not satisfied with a grade on any assignment, please make an appointment for extra help so I can help you with strategies to improve your skills.

Academic Integrity:

Plagiarism: When you plagiarize, the person you are really cheating is yourself. A student who submits plagiarized work will receive an automatic ZERO, a referral, and a phone call home. We will be discussing plagiarism in class, especially how to avoid plagiarism when you are writing formal papers.

Cheating: Cheating is using the thoughts/ideas/answers of someone else and presenting them as your own. Cheating can take the form of asking someone for answers, talking during a test, all forms of copying and plagiarism, using technology to look up or exchange answers, etc. Cheating will result in an automatic ZERO and notification of your principal and your parents/guardian.

Absences & Make-up Work:

If you are going to be absent—or have been absent—from class, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to:

1. Turn in any work due during your absence on the day of your return to school.
Please note: If you are absent the day a major assignment is due, you will be required to e-mail the assignment to Ms. Halter by the time it is due. Failure to do so may result in a grade penalty unless other arrangements have been made in advance. Exceptions: Hospitalization of the student or immediate family (verification required).
2. Obtain any work missed during your absence upon the day of your return to school (at the latest).
3. Turn in your make-up work on an agreed-upon date after your return*; be sure to label the top with “ABSENT.” Failure to turn in your work in a timely manner will negatively affect your grade.
*I will normally give you the same number of days that you have missed. In other words, if you were out three days, I will give you three days to make up the work.
4. **If your absence is unexcused, you will not be able to earn a grade for missed work.**

LATE WORK:

Students will be expected to complete and turn in all assignments on time. **Late work will only be accepted in the case of an excused absence.**

EXCUSED ABSENCES/TARDIES INCLUDE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- You are not in school and a parent/guardian has verified your absence.
- You are on a school-sanctioned field trip.
- Through no fault of your own, you are unavoidably detained by a principal or other adult in the building.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES/TARDIES INCLUDE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Making up/finishing a test/quiz/whatever in another class
- Attending Student Council meetings or any other school/club activity
- Showing up after the bell has sounded with no “excused” reason (See above.).

NOTE:

If a student misses class on a regular basis, I will set up a meeting (with parent/guardian, counselor, principal, and student) to come up with an attendance plan that will ensure the student's regular attendance and future success in AP Literature.

Homework: Homework will be assigned on a daily basis, and is due at the beginning of each class period unless otherwise noted. Expect an average of 60 minutes of homework per night.

Other Class Procedures and Policies:

Since the materials and assignments are reflective of the demands placed on college-level students, AP Literature may not be right for everyone. The workload will be intense, reading assignments will be taxing, and I will not accept work that does not meet the minimum criteria. Furthermore, I expect all students to behave as responsible, respectful, and serious students and observe the following classroom procedures:

- ☐ **It is your responsibility** to carefully, thoughtfully, and conscientiously complete all reading and writing assignments by the due dates. Much depends on your readiness and hard work. In some cases, reading the assignments several times is a must. If you arrive unprepared or having only "skimmed" the material, you will not be able to fully participate in the discussion. If you are chronically unprepared, I will talk to your counselor about moving you to another English class. *NOTE: Failure to read the assigned texts will likely result in a failing grade.*
- ☐ **You are expected to participate** meaningfully in discussions, workshops, and conferences. Class discussions will be graded based on participation. Chronic failing discussion grades will result in a phone call home and could affect your grade.
- ☐ **Assignments are required to be typed** unless otherwise instructed.
- ☐ **Attendance:** Being on time to class is crucial. Please make every effort to make that happen. Depending on whether or not your tardy is excused or unexcused (see previous page), you may or may not be permitted to make up missed work/quizzes. If you are late on a date where we have a major deadline (such as a formal paper or other major assignment), you run the risk of missing the deadline altogether if your tardy is unexcused.
- ☐ **It is your responsibility** to clarify readings, comments, and directions during class discussions or on-on-one meetings. Responsible students will arrive prepared and **will seek help before an assignment is due**. I will be available to assist you during Seminar and after school. Feel free to e-mail me if you have a question or need some clarification on any assignment. My standard policy is for you to reach out to me BEFORE it becomes an emergency.

THE COLLEGE BOARD AND THE AP TEST

- ☐ **The College Board website** (apcentral.collegeboard.com) is essential reading for any AP student. This site will help prepare you for the test and provide you with valuable AP information (such as how your potential college will award AP credit). Here, you can register for updates, take practice tests, and stay up-to-date on the latest AP news and tips.

- ☐ **The AP Test:** Although your score on the AP test has no bearing on your grade in this class, it is a major focus of the course. Students who enroll in AP Literature are expected to take the AP exam on 5 May 2021 at 8:00 a.m. The AP test is a three-hour test by the College Board and consists of a multiple-choice section and three hand-written literary analysis essays. The multiple-choice questions encourage and reward close reading. The essays challenge students to employ advanced analysis of literary pieces (prose, poetry, and free response) in a limited amount of time (40 minutes per essay). Your score may range from a 1 (Not recommended) to a 5 (Extremely well qualified), which will indicate how qualified you are in reading comprehension, literary analysis, and essay composition based on college-level literature. Nearly every university rewards high scores (4's and 5's) on this test with college credit. Some universities will even reward a score of a 3. I urge you to check the policies of your chosen college to see how credit will be awarded.