

AP English Literature and Composition Course Description

Mrs. Kohl

I. Course Goals

- 1 To learn to think more clearly, to speak and write more effectively, and to listen and read with great understanding.
- 2 To read some of the most accomplished literary works and understand the period in which they were created.
- 3 To encourage a delight of literature that is aesthetically, socially and personally appropriate.
- 4 To engage in critical reading, discussion and written analysis of literature with attention to language, structure, meaning, clarity of thinking, and value.
- 5 To appreciate a variety of texts and genres from many cultures and time periods.
- 6 To develop the ability to write in various forms, including the critical analysis of literature and a senior research paper, which is a requirement for graduation.
- 7 To enhance understanding of the relationship of literature with other forms of art and increase interpretive ability.
- 8 To improve vocabulary.
- 9 To review literary and usage terms.
- 10 To improve speaking skills through class presentations, discussions, and debates.

II. Content: This course is designed to comply with the curricular requirements described in the *AP English Course Description*.

Literature: Students will read selections of fiction, poetry, and drama written primarily by American and British authors of the past and present including *Beowulf*, *Grendel*, *Macbeth*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Frankenstein*, *Native Son*, and *The Dubliners*. In addition, students will choose novels from the AP suggested reading list to read outside of class (one per semester) and read selections from *The Compact Bedford Introduction to Literature, sixth edition*, including poetry, essays and short stories.

Writing: During each marking period, students will complete a number of writing assignments which will be examined for effective word choice, varied sentence structure, effective organization, effectiveness of argument using specific evidence including

numerous quotations as proof, in relation to supporting a well developed thesis.

Students will be given frequent opportunities to write and rewrite formal extended analysis and timed in-class responses as well as shorter, more informal assignments, which may or may not be collected, will be used to encourage thinking and class discussion by focusing on specific issues. Students will also receive options for creative writing.

Each student is required to keep a journal which will be reviewed each marking period. Peer editing will take place in the classroom. Grammar will be addressed as needed.

The completion of a poetry explication/research paper is a graduation requirement. All essays written outside of class must follow MLA format (see attached directions).

Speaking: Class discussions, panel discussions, presentations and debates will serve as the format for practicing speaking and discussion skills during the year.

Vocabulary: Students will compile vocabulary lists based on the literature they are studying in class. We will cover a word a day as a warm up activity. Students will be held responsible for studying the words and will be tested on them.

Course Planner/Student activities:

First semester

August/Sept 1 + weeks

Review summer reading assignments (two novels from the book list). Focus will be on developing and supporting a thesis, organization, writing an effective introduction (great beginnings) and conclusion (great endings).

Students will discuss key passages they chose from the summer reading novels and learn how to identify theme based on conflict and its resolution (or lack thereof) using one of the summer reading novels. They will then write an in-class essay on one of the novels.

Sept.

4 weeks

Beowulf* and John Gardner's *Grendel

* Discussion and analysis of satire, symbolism, point of view, and the anti-hero in *Grendel* /the epic poem, epic hero, digressions, allusions, rhyme, alliteration, kennings, tone in *Beowulf*.

* Students will compare and contrast differing points of view through a comparison of *Beowulf* and John Gardner's *Grendel*. They will analyze techniques the writers use and the effects of these devices on the overall meaning of the works.

* Students will write an essay comparing and contrasting the points of view of two passages: one from *Grendel* and one from *Beowulf*. Focus will be on on logical organization and coherence through use of repetition of key words and phrases, transitions, and emphasis.

Oct

4 weeks

Short Stories and reaction essay

Discussion of summary vs. analysis, reading fiction responsively, writing about fiction. Students will focus on plot, characterization, setting, point of view, symbolism, theme, style, tone and irony. Students will take a short answer test and complete passage analysis/close reading work.

Plot – read pp. 64-72 ; “A Rose for Emily” p. 75

Character – read pp. 98-103; “The Prisoner Who Wore Glasses” p. 104

Setting – pp. 134-136; “Nebraska” p. 143

Point of view- pp. 156-161; “Who’s Irish?” p. 161

Symbolism – pp. 198-200; “The Secret Lion” p. 201

Theme – pp. 220-223; “Miss Brill”

Style, Tone, and Irony – pp. 244-248; “Popular Mechanics” p. 248

“Bartleby the Scrivener” discussion

Nov/ Dec

5 weeks

***Macbeth* and Shakespearean vs. Italian sonnets**

- 11 Discussion of the format of the Shakespearean and Italian sonnets as well as use of literary techniques used including couplet, meter, tone, mood, diction, stanza, controlling metaphor, personification and allusion, in relation to the meaning of the poem as a whole.
- 12 Discussion and analysis of the tragic hero, character development, literary devices, and motifs in *Macbeth*. Is Macbeth a true tragic hero? Is he a victim of fate or free will?
- 13 Students will define 25 literary terms and analyze quotes from *Macbeth* that illustrate each term. Terms to include: allusion, analogy, apostrophe, aside, atmosphere, comic relief, couplet, euphemism, euphony, foil, foreshadowing, hubris, imagery, irony, metaphor, nemesis, paradox, pathetic fallacy, personification, plaint, pun, simile, soliloquy, stream of consciousness, tragic flaw
- 14 In groups, students will trace a word (hands, blood, night, nature) and its different meanings throughout the play in order to understand the use of motifs in literature.

