

AP English Literature and Composition Syllabus

Mr. Lorenzo, B33

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Course Overview:

Students in this college-level course will read and carefully analyze world literature written in a variety of time periods, from the 10th century through the postmodern era. This course will provide students with the intellectual challenges and workload consistent with a typical level 200 undergraduate English Literature class at any college or university. At the culmination of the course, the students **will** take the AP English Literature and Composition Exam given in May. Based on their scores, they may be granted advanced placement, college credit, or both at colleges and universities throughout the United States. In the course, you must read deliberately and thoroughly, taking time to understand a work's complexity, to absorb its richness of meaning, and to analyze how that meaning is embodied in literary form. In addition to considering a work's literary artistry, students reflect on the social and historical values it reflects and embodies. Careful attention to both textual detail and historical context provides a foundation for interpretation, whatever critical perspectives are brought to bear on the literary works studied.

Writing Assignments:

Throughout the year students will write, demonstrating an understanding and mastery of standard, written English. They should have a broad vocabulary, which will indicate that they can use words appropriately to show denotative accuracy and connotative resourcefulness. AP Literature students write for a variety of reasons: 1) Students will write creatively to indicate knowledge of the organization, structure, and style techniques of poetry and prose. 2) Students will write to inform their readers that they understand passages from poetry, and longer works like novels and plays. 3) Students will write to explain complex ideas and issues that require research and development. 4) Students will write to analyze various pieces interpreting the author's meanings based on careful observation, use of extensive textual support, and an understanding of historical and social values. 5) Students will write under time constraints, producing papers that show both complexity and sophistication.

Reading Assignments:

This course includes an intensive study of rich and representative works such as those authors cited in the *AP English Course Description*. The works selected require a careful, deliberative reading that yields multiple meanings. (Note: The College Board does not mandate any authors or reading list). **However**, because this is a college-level course, expectations are appropriately high, and the reading workload is challenging. Students are expected to come to class with the works read and annotated. Because of the length of some pieces, careful planning and time management is essential to success in the class. Careful reading leads to in-class discussion, which reveals a student's in-depth understanding and evaluation of the piece and contributes towards the strengthening of his/her own composition ability.

Primary Course Literature:

Beowulf

Unknown

The Inferno

Dante Alighieri

Hamlet

William Shakespeare

The Metamorphosis and other works

Franz Kafka

September-October: Close reading and annotation of text, evaluation of summer reading assignment, introduction to AP Literature and Composition exam, definition, and expository essays. Introduction to first work of British Literature. The Dark Ages.

Text: *Beowulf*, Translated by Seamus Heaney

The course opens with an evaluation of the summer reading assignment as well as an introduction to Britain in the Dark Ages and what is regarded to be the most important work of epic poetry to come from that era. Students will perform a close reading for stylistic elements and theme. Students will also be introduced to the genesis of the English language that we currently speak and write today.

Essential Question: Epics provide a narrative demonstration of the most important values of the societies in which they were written. How does *Beowulf* promote the values of the Germanic Heroic Code of Honor?

Suggested Further Reading: *The Issue of Feminine Monstrosity: A Reevaluation of Grendel's Mother* by Christine Alfano

Warriors, Wyrms, and Wyrd: The Paradoxical Tale of the Germanic Hero/King in Beowulf by Kevin J. Wanner

November - December: Continued close reading and annotating. The Middle Ages.

Text: *The Inferno* by Dante Alighieri

As we move on from the Dark Ages, we will travel to Florence, Italy in the height of the Middle Ages. We will examine the first part of Dante's Divine Comedy, The Inferno, and follow Dante and his guide Virgil through the depths of Hell to learn of the sins of man and the punishments they will receive. It is truly a sublime journey through the heart and soul of man.

Essential Question: As *Beowulf* reveals something about the culture in which it was written, so to "Dante's Inferno" reveals information about the culture of its origin. What can be deduced about society in Dante's Italy from this epic poem?

Suggested Further Reading: *Dante's Inferno: Critical Reception and Influence* by David Lumms

Darkness Visible: Dante's Clarification of Hell by Joseph Kameen

January - February: Continued close reading and annotating. Drama Unit continued. Re - Introduction to William Shakespeare. The Renaissance.

Text: *Hamlet*, by William Shakespeare

This unit will focus on reading and responding to Drama. The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark is a tragedy by William Shakespeare. Set in the Kingdom of Denmark, the play dramatizes the revenge Prince Hamlet exacts on his uncle Claudius for murdering King Hamlet, Claudius's brother, and Prince Hamlet's father, and then succeeding to the throne and taking as his wife Gertrude, the old king's widow, and Prince Hamlet's mother. The play vividly portrays both true and feigned madness – from overwhelming grief to seething rage – and explores themes of treachery, revenge, incest, and moral corruption.

Essential Question: How does fate and destiny play a role in the outcome of the tragic Prince Hamlet?

