

Advanced Placement Literature and Composition
AP English IV
Instructor: Matthew Ramirez

PRE-REQUISITE

Prior to entering Literature and Composition, students are required to complete one of the following courses:

- **Language and Composition (preferred)**
Reading selections include *Tale of Two Cities*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Great Gatsby*, *The Crucible*, *Huckleberry Finn* and a variety of shorter texts including the speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr., John F. Kennedy, and Abraham Lincoln. Students also studied historical documents such as the American Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and The Federalist Papers.
- **English III: American Literature**
Reading selections include *The Great Gatsby*, *The Crucible*, as well as historical documents and several short stories and essays by American authors from the precolonial times to the twenty-first century.

WORKS STUDIED

This list is intended as an overview of works read during the course of AP English IV: Literature. Other pieces may be added if time allows; works subject to change at teacher discretion.

Semester 1: Focus will concern pre-20th century literature, moving students through Renaissance, Victorian (in lecture only), and the Romantic period. Throughout the discussion of these major works emphasis will be placed on historical and cultural context of the time period, syntactical and stylistic characteristics, and the changes and shifts between these periods. Poems of the time period will be integrated for thematic or stylistic analysis with special focus paid to poetic structure and form of said time periods.

***Pride and Prejudice* (summer assignment): Novel of Manners, Romantic Period, Satire**

- During Reading: As students read the novel during summer, they will collect quotes about dominant themes, such as class and gender, characterization, setting, and satire, with particular depth given to the social expectations of the time period, and develop thesis statements categorizing their findings.
- Through lecture, annotation, and discussion, both small group and whole class students will consider:
 - Historical context with understanding of romantic period
 - Shifting characterization and contradictions
 - Austen's subtle irony, and her satirical attack of institutions and social expectations
 - Indirect discourse, and effect of third person narrative
- Assessment: The central issues of the summer assignment, and the unit focus on satire will serve as the basis for a well-crafted 1,000 word essay. Emphasis will be on developing a specific, albeit

focused, thesis and research skill such as quoting, use of an outside source, MLA citation, and development of analysis.

Frankenstein: Gothic Novel, Romantic Period, Science Fiction Genre

- Pre-Reading: students will read, annotate, and discuss *Paradise Lost* (I, X), and “Rime of the Ancient Mariner”
- During reading: Students will examine and track the development of four motifs through the collection of quotes, spanning the entire novel. Quotes will be checked regularly for a grade, and students will be assessed in their preparedness through class discussion. Supplemental analysis questions will also be provided and completed.
- Through lecture, annotation, and discussion, both small group and whole class students will consider:
 - Shelley’s use of *Paradise Lost* as a thematic foundation
 - Erik Erikson’s 8 Stages of Man
 - The elements of Gothicism, and the Romantic philosophy
 - The use of epistolary form
 - Real-world ethical parallels concerning science, responsibility, and the religious idea of God and the soul
 - The cultural impact of the novel
- Assessment: Students will take several reading quizzes throughout the unit. Their summative assessment will consist of an AP style timed writing, based on an unfamiliar prompt. Students will be asked to incorporate major concepts into their essay.

Hamlet: Drama, Shakespearean Drama

- During Reading: Students will read majority of the play in class with assigned parts. Pre-reading at home may be asked in order for students to understand character motivations, and demonstrate an ability to grasp some sense of understanding. Guided questions will be used to understand plot, evaluate literary features, and analyze the text.
- Through lecture, annotation, and discussion, both small group and whole class students will consider:
 - Historical and cultural background
 - Analysis of all major soliloquies and Hamlet’s maturing characterization
 - Shakespeare’s use of rhetorical and figurative language
 - Existentialism
 - Development of symbols, motifs
- Assessment: Students will take several reading quizzes throughout the unit. Their summative assessment will consist of an AP style timed writing, based on an unfamiliar prompt. Students will pick from 1 of 3 prompts. Students will be asked to incorporate major concepts into their essay.

Semester 2: Focus will concern 20th century literature, moving students toward understanding the foundations of American literature including modernism and post-modernism. Here, students will examine authorial response to British literature, specifically syntactically, stylistically, and thematically. The final term will push students even further to examine a piece of world literature, examining the cultural values, and even the avant-garde. Poems of the 20th century will be integrated for thematic or stylistic analysis with special focus paid to the radicalization of poetic structure and form.

The Sun Also Rises: American 20th century, Modernist Novel

- Pre-Reading: students will examine the history of the Lost Generation and the rise of American Modernism
- During Reading: Students will respond and type analytical questions as they read.
- Through lecture, annotation, and discussion, both small group and whole class students will consider:
 - Historical and cultural background of the Lost Generation – philosophy and characteristics
 - Hemingway’s style, including the objective correlative and syntactical characteristics
 - Iceberg Theory with close-readings
- Assessment: Students will take several reading quizzes throughout the unit. Their summative assessment will consist of an AP style timed writing, based on an unfamiliar prompt. Students will be asked to incorporate major concepts into their essay.

