

A.P English Literature and Composition Syllabus (Organized by Units)

Overall Course Goals:

Students will understand how literature, even from centuries ago, relates to and enriches modern life.

Students will understand how writing reflects the level and complexity of their thinking; they will practice varying forms of writing to reach varying audiences.

Students will exam and discuss the universal “big questions” of human existence by exploring the themes of “human vs. human,” “humans vs. nature,” “humans vs. themselves,” and “humans vs. God.”

Students will develop the ability to discuss important issues and the ability to assume leadership roles within a group.

Students will be prepared to take and pass the AP exam in May.

Essential questions:

While the essential questions will vary from unit to unit, some overall ideas will guide the study.

How does literature connect us to both the past and the present?

How does literature affect or predict the future?

How does literature help us better connect and communicate with each other?

Major concepts and content:

A.P. English Literature and Composition is a college/university level course which will challenge your thinking and ability at a college / university level. You have the option of taking the A.P. English Literature and Composition Exam in May. A student who earns a 3 or better on the exam will receive college credit at most colleges and universities. It is important to check with your selected college or university for specific requirements. Regardless whether or not you elect to take the exam, extensive research has shown just taking the course increases student success at the post-secondary level.

Course Requirements:

Students will carefully read and analyze various literary texts.

Students will study the way writers use language to communicate important ideas.

Students will increase knowledge of literary structure, style, and themes, as well as the use of literary devices such as allusion, imagery, symbolism and tone.

Students will work with various genres and time periods (from the sixteenth to the twentieth century.) While this study will be broad in scope, a few selections will be studied in depth.

Students will focus on critical, rather than general, analysis and response through the writing of expository, analytical and argumentative essays. There will also be opportunity for original creative writing and peer reviewing.

Students will develop leadership ability by conducting class reviews, explaining texts, and presenting their work.

Required Texts and Materials

It is suggested that students obtain their own copies for various novels to be studied. Used paperback editions are just fine.

Major novels and plays:

The Tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmark. William Shakespeare (1601)

Pride and Prejudice. Jane Austen (1813)

Frankenstein. Mary Shelley. (1818)

Sister Carrie. Theodore Dreiser (1900)

Heart of Darkness. Joseph Conrad. (1902)

Crime and Punishment. Fyodor Dostoevsky. (1917)

Brave New World. Aldolfus Huxley. (1932)

Waiting for Godot. Samuel Becket (1949)

Christy. Catherine Marshall. (1967)

Poetry:

Selected Sonnets. William Shakespeare.

The Metaphysical poetry of John Donne (1600s)

“Brokenheart.” John Donne

“A Dialogue Between Body and Soul.” Andrew Marvell (1600s)

“Man.”

“Paradise Lost.” John Milton (1600s)

“Rime of the Ancient Mariner.” Samuel Coleridge

“Harlan Sewall.” Edgar Lee Masters (1916)

“Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock.” T.S. Elliot (1917)

“The Hollow Men.” T.S. Elliot (1925)

“Love on the Farm.” D.H. Laurence

“Eve to her Daughters.” Judith Wright (1960s)

“The Man Who Spilled Light.” David Wagoner
“Daddy.” Sylvia Plath
“The Landlady.” Margaret Atwood
“Some Foreign Letters.” Anne Sexton
Various Carl Sandberg “Chicago” poms.

Short Stories:

“The Yellow Wallpaper.” Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1899)
“The Demon Lover.” Elizabeth Bowen (1945)

Essays:

“Allegory of the Cave.” Plato
“Utopia.” Sir Thomas More (1516)
“Civility.”
“The Monster’s Human Nature.” Stephan Jay Gould (1996)
“The Search for Self.”

Other works as selected.

Activities:

Timed essays based on past AP Exam prompts
Essay assignments based on texts
Journaling / creative writing based on texts
In-depth literary analysis papers, focusing on various literary techniques.
Personal college / scholarship application essay
Extended research paper.
Literary circles and seminar discussions
In-depth reading check quizzes
Traditional and non-traditional tests

Course Sequence – Organized by Units of Study

There will be a variety of writing experiences. You can expect to write at least once a week, possibly more frequently. Writing will be carefully assessed in a holistic fashion, with particular emphasis on following prompt requirements. We will be striving to develop a mature writing style featuring a good command of varying sentence types.

