**AP English Literature and Composition**

2015-2016

Shelby County High School

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**Overview:**

The AP English Literature and Composition course is designed to engage students in the careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature. Through the close reading of selected texts, students can deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure for their readers. As they read, students should consider a work's structure, style, and themes, as well as such smaller-scale elements as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone.

**Instructional Strategies:**

This course will involve many different activities and programs designed to give every student the opportunity to flourish in individual comfort zones, but also offer the chance for everyone to challenge themselves. Some of these methods may include but are not limited to the following:

* Discussion (full class, small group, individual) of readings, writings, etc
* Daily writing
* Reading/writing groups
* Outside reading
* Peer and teacher conferencing
* Reading of own writing
* Public speaking/acting

**Assessment:**

Assessments will vary throughout the year. In the first two nine-week terms, students will be assessed for their understanding of course novels, as well as their comprehension and analysis of literary devices (diction, symbolism, etc.) and effective usage of writing forms (thesis statements, topic sentences, use of textual evidence, etc.). After January, students will continue to be assessed on their understanding of course novels, but will be assessed on their writing and multiple choice proficiency in regards to the components of the AP Literature exam. All assessments will be scored using College Board’s nine-point scoring rubric in the hopes of making their understanding of course material clear and coherent.

**Classroom Expectation:**

1. Respect your teacher, your classmates, yourself and your surroundings.

**Required Materials:**

It is imperative that you come prepared to class every day, much like it is when you are in a college class. You will need to bring the following supplies with you to class.

* Any novel or supplemental readings we are discussing in class
* Large 3-ring binder for AP Binder
* Five-subject binder dividers
* Loose-leaf paper
* Blue or black pens ***and*** pencils

**AP Binder:**

The vast majority of your work for this class will be held in an AP Binder. It will be divided in to five subjects:

Poetry Essays / Poetry MC

Prose Essays / Poetry MC

Open Essays / MWAS

Class Texts

We will set this up together in class on the first Monday.

**Reading:**

This course will include an intensive study of representative works from various genres and periods, concentrating on works of recognized literary merit. Reading in this course will be both wide and deep, and will build upon the reading done in previous English courses. Our class will include the in-depth reading of texts drawn from multiple genres, periods, and cultures. Students will read works from several genres and periods -- from the sixteenth to the twenty-first century -- but, more importantly, they will get to know a few works well. Students will 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 will consider the social and historical values it reflects and embodies. Careful attention to both textual detail and historical context will provide a foundation for interpretation, whatever critical perspectives are brought to bear on the literary works studied.

**Course Texts:**

Throughout the year we will read at least five novels outside of class, in addition to multiple short stories, poems, and plays. These texts were chosen because of their complexity and richness, and because either the authors or titles themselves regularly show up on the AP Literature Exam. I ***strongly recommend*** buying your own copy of these titles, as we will do annotation activities with every text we read. Every book is still in print and easy to find, either new or used. If there is an issue with any of the novels on this list, contact me before the class begins reading it so I can assign an alternate text.

Text # 1 – *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster

Text # 2 – *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy

Text # 3 – *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

Text # 4 – *Swamplandia!* by Karen Russell (Free copy provided by the school)

Text # 5 –*To be announced…*

**Writing:**

Close reading involves the experience of literature, the interpretation of literature, and the evaluation of literature. All these aspects of reading are important for an AP course in English Literature and Composition, and each corresponds to an approach to writing about literary works. Writing to understand a literary work may involve writing response and reaction papers along with annotation, free writing, and keeping some form of a reading journal.

Writing to explain a literary work involves analysis and interpretation, and may include writing brief focused analyses on aspects of language and structure. Writing to evaluate a literary work involves making and explaining judgments about its artistry and exploring its underlying social and cultural values through analysis, interpretation, and argument.

Writing will be an integral part of our course, for the AP Examination is weighted toward student writing about literature. Writing assignments will focus on the critical analysis of literature and will include expository, analytical, and argumentative essays. Although critical analysis will make up the bulk of student writing for the course, we will also do a few small creative writing assignments to help students see from the inside how literature is written. The goal of both types of writing assignments is to increase students' ability to explain clearly, cogently, even elegantly, what they understand about literary works and why they interpret them as they do.

