

Advanced Placement Literature and Composition: Course Overview: 2016-17

Course Goal: The Literature and Composition course will provide you with the skills necessary for critical literary study. Through intensive reading, writing, speaking, and listening assignments, you will learn to read far beyond the text itself- Studies will include social, cultural and/or historical values represented within the text or relevant to the author's life/background. Senior AP addresses the composition of art, focusing on the artist and the meaning of the text, intended and unintended, for its time period and for today. This is, in every sense, a course for practiced readers and writers hoping to hone their already sharpened skills.

Student Performance Outcome: The Lewis Mills student comprehends written, visual, and auditory texts and communicates with clarity in a variety of modes.

Components of the Course:

Critical Reading/Writing: For every reading assignment, you will be asked to think critically: take literature apart (primarily prose, poetry, and drama), recognize its various elements, and explain how the writer's many creative choices contribute to the meaning of the work. For each genre under study, we will engage in inquiry learning which will require us to explore the social, cultural, and/or historical values associated with the time period of the text. The course culminates in Socratic seminars, which will ask you to apply a similar investigative lens in which you will research, draw conclusions, evaluate, and synthesize materials in order to propel the class' conversation and broaden the thinking of your peers.

Critical Study Questions: For each work, I may provide specific, directed questions, but over-arching all discussion will be the meaning of the work. Assessments will be in the form of actual AP questions. To add to your critical thinking skills, you may also examine popular/critical opinion, specific passages for study, or related quotes from noteworthy. As you read each text, makes notes on what appears to be the meaning of the work, and there may be many, and mark specific passages which support your opinion.

Critical Reading: For each text, you will be asked to find a critical essay, which may be supplied from time to time, but more than likely, you will have to find your own. There are a variety of sources for this: collections of essays in actual books (check with Mrs. Dias), any Norton critical edition of the text, literary journals and magazines, and, of course, the Internet. Our Learning Center has a number of web-sites purchased just for this study. Read the essay, identify the writer's important critical points, and write a brief response to the essay. You may want to evaluate the argument, critique the essay, or blast it altogether. You may use the essay on your assessments.

Poetry: A large part of the course is devoted to a study of poetry, covering a variety of aspects: form, structure, content, diction, sound devices, figurative language, tone, etc. . .

Assessments, Exam, and Projects: Individual novel and poetry assessments are authentic to the AP exam. The mid-term is a genuine AP exam. There is no final exam; however, student planned and facilitated seminars will occur.

The Writing Process: You will be asked to write routinely over the course of the year. Writing will take place through journaling/annotating, *writing to understand*; responding to discussion questions using evidence from the text to support claim(s), *writing to explain*; and responding to authentic AP prompts, *writing to evaluate*. During these time frames, instruction and feedback will be consistently provided as you work to elevate your writing through the development and use of a wide-range of vocabulary, and through varying your sentence structure. You will be expected to keep a writing journal in which you track new vocabulary words, record memorable quotes, and complete formative writing assignments. The writing process will include opportunities for peer review/revision. Additionally, I will offer clear and targeted feedback on all assessed writing assignments. Many of our writing will take place in a timed setting (see **Testing** on the next page); however, some longer writing assessments will be completed outside of class. You will know prior to engaging in the assessment if it will be a timed essay, or out of class assignment. If the assessment is untimed, we will engage in workshop days to check progress, bounce ideas off of each other, and/or edit and revise *our work*.

Modes of Writing and General Resources:

[Understanding Writing Assignments](#)
[Argument Essay](#)

[Synthesis \(Research Paper\)](#)
[Analytical \(Exploratory/Inquiry\)](#)

The Feedback Process: You will receive targeted and timely feedback on all major writing assignments, and on-going formative feedback on other assignments (journals/annotations/quick writes, etc.). Feedback is intended to help you grow as a writer. Areas of feedback comment on:

- ✓ Students writing overall (*verb tense, avoiding clichés, pronoun usage, organization and structure of writing*)
- ✓ Sentence Structure (*varied and appropriate for college level audience*)
- ✓ Diction (*appropriate to college level audience and vocabulary development*)
- ✓ Use of and evaluation of source material
- ✓ Synthesis of source material
- ✓ Audience, purpose, tone
- ✓ Structure (*modes of writing*)
- ✓

Please be prepared for spirited class discussion, lively debate, and high level challenge.

Advanced Placement Literature and Composition Expectation Sheet

Welcome to Advanced Placement Literature and Composition!