All essay assignments will be evaluated against a grading rubric, which will be explained before you begin working. You will have the opportunity to rewrite the more important papers they are returned, in order to enhance your skills and improve your grade.

Scoring of essays will follow AP guidelines, which will be carefully explained to you. We will have mini grammar lessons on specific issues which crop up as we proceed. You

will be expected to demonstrate a good command of grammar, so expect to grow in your ability.

The College / Scholarship Essay

The purpose of this early writing assignment is to assist you in preparing a formal, typed, perfect essay suitable for college admission requirements or use, with modification, in applying for scholarships. You are encouraged to find and response to the actual essay prompts required by your chosen college or university. These will be drafted, submitted for critique, and rewritten until perfect. They will then be kept on file for your future use.

The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

Guiding Questions

How did the religious, cultural and personal beliefs of the Elizabethan age influence the literature of the era?

How does the character, the challenges, of Hamlet relate to problems of today's world, especially today's young people?

Why is Hamlet considered Shakespeare's greatest play?

Expectations

Students will demonstrate, via discussion and quizzes, an understanding of the impact of Henry VIII on his daughter Elizabeth, and how that influenced the era of Shakespeare.

Students will experience AP multiple-choice work via cuts "John of Gaunt" and "Richard III."

Students will write analytical essays based on the passage "Bassanio," as well as creative writing from the perspective of Hamlet and Ophelia. The assignment "Ophelia's Diary" will be peer reviewed, with opportunity to rewrite. Writing opportunities focus on analytical, expository and creative writing.

Students will do an in-depth study of the sonnet, to include analysis and writing of original sonnets. Along with this study, we shall look at the work of John Donne and other early poets.

Frankenstein

Guiding Questions

What does society owe the maimed, outcast, and rejected?

What factors influence human behavior? What role does nature / nurture play?

How do the ideas of Frankenstein relate to advances in today's technology?

Expectations

Students will read and annotate the extensive, insightful essay "The Monster's Human Nature" in preparation for writing an expository or persuasive essay comparing the popular Hollywood, Gothic monster tradition with Mary Shelley's actual novel. This essay will be critiqued and rewritten as needed.

Students will experience AP multiple-choice work via cuts from Frankenstein, Dracula and other gothic works.

Students will study the poems "Rime of the Ancient Mariner," "Paradise Lost," "Eve to Her Daughters," and "Daddy." Responses to poems will feature creative writing, multiple-choice work, and shorter essays.

Students will study and extensively discuss Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" and relate it to the search of the creature to "come out of the cave" and join human society. After the seminar, an analytical or persuasive essay will be written and presented for discussion.

Crime and Punishment

Guiding Questions

What constitutes a "superman" in human society?

How do Nietzsche's philosophy / worldview and traditional Western Judeo / Christian worldviews compare and contrast? How does this relate to today's current events?

How are symbols, archetypes, and allusions used in this novel?

Expectations

Students will read an excerpt from "Thus Spake Zarathustra," do analysis questions, and conduct an in-depth seminar on Nietzsche's thought.

Students will study several relevant Biblical stories, such as the Raising of Lazarus, and discuss how they relate to the novel.

Students will experience AP multiple-choice work via a cut from Moby Dick, as well as the poems "Body and Soul" and "Love on the Farm."

Students will analyze and answer questions based on the short story "The Yellow Wallpaper."

Reading check quizzes for this unit will consist of quotations and excerpts from the novel, requiring in-depth short essays. They will stress knowledge of symbolism, theme, tone, allusions and literary technique.

Heart of Darkness

Guiding Questions

What evil lurks in the heart of men?

How is symbolism/archetypes used in the novel?

What changes have taken place in society regarding colonialism / race relations since the writing of this novel?

Expectations

Students will do a dramatic, antiphonal reading of the poem “The Hollow Men.” They will then, in groups, develop and present an analysis of themes and literary devices used in the poem.

Students will experience AP multiple-choice work via a cut from a Graham Greene novel.

Students will do times, in-class essays using old AP tests prompts based upon the novel.

Students will do preparatory work and then conduct an in-depth seminar discussion regarding the nature of evil, incorporating themes in the novel.

Sister Carrie

Guiding Questions

How have opportunities for young women changed from Dreiser’s time to today?

