

AP English Literature

Welcome to the jungle.

Introduction

In the AP English Literature and Composition course, students devote themselves to the study of literary works written in—or translated into—English. Careful reading and critical analysis of such works of fiction, drama, and poetry provide rich opportunities for students to develop an appreciation of ways literature reflects and comments on a range of experiences, institutions, and social structures. Students will examine the choices literary writers make and the techniques they utilize to achieve purposes and generate meanings.

Homework and Late Work

Expect 20-25 pages of reading per night OR about 30 minutes of homework. The workload might seem heavy, but I'm preparing you to compete at the college level, so an investment of time is necessary. Homework may also include online assignments in AP Classroom. If you do not have internet access, please inform me immediately so that I can arrange for alternative assignment options.

FYI, the texts we tackle are difficult, so I recommend doing the reading when you are most alert. (Nothing is worse than Joseph Conrad when it's 11PM and you are half asleep.)

Homework is due the day after it is assigned unless otherwise indicated. Late assignments can be turned in for partial credit (generally 70% credit for assignments turned in the next day). Assignments will not be accepted, even for a late grade, 1 week after they are due.

Assignments that are time sensitive, such as discussion preparations or annotations, may not be worth any late credit.

Course Texts

The College Board recommends that students read at least three long works of literature in AP Lit. The following are the major works I've selected for this year.

Life of Pi by Yann Martel

Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad

Othello by William Shakespeare

Additional readings will include short stories and poetry. AP Literature uses little, if any, non-fiction. *Life of Pi* and *Heart of Darkness* have been paid for from your school fees. We will use a variety of texts, both print and online, to read *Othello*. Other readings will be provided as handouts.

Grading Plan

Grades are weighted to ensure that students who may not perform well on tests are able to bring their grades up through diligent work in class and at home.

- 50% Tests and writing assignments
- 50% Class assignments and homework

Exams

Students are able to earn an exam exemption if they meet strict academic, attendance, and behavior criteria. Students CAN be exempt from my midterm or my teacher-made exam. Students CANNOT be exempt from the AP exam. The AP exam will take place in the first two weeks of May. The AP exam is required for students who want to get college credit for this course, but it does not count toward the student's grade. The district will pay the cost of the exam (\$94).

Tutoring

Tutoring is available Monday-Thursday after school in my classroom from 2:30-3:30. You may see me for help in any class or for any reason.

Absences

If you are absent for any reason, you will have the same number of days you are absent to make up the work. I have six classes of students to keep track of. Please help me out by asking me for your work immediately following an absence. If you missed a test, you must make it up as soon as possible when you come back. All assignments that were due while you were absent will be due when you return. **It is YOUR responsibility to arrange for and complete the necessary work THE DAY you return.**

Denial of Credit Policy for a Semester Course

Any student who accrues non-professional absences in excess of four (4) days in a nine-week period, eight (8) days in a semester-long class and/or sixteen (16) days in a year-long class will be subject to receive zeroes on assignments for every additional day of non-professional absence for the remainder of the 9 weeks for each class that this takes place. Each new nine weeks every student will begin with a clean slate with regard to period attendance.

Cheating

Cheating can mean copying someone else's work or allowing someone to copy your work. It also includes using the internet to look up answers that should come from your own knowledge. You should do work individually unless indicated otherwise by me. Cheating also includes plagiarism spectrum offenses, such as following an author's wording too closely or failing to cite a source used.

On an intentional cheating offense, all involved parties will receive a zero on the assignment and may be subject to disciplinary action in the office. In other words, if you let someone copy your work, you will receive the same punishment. If a student takes another's work to copy without permission, he or she will be written up for both cheating and theft.

On an unintentional cheating offense, such as failing to properly cite a source, you will be asked to redo the work according to standards before receiving a grade.

Classroom Expectations

What I expect:	What it means:
1. Show respect.	When someone else is speaking to the class or to your group, look at the person and do not talk. Don't laugh rudely at what someone else says or does. If you have to work with someone you don't know (or don't like), participate in the activity without rolling your eyes or grumbling.
2. Participate.	All this means is follow directions for class activities. If you don't understand directions, ask a classmate or raise your hand for help. Not all activities will be for a grade. I will expect you to participate whether you are earning points or just practicing. All students will be asked to read out loud on a regular basis.
3. Keep distractions put away.	Keep your phone and earbuds put away. If I see them or hear them, I will take them and turn them in to the office. If we're not using our iPads for a class activity, keep them closed.

Classroom Procedures

What you should do:	What it means:
1. Take care of yourself.	Unless we are in the middle of a lecture, you can get up to sharpen your pencil, turn in a paper, or get supplies. Refill the staplers or empty the pencil sharpeners if you see that it's necessary. All supplies on my side table are for student use. Take what you need.
2. Be on time.	When you arrive at my room, please take your seat, whether the bell has rung or not. When the bell rings, stop talking and prepare to begin the day's work. You are expected to be in class, seated, and ready to begin class by the bell.
3. Ask before you take.	Don't touch other people or other people's things unless you have permission. If you need a pencil, paper, or other supplies, just ask a classmate or the teacher. If I have something you would like to use that is not in the student center, please ask before you use it.
4. Ask before you leave.	Try to use the restroom and visit the water fountain between classes. However, if you need the restroom or the water fountain, you may raise your hand and ask. When I say it's ok to leave, scan out and leave your iPad next to the pass. You should not be anywhere other than the place you asked permission to go. Detours count as skipping class and will receive consequences.