Preparation for class: You are expected to come to class prepared: materials in hand, assigned work completed, and ready to participate in class discussion. For all assessments, it is essential you have with you your copy of the current text.

Due dates: Please pay attention to these, they are important. If something arises and you cannot meet a deadline, I expect there to be a conversation *prior to* the deadline where you and I craft a plan to accomplish the work in a timely manner.

Academic Responsibilities: Academic responsibilities include assigned reading, independent reading, note-taking, preparing outlines, critical writing, researching, and preparing for projects and/or activities. If a student is on a field trip on a day an assignment is due, please hand in the assignment before you leave. If a student is absent on the day a written assignment is due, it is due the day s/he returns to school even if the class does not meet on that day. In the event the absence occurs before a week-end or vacation, the assignment should be e-mailed to me the day following the absence. In the event you e-mail me an assignment, you will receive a response indicating that I received the piece and could open it. If I cannot open it, you will not receive extra time.

Grading and Scoring Tools: Grading is done on a point system: more complex, challenging, or time-consuming assignments are worth more points. Written assessments will be scored using a rubric. For grading, the rubrics' levels of performance have been converted into point ranges and equivalents. Scoring tools (rubrics) will be provided to students prior to each assessment. If assignments maybe revised/redone, you will be informed prior to the administration of the assessment.

Main Scoring Tools:

- ✓ [From Jim Burke, "What's the Big Idea?"](#)
- ✓ [AP Analysis Rubric](#)
- ✓ [Common Core Standards rubrics](#)
- ✓ [Poem Analysis Rubric](#) (*Quick Writes*)
- ✓ [AP Poetry Analysis Rubric](#) (*Extended Responses/Summative Assessments*)
- ✓ [Synthesis Rubric](#)

Testing: Because national tests are timed, it is important for students to learn to work under timed situations. Students must learn to think quickly, get to the heart of the question, and formulate a clear, focused and accurate response. Therefore, during many of the assessments, students will be held to a one-period time frame (*50 minutes*). Please do not stay into the next class or ask to come after school. Unfortunately, students who do not complete assessments will be penalized for incomplete responses, as they would be on the AP exam. I am not trying to create a stressful testing environment: rather, I hope to prepare you for one that already exists.

Make-Up Work: If you miss class, check the agenda for the day via the class webpage. If you miss an assessment, I usually write your name on it, date it, and put it in the folder in the English office. Please make up work in a timely fashion. You will be held to the school make-up policy. Students who fail to make up work per school policy will be issued zeroes for the missed work.

Academic Ethics: Students are expected to demonstrate ethical academic behavior. This includes completing all the reading unaided by suspect web-sites such as Cliff Notes, Spark Notes, and Wikipedia; avoiding either deliberately or accidentally plagiarizing other writers or works; correctly citing all sources; refraining from using failed e-mails and computer glitches as extension-getting devices; and maintaining security regarding test information. There is a zero tolerance policy for any type of plagiarism, intended or not.

Questions and Concerns: If you have a question or concern, please speak to me directly.

Help: I will help you whenever I can. Feel free to see me before, during, or after school, but please do wait until the last moment to ask for help, such as the night before an assessment is due.

I look forward to working with you!

Potential Reading List:

Hardy, Thomas. *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

Shakespeare: William. *Othello or Hamlet*

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*

Bronte, Charlotte. *Wuthering Heights*

Guest, Judith. *Ordinary People**

Faulkner, William. *As I Lay Dying**

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*

Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*

Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman**

Ibsen, Henrik. *A Doll's House*

Williams, Tennessee. *The Glass Menagerie*

Dickens, Charles. *Great Expectations*

Hosseini, Khaled. *The Kite Runner*

Atwood, Margaret. *Various Titles*

Perrine's Sound and Sense

- *Poets: Tennyson, Shakespeare, Owen, Dickinson, Randall, Brooks, Williams, Hughes, Housman, Donne, Plath, Reed, Wordsworth, Frost, Wilbur, Bishop, Emerson, Whitman, Heaney, Auden, Browning, Cummings, Yeats, Cullen, Nash, Angelou, Ferlinghetti, Atwood, Thomas, and Rossetti*

**Summer Reading*

Units of Study:

The Tragic Formula: (Hardy and Shakespeare)

Number of Weeks, 4-6

Overview:

In this unit, students will explore the Tragic Formula through two texts: Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and Shakespeare's *Othello*. Students will be asked to read, interpret, and evaluate texts based on the components of the tragic formula. Students will be asked to find and consider critical analysis of each text, which may include social and historical influences.