What is the meaning of success?

How does one find fulfillment and happiness?

What is the affect of poverty and poor judgment both in Dreiser’s time and in today’s world?

Expectations

Students will study in-depth four of Carl Sandberg's "Chicago" poems and relate them via group presentations to the novel.

Students will experience AP multiple-choice work via poems such as "The Landlady," "Brokenheart," and "Man."

Students will write timed AP style essays using past AP exam prompts, as well as out of class essays related to themes of the novel.

Reading checks requiring in-depth thinking about themes, literary style, tone and diction will be given. These will be in a short answer / essay format.

Waiting for Godot

Guiding Questions

What are we waiting for in life?

To what extent are we personally responsible for our life's events?

Why has this absurd, existential, almost nonsensical play been to enduring and popular?

Expectations

Students will read the essay "The Search for the Self" and answer in-depth questions regarding the play, in preparation for reading/acting out "Waiting for Godot."

Students will actively read the play, using in-classroom staging and appropriate props. After each act, they will discuss the events thoroughly.

Students will do a teacher-guided, oral analysis of the poem "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufock." This will be followed by a timed, in-class essay based on an old, AP test prompt dealing with Pleasure and Disquietude.

Students will do a take-home essay based on an old AP test prompt dealing with the influence of a character who, while talked about, does not appear in the literary work. This essay will be subject to peer review and rewriting.

Jane Austen Unit

Guiding Questions

What are some customs of Austen's era which influence society today?

How important is a "good marriage" and how is it attained?

How is Austen's subtle, witty humor achieved?

Expectations

Students will view and discuss the film Emma in order to see and better understand the era and customs of Austen.

Students will experience AP multiple-choice work via a past AP exam cut from Emma, and from studying the poem "Some Foreign Letters."

Students will do a timed, in-class essay based on an old AP test prompt from Emma. This essay will be subject to peer review and rewriting.

Students will read the short essay "Civility" and conduct an in-depth seminar discussion about manners and mores.

Students will read the novel Pride and Prejudice.

Students will be assessed using reading check quizzes and traditional test.

Brave New World

Guiding Questions

What technology today is proving to be both harmful and helpful?

How does Huxley's imaginary world compare with today's?

What happens when traditional ways of understanding and belief clash with new, contemporary ways of understanding and belief?

How does the individual function and flourish in a regimented, conformity based society?

Expectations

Students will read excerpts from Sir Thomas More's book Utopia and then design their own "ideal world." These will be presented to the class.

Students will experience AP multiple-choice work via the poem "The Man Who Spilled Light."

Students will demonstrate creative thinking and writing by designing a "propaganda pamphlet" advertising their original Utopian world.

Students will research and present information on banned books and censorship, both past and current.

Christy

For a change of pace, we will read a modern American novel set in the mountains of western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. We will deal with life's "big questions." Things such as how we can best help others, why bad things happen to good people, and the nature of God or a higher power. We will also gain insight into Appalachian Mountain music and culture. This novel will provide excellent material for the writing of the Philosophy of Life term paper / extended essay.

Modern Prose and Poetry Unit

Students may choose a novel to read from the following, along with two companion poems that support / illuminate the novel. They will write an extended essay regarding the theme, literary techniques, and major issues featured in their selected novel, as well as explaining how the poems tie-in.

Choose from the following list:

All the King's Men, The Awakening, Catch 22, The Grapes of Wrath, Christy, The Great Gatsby, Of Mice and Men, The Poisonwood Bible, 1984, or a work of similar stature (to be approved by teacher.)

Samples of Required Work

Crime and Punishment Unit – Sample Reading Check Quiz



Reading Response Part IV

Respond to the following quotes and excerpts as requested. Show what you know. (4 pt. scale. Use separate paper so you have room to develop.)