Suggested Further Reading: *Resituating Freud's Hamlet* – by David J. Gordon

Hamlet and Amleth Princes of Denmark: Shakespeare and Saxo Grammaticus as Historians and Kingly Actions in the Hamlet/Amleth Narrative by Megan Arnott

March- May: Continued close reading and annotating. Introduction to the Modern Era

Text: *The Metamorphosis*, and other stories, by Franz Kafka

So few authors resonate with the world that they get a style of writing named after them. Authors can be Shakespearian, Orwellian, while others try their entire career to be Kafkaesque, a style of writing that places the protagonist in the worst possible mental state, then only brings them down from there. A Jewish author, living in Europe under Hitler's regime certainly makes for a person whose struggles with the world were made apparent in his writing.

Essential Question: How can the lack of community and socialization impact one's identity? How do Kafka's narrative choices, structures, and literary techniques develop the complexities and pressures of being a human in a society?

Suggested Further Reading: *Kafka and the Universal* edited by Arthur Cools and Vivian Liska

May - June: AP Test Review, the exam, and Post AP Test activities.

During the final days before the exam, students work on quality AP works to review various aspects of literature.

Grading Policy

Formal Essays - 35% of your grade - These are M.L.A. formatted research papers that will require most of your time and effort.

Practice Free Response A.P. Literature Prompts - 25 % of your grade - These are much shorter, but no less challenging. These practice F.R.Q.'s will be assigned monthly, and you will have less than an hour to do them.

Annotations of Scholarly Sources - 10% of your grade - Occasionally, you will be asked to read an article on a work of literature we have read and annotate for diction and content, offering insightful observations of the article as a whole.

Oral Presentations - 15% of your grade - In pairs, or small groups, you will read an article on a work of literature we have just completed and create a Prezi, or Google Slides, or similar software, and analyze and interpret the article to be presented to the class.

Class Participation and Engagement - 15% of your grade - I cannot stress enough the importance of this portion of your grade. You may not like everything we do on any given day. That is not a license to disengage and watch videos on your phone or put your head down to

sleep. Sleep at home. This is an A.P. class, your focus and undivided attention is on what we are doing that day, whether it be reading the next section of the text, watching a film clip, researching for a presentation, or preparing for the A.P. test, you are to be involved every day with questions, comments, and interpretation.

F.A.Q.'s

Q: Do you accept late work?

A: It is the school's policy to accept work that is handed in beyond the due date; however, the teacher may decide how much the work will be penalized for tardiness. Typically, essays handed in late, regardless of absence, will suffer a deduction of at least 30%

Annotated articles and presentations that are late will be penalized 50%

Q: Is there any extra credit I can do?

A: No. All work on the course outline must be completed first before any extra credit is even considered.

Q: Is there any way I can boost my grade at all; I really need this class to graduate?

A: Sure. Invent, then build a Time Machine, travel back in time to September, then do everything you were supposed to do the first time. Then, since you can travel through time, rescue Abraham Lincoln.

Please note that there will be several occasions where we pause a work of literature for a day or two and turn our attention to AP multiple choice questions and AP Free Response prompts.

Mr. Lorenzo reserves the right to alter or modify this course outline at any time during the year and at his discretion

AP English Literature and Composition
Summer Reading Assignment (2022)

The College Board requires specific genres and time periods to be covered before they deem a student ready to take the A.P. test in May of their senior year. You have covered a number of these genres in the three years leading up to this class, and we will cover several more before May.

Please read and annotate **ONE** title from the following list:

The Postmodern Period: *Brooklyn*, by Colm Toibin

The Postwar Period: *The Lord of the Flies* by William Golding

The Horror Novel: *Dracula*, by Bram Stoker

The Victorian Period: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

Once read, consider the following prompt from the 2009 AP English Literature and Composition Exam:

A symbol is an object, action, or event that represents something or that creates a range of associations beyond itself. In literary works a symbol can express an idea, clarify meaning, or enlarge literal meaning.

[Using the] novel [you read during the Summer,] focus on one symbol, draft an essay analyzing how that symbol functions in the work and what it reveals about the characters or themes of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

This response WILL NOT be due the day we get back and meet each other for the first time, you will get time in class in September to compose your response. All you need to do is read and annotate over the summer and be prepared to write when we meet in person. To those that have the confidence to write your response before we meet, I commend you and say, “go for it!” I only ask that you time yourself and do not spend more than 45 minutes writing your response, as that is the amount of time you will have in May. You may handwrite the essay, snap a clear picture, and turn it in through Google Classroom, although I encourage typed responses, it really expedites the grading, but it is up to you.

Additionally, at some point over the summer, you must email me and tell me which work of literature you read. I will then direct you to an online scholarly article on the novel that must be printed, read, and annotated. Acceptable annotations include several notes in the margins focusing on vocabulary, author’s purpose, and general observations that prove you can engage in scholarly discussion with your academic peers. Failure to contact me will result in a zero for this part of the summer assignment. A grade of 100 will be earned in September when you are able to discuss the content of your article. Again, in these unsure times, we will save the writing component for face to face, but you must read and annotate over the summer. Showing up and not having read the book will make the written component impossible (not to mention, make me incredibly angry).