Through various writing assignments and seminar discussion, students will focus on applying Aristotle's tragic formula to both *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *Othello*. Students will draw comparisons between the texts' protagonists and antagonists. Further, they will discuss the idea of fate vs. free will as it applies to the decisions the characters make within each text. Using the evidence students gather from both texts, and Aristotle's formula, they will craft the following summative assessments to explore the concept of the "Tragic Hero":

1. Othello storyboard or Essay: (*Producing to explain/evaluate. Work is to be completed outside of the class time*)

Student Directions:

- ✓ Select from one of the following products to display your learning: Argument Essay or Storyboard
- ✓ Using Gale Resources (visit The Learning Center website for the correct link), select a critical analysis piece relating to the themes/motifs found within *Othello*.
- ✓ Read the critical analysis piece and annotate the text to support your opinions/conclusions of *Othello* as it relates to the concept of *Tragedy*.
- ✓ Finally, in a well-crafted essay or storyboard, demonstrate your learning by defending/refuting the thesis of the chosen source document.

Scoring Tools:

Storyboard Choice: [Storyboard Rubric](#)

Essay Choice AP Literature Free Response Rubric: [From Jim Burke, "What's the Big Idea?"](#)

*Regardless of choice- Assessment is worth a total of 50 points.

2. Casterbridge Essay: (*Writing to Evaluate. Timed essay*)

While there are many meanings of the work, Hardy is concerned primarily with two visions: the working out of the tragic formula and the affirmation of the Hardy Universe (Think *Darwinism*). You will be asked to select a question on which to write. Your analysis must include an introduction which demonstrates a complete and thorough understanding of the text (avoid summary!) and question, a response marked by a strong critical voice, many apt references from the text and critical readings (as they apply), and extension of the examples.

(please note prompts have been intentionally left off of the syllabus)

Scoring Tool:

AP Literature Free Response Rubric: [From Jim Burke, "What's the Big Idea?"](#)

Perrine's Sound and Sense

Number of Weeks, 1-32

Overview:

*Students in AP Literature and Composition will remain engaged with Perrine's **Sound and Sense** throughout the entirety of the year. The reading of poetry and accompanying exercises will be woven into the daily instruction of the course. Students will examine "What Poetry is," how to "Read the Poem," and how to "Evaluate the Poem." As students work within this text, they will analyze poetry based on careful observation of textual details.*

Details include the author's use of:

- *Denotation and Connotation;*
- *Imagery;*
- *Simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, metonymy and synecdoche;*
- *Symbolism and Allegory;*
- *Paradox, Overstatement, Understatement, Irony (verbal- Satire and Sarcasm);*
- *Allusion;*
- *Tone;*
- *Meaning and Idea;*
- *Musical Devices;*
- *Rhyme and Meter;*
- *Sound and Meaning;*
- *Pattern.*

During the course of the year, students will also hone their skill on Writing about Poetry. They will examine and evaluate papers that focus on a single poem, papers that compare and contrast poems, and papers on a number of poems by a single author. During this unit, students will use their journals as they write to understand, explain, and evaluate.

Formative assessments will be in the form of “quick writes” in which students write to understand and explain the text in relation to the author’s use of his/her chosen details. *For example, students will read “The Juggler” by Richard Wilbur and select a reading lens to use as they analyze how the speaker describes the juggler and what that description reveals about the speaker (AP Quick Write #1). Or, using examples from “Promises Like a Pie-Crust” by Christina Rossetti, students are asked to describe the form and structure of the poem, and how the author’s sentence structure (syntax), use of repetition, parallelism, and paradox affect the meaning of the poem (AP Quick Write #2).*

Summative assessments ask students to evaluate:

- Compare how poets use different imagery, figurative language, and poetic devices to convey a shared view
- Analyze how two poets present similar themes and how each is effective in his/her presentation of that theme.
- Compare and contrast a body of work from a poet of choice in order to analyze the poet’s message as being meant for a private or public audience.