1. "Tell your sister Marfa Petrovna remembered her in her will and left her three thousand roubles. That's absolutely certain...Avdotya will be able to receive the money in two or three weeks." (**Explain the circumstances surrounding / leading up to this bequest.**)
2. There was a woman called Resslerich...Svidrigailov had with her for a long while mysterious relations. She had a niece living with her, a deaf and dumb girl of perhaps not more than fourteen or fifteen. One day the girl was found hanging...the child had been

cruelly outraged by Svidrigailov...you heard, no doubt, the story of the servant Philip who died..." "I heard that this Philip hanged himself." "Quite so, but what drove him was ...Mr. Svidrigailov." **(Given your knowledge of the context and the excerpt, what are we finding about Mr. Svidrigailov's personality and values?)**

3. "Excuse me," said Luzhin"...point out one falsehood, show that you didn't throw away your money and there are not worthless persons in that family." "To my thinking," said Raskolnikov, "you are not worth the little finger of that unfortunate girl at whom you throw stones." "Would you let her associate with your mother and sister?" "I have done so...I made her sit down today with mother and Dounia." **(What are the circumstances surrounding this exchange? Luzhin and Raskolnikov are referring to whom or what?)**

4. ...her helpless position had been a great allurements. This creature would be slavishly grateful all her life and would humble herself in the dust before him...the charming, virtuous, educated woman might make his way easier...this rupture was an absurdity. **(Explain who is involved here and what has happened.)**

5. "Leave me, but don't leave them." Raskolnikov's burning and intent eyes grew more penetrating, piercing into his soul. Raszumihin started. Something strange passed between them...some idea, some hint, something awful, hideous, and suddenly understood on both sides. "Do you understand now?" said Raskolnikov. "Go back to them." **(What "commission" is being given here? What is the "understanding" Raszumihin grasps?)**

6. A minute later Sonia came in with the candle...the yellow, scratched and shabby wall-paper was black in the corners. It must have been damp in the winter. **(Comment on the recurrent symbolism here, relating it to former similar passages.)**

7. "Where did you get that [Bible]?" "Lizaveta brought it." "And haven't you been to church?" "I haven't been...do you go often?" "I was at church last week...I had a requiem service." "For whom?" "For Lizaveta. She was killed with an axe...we used to read together and talk. She will see God." **(Explain the significance of the above exchange, taking into consideration the people conversing.)**

8. "That is all about the raising of Lazarus," she whispered. The candle-end was flickering out in the battered candlestick, dimly lighting up in the room the murderer and the harlot who had been reading together the eternal book. **(Comment on the implications, symbolism and irony of this passage, keeping in mind the story of Lazarus.)**

9. "If I shut him up too soon, I should very likely be depriving myself of the means of getting further evidence against him. If I leave a man quite alone, if I don't touch him and don't worry him, but let him know or at least suspect that I know all about it and am watching him day and night, ...he'll be bound to lose his head. It's delightful. It's not merely that he has nowhere to run to, he is psychologically unable to escape me, he-he. Have you seen a moth round a candle?" **(Throughout this section, Porfiry is playing cat and mouse with Raskolnikov. Comment on Porfiry's methods.)**

10. "I am guilty! Mine is the sin! I am the murderer! I...am the murderer. Alyona Ivanovna and her sister Lizaveta Ivanovna, I...killed...with an axe. Darkness came over me." **(Surprise! Explain what is going on here and what is surprising / unexpected about this event.)**

Frankenstein Unit Sample Essay

In – Class & Take Home Essay

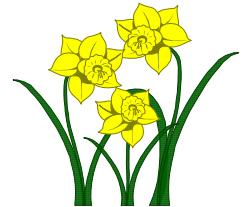
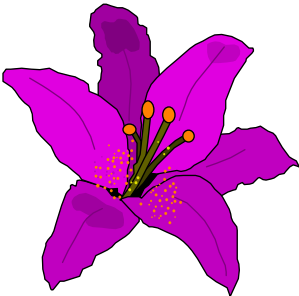
You are to begin your paper in class, with the understanding that you may finish it at home. Your essay will be submitted for peer review and grading (not necessarily by someone in this class!) Do a careful and competent job worthy of an Honors English student.

Prompt: Shelley’s novel Frankenstein is structured upon a series of five “frame stories” nestled one within the other. Further, each story’s characters speak a different native language. In your paper, first summarize each of the five stories. Tell which language is used primarily by the characters featured in that portion. Then, select two of the stories. Compare and contrast them as to theme, events and purpose served in the book.

Note the steps again:

1. Summarize the five stories
2. Give the primary languages for each story
3. Select two of the stories
4. Compare and contrast those two stories as to theme, events and purpose.