- Students will analyze what affects each word's meaning.
- 15 Students will analyze the character development of a character of their choice. How does the character change and why? How does this relate to the meaning of the work as a whole? What literary devices are used? They will create a mask using symbols to illustrate this development and write an explanation using quotations from the play as proof.
 - 16 Students will write an essay analyzing the timelessness of *Macbeth*. They will explain why one of *Macbeth*'s themes is significant in today's society using direct quotations from the play. As always, students must explain what literary devices Shakespeare uses in the work. Students should focus on using a variety of sentence structures and achieving coherence through repetition of key words, transitions, and emphasis.
 - 17 Essay test on *Macbeth* using question from previous AP exam

Dec/Jan

3 weeks

Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein*, Coleridge's "*The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner*" and other Romantic Poems

- 18 Students will read and analyze Romantic poetry in relation to the beliefs of Romanticism and literary devices used. Students will focus on voice, diction, connotation and denotation, and imagery.
- 19 Poems include, but are not limited to: "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" and "London" by Wordsworth; "The Chimney Sweeper" by Blake; "Ode on a Grecian" and "Bright Star" by Keats; "Ozymandias" by Shelly
- 20 Students will write an analysis of a Romantic poem explaining the use of the above literary devices in relation to the work as a whole.
- 21 Discussion and analysis of *Frankenstein* as a Romantic novel, Victor as a tragic hero (as compared to Macbeth), the effects of the different points of view, the novel's structure, use of allusions, Victor and the creature as a doppelganger, Victor as the Modern Prometheus, discussion of key passages in relation to meaning of the work as a whole.
- 22 Students will write an analysis of a key passage from *Frankenstein* focusing on some or all of the following: mood, diction, patterns, imagery, symbolism, types of writing, paradox, gnomon, point of view, allusions, connotation vs. denotation, the passage as an allegory. Again, students should take care to incorporate effective writing strategies studied thus far, such as writing effective introductions and conclusions, supporting generalizations with specific, illustrative detail and achieving appropriate emphasis through diction and sentence structure.
- 23 Students will compare and contrast narrator, structure, setting, theme, and tone in *Frankenstein* and *Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner*.
- 24 In class essay on *Frankenstein* using question from previous AP exam

Second semester

Jan/February

4 weeks

Poetry Unit

Diction, denotation and connotation pp. 537- 542; “she being Brand” p. 542

Word order and tone pp. 543-544; “Common Ground” p. 544 and “Invocation” p. 545

Images pp. 570-571; “Mafioso” p.581

Figures of Speech (Simile and metaphor) pp. 589-593; “Chess” p. 593-594

Other figures read pp. 594-598; “February” p.598-599

Symbol - read pp. 609-611; read “The Bumper Sticker” p. 619-620

Allegory – read pp. 611-614

Irony – read pp. 614-618; “Surprise” p.618-619

Sounds- chap 42

Patterns of rhythm-chap 25

Poetic forms-chap 26

25 Students will complete practice poetry essays and multiple choice tests.

26 Poetry essay test

Poetry Research project (this will be completed during the third marking period)

27 Students will begin work on their senior research project. They will choose a poet and research his/her biographical details, influences, characteristics of style and content, and place in the “canon of modern poetry.” At the heart of the essay will be an explication of a single poem.

March

Richard Wright’s *Native Son* and poetry from The Harlem Renaissance

- 28 Panel discussion: Students will lead discussion on: **1.** the use of naturalism in the novel **2.** the major characters’ views on life including race relations **3.** life in Chicago in the 1930s **4.** the title of the novel and the novel’s three subtitles **5.** The significance of the actual cases of Loeb and Leopold, Scottsboro Boys and Robert Nixon **6.** Bigger’s relationships with other characters (i.e. Bigger and Bessie, Bigger and his family, Bigger and the Daltons, etc.). Connect to “How Bigger was Born” **7.** The depiction of Communists, white people, black people in the book **8.** Symbols and motifs used in the novel **9.** the tone and mood of the book **10.** the themes found in the novel. Students must refer to specific quotes and passages from the novel and other sources for support.
- 29 Discussion of *Native Son* will also include protest art, character motivation, double consciousness
- 30 Students will read James Baldwin’s “Notes from a Native Son,” analyze Baldwin’s point of view and compare and contrast his views with those of Wright. Whose view do you support? What is the purpose of literature? What is the effect of society on an individual, the effect of literature on society and vice versa? Find examples of Harlem Renaissance poetry and literary protest art to support your views and share in a class discussion. Be prepared to discuss how

- textual details relate to the piece's meaning as a whole.
- 31 Students will write a formal analysis of a poem from the Harlem Renaissance evaluating the author's purpose and analyzing the effectiveness of the literary techniques used to achieve this purpose.
 - 32 In-class essay on *Native Son* using question from previous AP exam

April
3 weeks

The Turn of the Screw and Critical Theory

- 33 Henry James cultural intro; intros to reader response, psychoanalytic, new historical, feminist/gender, deconstruction and Marxist/cultural critical theories and application to *TOTS*.
- 34 Students will complete a passage analysis and essay test.

If time permits:

James Joyce's *Dubliners*

- 35 Discussion of the progression seen in *The Dubliners*, Joyce's style, historical context including the role of religion and politics, symbolism of the paralysis of Dublin, motifs, epiphanies.
- 36 Students will write an in-class essay answering an AP exam open question.

May

Specific preparation for the AP Literature Exam.

- 37 Students will take practice exams and discuss responses.
- 38 Evaluation of past essay responses and their strengths and weaknesses.
- 39 Review of literary terms and strategies as needed.
- 40 Review of Roman and Greek mythology and biblical allusions as seen in the practice exams and other literature studied throughout the year.

After the Exam

Students will complete a book evaluation.