Scoring Tools:

[Poem Analysis Rubric](#) (Quick Writes)

[AP Poetry Analysis Rubric](#) (Extended Responses/Summative Assessments)

First Impressions and Dueling Societies

Number of Weeks, 4-6

Overview:

*In this unit, students will be exploring the world of Regency England and the social norms associated with it. **Pride and Prejudice** on its surface seems to be a novel of manners; however, Austen’s thesis involves a warning about the dangerous nature of first impressions. As critical readers, students will explore the resolution of the novel, specifically how it is based on the alteration of characters, their “education” and full self-awareness; a “moral flowering” that shows great potential in human beings. Students will understand that as Austen’s characters perfect themselves, they imbue perfection on their world: civilization has refined its humanity. This novel even-handedly presents a world of dualities and often, the clash between an established world and an emerging one: feudal and mercantile, titled and untitled, upper class and middle class, old money and new money, materialism and charity, and city and country. Marriage provides a means of merging these dualities.*

*During this unit of study, students will read a variety of criticisms in order to make evaluative claims about the themes within Austen’s text. Students will journal their reactions to “Austen’s Minimalism,” (Elfenbein); “Conjecturing Possibilities: Reading and Misreading Texts in Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*,” (Bonaparte); “Feminisms,” (Jones); and, “*Pride and Prejudice* and Zombies,” (Potter). Based on the connections between the text, the criticisms, and students’ understanding of Regency England, they will craft a synthesis essay (write to interpret) arguing if such “pride and prejudice” is evident in today’s society. To be successful, students will need to provide specific examples from Austen’s world, her text and her society, as well as specific examples from today’s society to defend/refute their claim(s).*

This summative assessment will require students to pay careful attention to the textual details presented in Austen’s novel, particularly how she has crafted her characters and used the actions of both static and dynamic characters to reveal her message. Students will work on the synthesis essay within and outside of class. Students will have 1 week to plan, draft, receive feedback, edit and revise before the final submission is due.

Scoring Tool:

[Synthesis Rubric](#)

[Common Core Standards rubrics](#)

Dueling families, Romance, and Vengeance

Number of Weeks, 4-6

Unit Overview:

*In this unit, students will be exploring the multifaceted layers of “love” through a drastically different lens than that of *Pride & Prejudice*. Students will read Emily Bronte’s **Wuthering Heights** in order to explore generational ties that bind us all. Students will examine four structural patterns within the text: *The Cycle of Names, A Union of Souls, Orphans and Outcasts, and The End of Tyrannical reign*. To do this work, students will pay close attention to textual elements in order to analyze and evaluate the themes of destructive passion and mutual love within the corners of the text. Additionally, students will explore the concept of vengeance as it relates to the development of the characters. As students read the text, they will need to pay careful attention to the shifts in points of view- students will need to make a determination of how well they trust the narrators of this text in order to determine character motivation. Additionally, as students read the text, they will need to access their prior understanding/knowledge of 19th c England (Victorian and the English industrial revolution) of which was covered during their study of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.*

After each section of the novel (prologue, History of the Family, and Epilogue) students will engage in a writing exercise exploring the structural patterns, themes, and motifs within the text. These writing assignments will focus on students’ ability to write about their reading: writing to understand and writing to explain.

Students may also be asked to create or continue the conversations of main characters in pivotal parts of the text in which they do not exist.

For example:

- ✓ *Continue the conversation between Heathcliff and Catherine (after Nelly has left the room) on the afternoon of their quarrel.*
- ✓ *Create the conversation between Isabella and Heathcliff in the garden on the day they eloped.*
- ✓ *Create the conversation between Isabella and Linton when he comes to her bedside near the end of her life.*
- ✓ *Create the interior conversation Heathcliff has with himself on the night he steals into the parlor to hold the dead Catherine’s body in his arms.*

To be successful in this area of study, students will need to remain within the specific character’s elements of characterization.

As a summative assessment, students will complete an in-class timed AP prompt.*

*(*please note prompts have been intentionally left off of the syllabus)*

Scoring Tools:

[Common Core Standards rubrics](#)

AP Literature Free Response Rubric: [From Jim Burke, "What's the Big Idea?"](#)

What’s Beyond the Text- Working with Types of Criticism

Number of Weeks, 2-3

Unit Overview:

*The novel, **Heart of Darkness**, invites readers to draw many conclusions, to come away with many interpretations. Its narrator even claims that the meaning of the story, “was not inside like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze, in the likeness of one of these misty halos that sometimes are made visible by the spectral illumination of moonshine.” For this reason, it is no wonder that since its publications in 1899,*

Heart of Darkness has been one of the most widely read and analyzed books written in English- which, of course, means it has been one of the most fascination for literary critics as well.

