

Advanced Placement Literature and Composition: Vision and Revision

Peak to Peak Secondary School, Room 260
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*never to rest and never to have; only to grow.
Always the beautiful answer who asks a more beautiful question*
e. e. cummings

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The College Board describes the ideal AP English Literature Course as engaging students “in the careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature.” This College Board certified Advanced Placement Literature and Composition class complies with the College Board’s requirements of providing literature, intellectual challenges and assessments consistent with a college level course. This class requires students to read actively, to write critically, and to think independently. In order to achieve this goal, students should expect an hour of reading, researching or writing each evening, and a substantial amount of summer reading. College credit or placement may be awarded based on the results of the national Advanced Placement Literature and Composition exam in May, so students will become prepared to demonstrate mastery of literary skills on this exam and in college.

Class time will focus on analyzing literary works and on critical writing. The course presupposes writing efficiency, but will focus on improving written analysis and will include an advanced study of grammar, writing fluency, persuasive techniques and vocabulary. We will use timed writing and formal writing which will require reflection and revision (using both peer response and teacher feedback.) We will also use creative forms to engage with texts, and explore interpretive models. Each unit will require students to create a study guide for each text (format online) to facilitate review for May’s exam, timed writing on a prompt from a past Advanced Placement exam, and multiple choice assessments asking students to identify and analyze literary techniques. Other requirements include research, class presentations, formal papers, creative writing (especially poetry) and interpretive acting exercises.

Purchasing copies of all class texts is recommended; all packets (short story, poetry and critical articles) will be distributed in class. Scholarship money for these books is available, and our school library has copies of all books. Critical reading **requires** that the student read with a pencil in hand, annotating the text; owning books allows students to make notes, mark passages and record questions. Plus, many of these texts will be used in college! If students do not want to own the books, Post-it notes will be used to annotate the text as you read.

Summer Reading List:

- *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Bronte
- *Crime and Punishment*, Fyodor Dostoevsky
- Short stories (“Barbie-Q” by Sandra Cisneros, “Bartleby the Scrivener” by Herman Melville)

These two novels will be used extensively in Unit One, and the short stories provide perspectives and examples that we will use as the basis for study and discussion. Each student needs to complete a study guide (available online at www.peaktopeak.org) for each novel. These study guides require students to analyze these texts in writing, and to familiarize themselves with AP open question writing prompts from past exams. Because the study guides ask students to track themes and new vocabulary, students should create guides *as* they read (not after!) Please bring completed study sheets on the first day of class.

Class Reading List:

- *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Zora Neale Hurston
- *As I Lay Dying*, William Faulkner
- *Beloved*, Toni Morrison
- *Ceremony*, Leslie Marmon Silko
- *First Indian on the Moon*, Sherman Alexie
- *White Noise*, Don DeLillo
- *Waiting for Godot*, Samuel Beckett
- Poems by Cummings, Hughes, Dickinson, Eliot, Shakespeare and others (provided)
- Critical articles by Baudrillard, Cunningham, Hassan, Woolf and others (provided)
- Short stories by Cisneros, Ferré, Calvino, Hemingway and others (provided.)

Supplemental Materials:

As a way of analyzing literary possibilities and making thematic connections, students will also listen to songs, consider paintings and photographs, analyze architecture, read primary source historical documents, evaluate news clips, and connect brief film clips (from movies such as *The Hours*, *Beloved*, *Blade Runner*, *Young Frankenstein* and various versions of *Hamlet*) to thematic and text-centered discussions.

Unit One: Critical Writing Intensive

- **Objective:** Use the 6 Traits of Writing model to assess, to improve and to compose essays (including the all-important college essay.) Direct instruction and review of 6 Traits writing models including sophisticated usage, advanced grammar, sophisticated syntax and using style to further purpose, especially with the high stakes college essay.
- **Texts:**

Peak to Peak's *Writer's Handbook*

summer reading novels (*Crime and Punishment*, Fyodor Dostoevski, *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Bronte, and short stories)

various speeches from plays by William Shakespeare

"How to Tell a True War Story," Tim O'Brien (provided)

Past College Essays

- **Assessment:** Three timed essays, reading assessment, and three drafts of the college essay, including a final revision shaped by instructor feedback (addressing voice, content and grammar)

Unit Two: Self and Society

- **Objective:** Incorporate historical information, literary criticism, and poetic terms into sophisticated close-readings. Recognize and analyze a range of literary allusions.

Understand meter, scansion and sophisticated literary technique as well as components of the Elizabethan age.

- **Texts:**

Hamlet, William Shakespeare

“The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” T.S. Eliot

Allusion packet (descriptive list of literary, historical and biblical allusions)

- **Assessment:** Timed writing, formal close-reading essay (peer response, self-score and instructor scored drafts), interpretive performance of *Hamlet* scene, literary terms and allusions assessment.

Unit Three: Voice and (re)Memory

- **Objective:** Use SOAPStone analysis to fine-tune critical analysis skills, with a focus on the power and purpose of literary voice. Employ multiple choice strategies, explain literary allusions, and utilize advanced critical vocabulary. Connect historical facts and primary documents (Fugitive Slave Law, Margaret Garner, Vietnam war) to fictional ghost stories about history. How can literature address historical issues, in a combination of fact and fiction?