This class teaches students to write an interpretation of a piece of literature that is based on a careful observation of textual details, considering the work's:

* Structure, style, and themes
* The social and historical values it reflects and embodies
* Such elements as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone

This course also includes frequent opportunities for students to write and rewrite formal, extended analyses and timed, in-class responses. We will write for the following purposes:

* Writing to understand: Informal, exploratory writing activities that enable students to discover what they think in the process of writing about their reading (such assignments could include annotation, free writing, keeping a reading journal, and response/reaction papers)
* Writing to explain: Expository, analytical essays in which students draw upon textual details to develop an extended explanation/interpretation of the meanings of a literary text
* Writing to evaluate: Analytical, argumentative essays in which students draw upon textual details to make and explain judgments about a work's artistry and quality, and its social and cultural values

Throughout the year, I will provide explicit instruction and feedback on students' writing assignments—both before and after the students revise their work—that will help students develop:

* A wide-ranging vocabulary used appropriately and effectively
* A variety of sentence structures, including appropriate use of subordination and coordination
* Logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques to increase coherence, such as repetition, transitions, and emphasis
* A balance of generalization and specific, illustrative detail
* An effective use of rhetoric, including controlling tone, establishing and maintaining voice, and achieving appropriate emphasis through diction and sentence structure

**Policies:**

*Grading Criteria and Scale*

* Shelby County High School Grading Scale:
  + ***A: 100-90***
  + ***B: 89-80***
  + ***C: 79-72***
  + ***D: 71-66***
  + ***F: 65 or Below***
* AP Literature Standards-Based Grading Scale:
  + ***5: 100***
  + ***4: 95***
  + ***3: 85***
  + ***2: 75***
  + ***1: 65***

***Standards Based Grading***

* 5 = 9-8
* 4 = 7-6
* 3 = 5
* 2 = 4-3
* 1 = 2-1
* Assessment (Annotations, AP exam prompts, multiple choice, writing assignments, novel quizzes) = 90%
* Class Work (Binder checks and miscellaneous) = 10%
* Participation – The structure of this class is often more interactive than lecture driven; thus class participation is an important part of your grade. It is your responsibility to come to class prepared to discuss what you have read. Apt, intelligent, and helpful participation is assumed as the norm. Low and/or negative class participation, absences, and tardies will lower your grade.
* I will not, under any circumstances, discuss grades during classroom time. If you have a specific question about your grade you may come to my room either before or after class (or school), or can send me an email.

***Make-Up and Late Assignments/Texts***

* If you are absent on the due date of a homework assignment, binder check, rough or final draft of an essay, and/or presentation, you must turn in the piece the ***immediately following class***. No exceptions!
* Make-up class work, reading quizzes, and/or unit exams for an ***excused*** absence will be given one week following a student’s return to class. After one week, make-up work will not be accepted.
* All excused make-up work will be recorded as a **zero** (0) until turned in and graded. This is especially important to athletes as it may hinder your eligibility.
* Make-up work will not take grading priority over any other class assignments.

***Attendance and Tardies***

* If you are tardy, the SCHS tardy procedure applies. You should be familiar with this policy and follow it accordingly.
* If you know you are going to be absent let me know ***ahead of time*** so I can give you the work you will miss in advance.

***Academic Honesty (or Dishonesty: Cheating and Plagiarism)***

* Cheating is an old problem in schools. Simply put, cheating involves taking the work of others and turning it in with the intent of accepting credit for it as though it were your own. It sometimes seems like a solution to a problem, but it is only short term. Much of the work you do in here will require a good ear for listening and a good pen for notes. Much of the evaluation is based on your writing. If you have not listened in class, cheating won’t get you far anyway. If I see you cheating or have evidence of cheating in any way, shape, or form, you will receive a zero grade. Your parents, administration, and athletic coaches will be notified as well. Please take your own measures to discourage others from cheating by covering your paper during quizzes and not sharing your homework assignments from previous nights. I will be glad to take anonymous reports of cheating outside of class, and will address plagiarism and what it constitutes in class.
* Plagiarism – Using words or ideas of another person without giving credit to the original author.