Evaluation: Paper will be evaluated based on completeness, development of the comparison/contrast (do you do both), structure (does your paper have a beginning, middle and conclusion), mechanics, style and overall interest. The peer reviewer will use short answer scale.



Hamlet Unit. Sample Creative Writing

I Am Ophelia...

Imagine yourself as Ophelia... think as she would think. Now, select three (3) events of her life to write diary entries about. Once you have selected the events and organized your details, write the following:

Dear Diary,

Entry One (1)

Dear Diary,

Entry Two (2)

Dear Diary,

Entry Three (3)

For each entry, make sure the situation is clearly explained (description), carefully analyzed as to significance or affect on Ophelia or those around her (analysis) and a future course of action (synthesis) Ophelia might contemplate in order to “fix” things.

Turn in when done.



I Am Ophelia
Scoring Rubric Peer Review

Use separate paper

1. Using the red pen, **read and mark your paper** for spelling and syntax errors.
2. Using the rubric below, **evaluate your paper** and **give it a score** (see scale below)

1. ___ Does it have three sections?

First Section:

2. The description of the situation begins with what line (copy first words):
3. The analysis section begins with what line (copy first words):
4. The synthesis (action Ophelia could take) begins with what line (copy first words):

Second Section:

5. The description of the situation begins with what line (copy first words):
6. The analysis section begins with what line (copy first words):

7. The synthesis (action Ophelia could take) begins with what line (copy first words):

Third Section:

8. The description of the situation begins with what line (copy first words):

9. The analysis section begins with what line (copy first words):

10. The synthesis (action Ophelia could take) begins with what line (copy first words):

11. Is each section developed with SPECIFIC details BASED ON THE TEXT?

Yes, a lot Somewhat A little Not much

12. Is the writing style complex and mature, with original diction?

Yes, very So-so Well, somewhat No, it's simplistic

13. Have literary devices and techniques been incorporated?

Yes, quite a few Somewhat No, not many I never thought of that!

14. My Score:

Scale: **9** **Head and shoulders above** what the average Honors English student will write

8/9 **Something special**, catches the attention as very mature, thoughtful writing

8 **Above average.** Shows care and thought. Originality evident

7/8 **Above average.** Shows thought, but not even in development or maturity of style

7 **Above average.** Shows effort, originality in spots, but lacks in some areas.

6/7 Getting into "good" range of the average Honors English student.

Interesting, but **not as developed** as the above papers.

6 **A typical, good** effort. Not bad, but **not unique** in a "stand out" way.

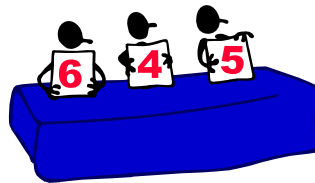
5 **Typical high school writing**

4 **Lacks** in some critical area, usually in development. Hits a few high spots and then uses lots of words that don't "say" much.

3 Oh, well – let's **do enough to get by**, maybe

2 Have you considered transferring out?

1 don't waste everyone's time!!!!!!!!!!



Jane Austen Unit Sample Reading Check Quiz.

Consider the letter of Darcy to Elizabeth. Based on what it reveals, prepare a “pro” and “con” paper addressing two views of Darcy. For the “pro” section, write a clear and coherent argument in Darcy’s defense. Back up what you say with specific information.

Then, take the other position and write a clear and coherent argument condemning Darcy. Again, back up what you say with specific information.

Try not to let your own opinions color your writing. Stay detached and objective, making both positions persuasive and logical.

Brave New World Unit Sample Poetry Study

The Man Who Spilled Light
Study Guide
[Use Separate Paper]

Grammar and Syntax

1. In line 7, what is the antecedent for the pronoun?
2. What purpose does the colon serve at the end of line 7?
3. List the alliterative words in lines 8 and 9.
4. Write down the simile in line 13.
5. Write down the consonance words in line 25.

Symbols and archetypes

6. Explain the archetypal implications of “light.”
7. Explain the archetypal implications of “shadow.”
8. Explain the connotation of the phrase “their backs to the wall.” [Line 19]
9. Explain the significance of “broken light.” [Line 28]
10. Speculate what is intended by the words “Egg light.” [Line 12]

Short Essay – Interpretations

In your own words, explain what is taking place in EACH stanza. Be sure to include such things as the THEME, tone, mood and outcome. Think POETICALLY!