Chronicle of a Death Foretold: 20th century, World Literature

- During Reading: Students will track several motifs, symbols, and characters as they read. These will be used during class discussion.
 - Through lecture, annotation, and discussion, both small group and whole class students will consider:
 - Historical and cultural background of Marquez and Colombia
 - Social critique and denunciation of institutions and religion
 - Complexity of narrative and structure
 - Magical Realism and Surrealism
 - Assessment: Students will take a holistic quiz at the beginning of the unit. Their summative assessment will consist of an AP style timed writing, based on an unfamiliar prompt. Students will be asked to incorporate major concepts into their essay.
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Short Stories (not a complete list)

“Bartleby the Scrivener” – Melville
“Cat in the Rain” - Hemingway
“Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?” – Oats
“Killings” - DuBois

Poetry (not a complete list)

“In Goya’s Greatest Scenes We Seem to See . . .” - Ferlinghetti
“Dulce Et Decorum Est” - Owen
“Convergence of the Twain” – Hardy
“Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night” - Thomas
“The Lamb”; “The Tyger” – Blake
“Bright Star” – Keats
“When I Have Fears I Cease to Be” - Keats
“Batter My Heart” – Donne
“The Flea” - Donne
“To His Coy Mistress” – Marvell
“To an Athlete Dying Young” – Houseman
“If I Told Him, A Completed Portrait of Picasso” – Stein
“Before the Mirror” - Updike
“The History Teacher” – Collins
“Out, Out” – Frost
“Chimney Sweeper” (Innocence/Experience) – Blake
“One Art” – Bishop
“Unknown Citizen” – Auden
“Icarus” – Field
“Nocturne Iii” - Jose Asuncion Silva
“Juggler” - Wilbur

Excerpts from Major Works (not a complete list)

The Turn of the Screw – James
Blood Meridian; All the Pretty Horses – McCarthy
Beloved – Toni Morrison

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Ideally, students will have at least one writing assignment per week. These assignments might be in-class, or timed, while others will be long-form, encompassing the entire writing and research process. Evaluating student writing will be based on the following holistic criteria, using the AP rubric:

Did the student

- demonstrate understanding of the work holistically?
- demonstrate appreciation for the literary features of the text?
- illustrate command of the grammatical and syntactical conventions of standard, formal English, including the sophistication of vocabulary and ideas?
- illustrate a narrowed focus through the organization of the essay?

Timed Writings

Timed essays will be used as summative practice for the AP exam, and assessments of student's understanding of a text, like a specific element of a novel or major work read in class, and demonstration of skills covered in class. Prompts will be pulled from released AP Exams and grade using the AP rubric.

As the instructor, my job will be to provide timely commentary of strengths and areas of improvements such as clarity, organization, understanding, terminology, and grammatical conventions. As the year progresses, feedback may become simply holistic; nevertheless, students will learn to grow from their feedback.

In these in-class timed essays, students will be tasked with explicating poetry or prose pieces to not only build their timed writing stamina but analyze an author's style. Modeling, including group work, will guide students through this process of deconstruction, examining how figurative and stylistic devices contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole.

At times, students will have the opportunity to revise AP timed writings in order to raise their score to at least a 6/9.

Formal, Long-Form Essays

For each semester, students will write a long-form, researched, and typed literary criticism, demonstrating their ability to generate a specific thesis, and dissect the elements of a text from a critical perspective. Criteria, rubrics, examples, and modeling will be provided prior to writing. An emphasis will be placed on honing MLA citation, specifically parenthetical citation, and incorporation of purposeful quoted evidence, with special attention to the finesse of embedding. Drafting of thesis statements and the paper will occur in class with teacher feedback. In the second semester, this process will be more student driven, with peer-editing and self-evaluation guiding student success.

Research Assignment

Research will be integrated into final research paper with a presentation, which can be a literary criticism or a topic of their choosing, provided it is approved by myself. The focus, for students, can be a piece of art, and its impact whether historical, cultural, political, etc. Students will use their literary analysis skills to explicate said art and deconstruct it critically. The assignment is designed not only to create student investment, but as a culmination of all the skills acquired throughout the year including literary explication, MLA citing, research skills, and use of evidence. Students will demonstrate research and written presentation skills through citing text, determining credibility of sources, presenting a focused

thesis, organizing with logic, and building towards a meaningful conclusion. For the essay, students will write 1,000 – 1,500 words, with a brief, roughly 5-minute presentation.

Annotations and other Informal Assessments

Students are expected to explicate all pieces of poetry, prose, excerpts from major works read in class, or passages unstudied in class before writing or discussing in class. All passages to annotate will be photocopied to ensure students develop a physical connection with the text. Explication in the beginning of the course will be as a class, with me guiding students through the process. Some explications will be in groups, while the majority will be individual. Their stamina will slowly be built by occasionally timing them on their annotations. Ultimately, students are expected to annotate all texts within 10 minutes. By the 2nd semester, in groups, students will teach their peers a poem by annotating it and discussing it in class with their peers taking notes.

Class/ Small Group Discussions

While lecture and notes are the foundation of the course, the majority of class discussions concerning novels or texts will be led by students in a Socratic seminar style. In a roundtable, students will be asked to discuss passages and higher-order thinking questions, with their responses being graded for depth. In the beginning, teacher guidance is paramount, but ultimately students will begin to drive the conversation with a monitor writing down each time a peer speaks. Sometimes students will generate their own questions to bring to the discussion; other times, students will speak in small groups (3-5) as I examine their understanding. Through these discussions, students are tasked with taking ownership of their understanding and learning, with the teacher acting as a guide, rather than a facilitator.

RESOURCES

Students should have their own copy of *How to Read Literature like a Professor* from AP English 3, while the Vogel resources will be used in class for AP multiple choice questions.

Foster, Thomas C. *How to Read Literature like a Professor*. New York: Quill, 2003. Print.

Vogel, Richard, and Charles F. Winans. *Multiple-Choice and Free-Response Questions in*

Preparation for the AP English Literature and Composition Examination . 6th; 7th ed.

Brooklyn, NY: D & S Marketing, Inc., 2001. Print.