During this unit, students will become familiar with the types of criticism for which we look at literary works. After you have familiarized with the types, you will hone in on one type you find interesting- this lens (type) will become the basis for your own critical analysis. After you've chosen your lens, you will use your critical lens to analyze 4 passages from Conrad's text. To be successful, you'll need to ask yourself: How would this type of critic read this passage? What particular slang would s/he put on the text? What would s/he find important or significant (and less important or significant)? Finally, you'll need to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of reading literature through a particular lens, using the structure and Conrad's text to support your claim(s). (Writing to Explain and Evaluate)

Types of criticism to explore

Psychoanalytical Criticism 1

Psychoanalytical Criticism 2

Post-Colonial Criticism

Reader Response Criticism

Feminist Criticism 1

Feminist Criticism 2

Deconstruction Criticism

The Evolution of the Female Role in Drama

Number of weeks, 3-5

Unit Overview:

In this unit of study, students will read either "A Doll's House" or "The Glass Menagerie." They will study the elements of drama and explore the main themes and motifs in the play of their choice.

In "A Doll's House," students who desire to continue exploring the role of the female within society, can once again dive into the idea of society "treating women primarily as social ornaments or vessels." Throughout this play, students will explore Ibsen's craft, particularly how he emphasizes character over plot.

In "The Glass Menagerie," students who desire to explore the role of sibling relationships within literature, can dive into the life of Tom and Laura. Throughout this play, students will explore Williams' craft, particularly how he weaves in the motifs of illusion and magic into the construct of the play.

Objectives of the unit (regardless of text):

- Research and discuss the social and historical context of this time
- Understand the construct of a "well-made play" and explain how Ibsen's/Williams' play follows or does not follow the formula
- Look at Freytag's pyramid and assign plot elements to each part of the pyramid
- Look at and discuss the importance of irony and foreshadowing
- Read the play through the lens of feminist criticism
- Explain Ibsen's/Williams' use of language and his handling of figurative language within the text
- Analyze types of character and each type's relationship to the play's protagonist and antagonist
- Analyze various themes/motifs present in the play and what connections they may have to the social/historical time periods of the play.

As a summative assessment, students will complete an in-class timed AP prompt which addresses a passage connected to the text they've chosen to read.* (Writing to explain) The analysis will ask students to interpret specific elements of drama as each relates to the whole of the text.

(*please note prompts have been intentionally left off of the syllabus)

Scoring Tools:

Common Core Standards rubrics

AP Literature Free Response Rubric: [From Jim Burke, "What's the Big Idea?"](#)

Contemporary Issues

Unit Overview:

Using Khaled Hosseini's text ***The Kite Runner***, students will explore the idea of universal themes which are applicable beyond the corners of a text. Students read Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* in their sophomore year, so much of their time with this novel will be spent on drawing comparisons of his craft and structure from both stories. Students will draw upon their knowledge of the historical context in order to discuss how the elements of plot and characterization construct a text's theme. Additionally, students will spend time researching and building a timeline from the early 1980s (where the novel starts) to present day in order to discuss the social and historical implications of the novel within the Iraqi society. During this unit of study, students will explain the use of metaphor in setting, tone and mood; analyze the use of irony in creating tone and mood; analyze the function of the flashback structure as an element of craft and style; trace the development of complex and intertwining themes including such themes around the motifs of discrimination, the past, friendships, guilt; and students will analyze the impact the point of view has on this particular text. Throughout their reading, students will spend time journaling reflections based on the text, paying careful attention to textual details and evidence. This process will aid students as they read and write to understand contemporary issues within our society.

As a summative assessment, students will complete the 2007 AP free response question using Hosseini's text as a basis for their analysis. This will be a timed, in-class assessment.

(*please note prompts have been intentionally left off of the syllabus)

Scoring Tools:

[Common Core Standards rubrics](#)

AP Literature Free Response Rubric: [From Jim Burke, "What's the Big Idea?"](#)

EXAM TIME

Post Exam- Yahoo

Unit Overview:

As students near the end of their senior year, they may choose from a variety of AP literature worthy texts they'd like to read. Students can elect to run literature circles, select to read novels as a class, and/or complete an author study. Classes will run using a seminar style in which students are responsible for drafting questions and carrying the bulk of the class discussion. Seminar discussions must demonstrate a synthesis of learning from the course of the year. Students will be responsible for bringing the following into their class discussions:

- ✓ A Literary lens from which to read the text
- ✓ Applicable criticism(s)
- ✓ Connections to Historical/Social/Cultural time period(s)
- ✓ Questions which can propel conversation

Scoring Tools:

[Socratic Seminar Rubric](#)

[Common Core Rubrics](#)