- **Texts:**

Beloved, Toni Morrison

The First Indian on the Moon, Sherman Alexie

“How to Tell a True War Story,” O’Brien (part 2)

Copy of Fugitive Slave Law and original newspaper story about Margaret Garner, Vietnam news clips

- **Assessment:** Formal literary essay (3 drafts, feedback from peer and instructor), allusion and literary terms test

Unit Four: Literary Circles

- **Objective:** Perform sophisticated literary analysis on how setting and overall structure of a literary text creates meaning. Articulate how form shapes meaning in a Modernist text, and apply an understanding of cultural and social concerns to an analysis of a text.

- **Texts:**

Waiting for Godot, Samuel Beckett

Their Eyes Were Watching God, Zora Neale Hurston

“Looking for Zora,” Alice Walker

- **Assessment:** Three timed essays, setting analysis project, Beckett performance.

Unit Five: Self, Mirrors and Modernism

- **Objective:** Integrate social and psychological modes of interpreting text and character. Apply understanding of Modernism to architecture, art, novels and film. Begin to understand how Postmodern art can re-vision Modernist forms.

- **Texts:**

- *As I Lay Dying*, William Faulkner

Selections from *Mrs. Dalloway*, Virginia Woolf (provided)

film clip from *The Hours*

“First Love” by Michael Cunningham (provided)

- **Assessment:** Timeline of literary periods, literary period test, timed essay, creative response to Modernism, group teaching presentations.

Unit Six: Poetry and Persuasion

- **Objective:** Recognize poetic forms, and interpretation of poetry, persuasive techniques and logical fallacies. Utilize a sophisticated vocabulary of literary techniques, form and meter to evaluate and describe poetry. Write brilliant comparative thesis statements and back them up with persuasive textual evidence.
- **Texts:**

Poetry packet (provided)

- **Assessment:** Position paper for class debate, timed poetry essay, poetic terms test. The timed essays will ask students to write for understanding and analysis, demonstrating use of specified terms and analyzing use of meter, figurative language and tone.

Unit Seven: (Re)vision and Postmodern Poetics

- **Objectives:** Understand Postmodernism and its relationship to Modernism, use sophisticated critical vocabulary to express this relationship, analyze and use multimedia sources critically.
- **Texts:**

Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative, Sherman Alexie's "Captivity"

White Noise, Don DeLillo

The Matrix(film)

Jean Baudrillard's "Simulacra and Simulation" and Ihab Hassan's "Towards a Theory of Postmodernism"

- **Assessment:** Comparative essay, multi-media presentation, postmodern poetry.

Unit Eight: Boundaries

- **Objective:** Write about, emulate and evaluate literary boundary crossing, both in terms of theme and of narrative technique. Understand environmental concerns in postmodern texts, and respond to your own "environmental issue" using postmodern pastiche. Review all vocabulary and skills, and succeed on the AP Literature exam in May!
- **Texts:**

Short stories (provided)

Ceremony, Leslie Marmon Silko

Bladerunner (clips)

- **Assessment:** Two timed essays, a group project on literary boundaries, multiple choice sections from past AP Literature exams, and a creative "environmental issue" project that incorporates Postmodern pastiche.

Unit Final: Self-directed Research and Presentation

- **Objective:** Foster independent scholarly research based on student interest, sharing that knowledge with the class in a teaching presentation, and the creation of a teaching tool. Students become an expert on literary topic of own choosing (with instructor approval) going above and beyond what has been covered in class. Students will read critical perspectives on their topics, citing all sources appropriately, design a teaching tool to showcase this newfound expertise and use it to teach classmates.
- **Text:**

Self-selected novel/writer and critical perspectives from research

- **Assessment:** Research presented in webpage, film, Powerpoint or instructor-approved teaching tool, and as a teaching session (15 minute minimum) led by the student. Also a bibliography and reflection will be turned in after the teaching session.

Useful English Literature Websites for Study, Research and Exploration

Literary Terms:

<http://www.pfmb.uni-mb.si/eng/dept/eng/text/glos2.htm>

http://www.galegroup.com/free_resources/glossary/

<http://www.virtualsalt.com/rhetoric.htm>

http://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/display_rpo/poetterm.cfm

Practice Exams and Test Taking Strategies

<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com>

<http://www.angelfire.com/fl/apenglishlit/>

Allusions

<http://www.greekmythology.com/index.html>

<http://www.milforded.org/schools/foran/rscaramella/allusions/>

Literary Theory

<http://www.kristisiegel.com/theory.htm>

<http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/irvinem/theory/pomo.html>

Background expectations

This course assumes a body of background knowledge, including writing skills, grammar mastery, familiarity with the Six Traits of Writing model, and textual knowledge of many seminal literary works. These literary works include (but are not limited to) the list below. Please review the list and review the literature if necessary.

The Odyssey, Homer

Antigone, Sophocles

The Inferno, Dante

Invisible Man, Ellison

The Scarlet Letter, Hawthorne

Huckleberry Finn, Twain

Twelfth Night, Shakespeare

King Lear, Shakespeare

Othello, Shakespeare

Macbeth, Shakespeare

The Tempest, Shakespeare

Romeo and Juliet, Shakespeare

Frankenstein, Shelley

The Importance of Being Earnest, Wilde