Course Progression: Semester 1

This course is divided into 9 Units. What follows below is a pacing guide to give you an idea of what we'll be reading this year.

Unit 1: Short Fiction, Fundamental Elements (10 class periods)

Reading List

- "Everyday Use" by Alice Walker
- "The Destructors" by Graham Greene
- "A Rose for Emily" by William Faulkner
- other passages and excerpts of short fiction as necessary

Reading Skills Focus

- Identifying characterization
- Analyzing plot structure
- Distinguishing perspective and narrator

Writing Skills Focus

- Integrating and punctuating quotes
- Developing and supporting claims
- Writing paragraphs

Grammar Review—using a colon

AP Classroom: Complete Progress Check 1, MCQ

Assessments: Multiple Choice practice, paragraph portfolio

Unit 2: Poetry, Fundamental Elements (10 class periods)

Reading List

- "The Ballad of Birmingham" by Dudley Randall
- "The Naming of Parts" by Henry Reed
- "It sifts from leaden sieves" by Emily Dickinson
- "Blackberry Eating" by Galway Kinnell
- "The Author to Her Book" by Anne Bradstreet
- other passages and excerpts of short fiction as necessary

Reading Skills Focus

- Identifying ambiguous referents
- Identifying elements of structure
- Recognizing sound devices (alliteration)
- Explaining four forms of metaphor

Writing Skills Focus

- Selecting evidence
- Citing poetry in essays
- Developing and supporting claims
- Writing paragraphs

Grammar Review—using a semicolon

AP Classroom: Complete Progress Check 2, MCQ

Assessments: Multiple Choice practice, paragraph portfolio

Unit 3: Longer Fiction, Character and Conflict (17 class periods)

Reading List

- *Life of Pi*

Reading Skills Focus

- Examining character complexity
- Analyzing the intersection of conflicts
- Explaining functions of text structure
- Connecting setting and character

Writing Skills Focus

- Writing a thesis statement
- Establishing a line of reasoning
- Describing the interaction among devices
- Selecting evidence—quality and quantity

Grammar Review—eliminating comma splices

AP Classroom: Complete Progress Check 3, MCQ

Assessments: Multiple Choice test on book, Essay

Unit 4: Short Fiction, Complexity and Nuance (17 Class Periods)

Reading List:

- “The Importance of Being Ernest” by Oscar Wilde
- “A Jury of Her Peers” By Susan Glaspell
- “Girl” by Jamaica Kincaid
- “The Lesson” by Toni Cade Bambara

Reading Skills Focus:

- Finding contrasts: characters and values
- Identifying advanced narrative techniques

Writing Skills Focus

- Creating coherence
- Using transitional words, phrases, and sentences

Grammar Review—transitional words and phrases

AP Classroom: Complete Progress Check 4, MCQ

Assessments: Analysis Essay

Unit 5: Poetry, Word Choice, Imagery, and Comparisons

Reading List

- “The Bear”
- “One Art” by Elizabeth Bishop
- “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night” by Dylan Thomas
- “Ozymandias” by Percy Bysshe Shelley
- assorted sonnets by Shakespeare
- “Out, Out” by Robert Frost

Reading Skills Focus

- Explaining extended metaphors

- Closed forms of poetry

Writing Skills Focus

- Critiquing and refining claims

Assessment: Analysis Essay

Hello Parents!

I will be your student's AP Literature teacher this year. I would like to start the year out with clear communication about course requirements and literature.

First, this course is time-consuming. Students can expect between 20 and 30 minutes of homework as much as four or five times a week. The workload might seem heavy, but I'm preparing students to compete at the college level, so an investment of time is necessary. Absences and vacations will make the workload even more complicated, so encourage your student to go to school every day.

Second, homework may also include online assignments in AP Classroom. If you do not have internet access in your home, please inform me on the form below. I will accommodate your family's internet situation as needed.

Third, good literature is seldom tame. We will be reading works of literature that contain potentially offensive ideas and/or language. Please note that every work of literature we read is critically-acclaimed literary canon that has been carefully selected for this course. However, out of respect for parents and students' beliefs, I would like to provide the following samples of cautionary notes.

The disclaimers below are merely samples of the types of controversy we will read about. If students do not feel comfortable reading about these issues, another course may be a better option for the student.

- The short story "The Destructors" shows an extreme act of vandalism.
- The play *Othello* shows a mixed-race marriage and domestic violence.
- *Life of Pi* has a protagonist who is Hindu, Muslim, and Christian all at the same time. He discusses aspects of all three religions in his narration.
- The novel *Heart of Darkness* contains racist imagery and language and a sexist portrayal of women.

Please confirm your understanding by checking off the following statements.

____ I understand my student will have a heavy workload (up to 30 minutes of homework per night) to prepare him or her for college-level rigor. I will encourage my student to complete homework regularly.

____ I understand that my student will read high quality literature that may contain language and ideas that are controversial and potentially offensive. My student is mature enough to read these ideas and words.

By signing below, you acknowledge the information in this letter. If you do not wish to sign, please leave a phone number and convenient time when I can contact you.

(Parent name: please print)

(Parent Signature)

(Student name: please print)