

English Literature and Composition

Course Description

- This AP English Literature and Composition course is a one-year course broken down into four nine week grading periods.
- In short, we adhere to the guidelines set forth in the AP English Course Description.
- This college-level course prepares students to think critically about texts from the traditional western canon as well as global literature and engage in meaningful class discussions and Socratic seminars about the assigned texts. Students will read literature from both American and British authors as well as a sampling of texts from other countries including Canada, the Middle East, Africa, and Japan spanning time periods ranging from the sixteenth century to contemporary times.
- Students learn to examine both the cultural and historical values and ideas present in a given work as well as the universal values and essential questions these works represent. Students learn to do careful, deliberate readings in examining the following conventions: structure, style, figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and diction, among others. Thus, while a Socratic seminar topic for Catcher in the Rye might be to discuss the notion of an unreliable narrator in considering literary conventions, they may discuss the notion of what "normal" behavior looks like and whether there are universal norms in grappling with the themes of the text.

Reading and Writing Assignments

- The reading assignments include two texts which must be read during the summer leading up to the senior year. During the first semester, students are assigned the reading of three novels. All of this reading is done outside of class so that class time can be devoted to discussion and writing instruction. Second semester focuses on the genres of drama and poetry. Some of the dramatic readings are done in class and others are done as outside reading.
- Writing assignments are varied. Students will write interpretive essays focusing on textual details such as structure, style, and figurative language. Other essays are analytical, argumentative essays in which students form judgments about a literary work. These longer papers are written outside of class, and class time is spent in peer writing groups where students utilize the six traits plus one approach to evaluation and revision. These essays go through several revisions.

- In-class writings are also assigned in the form of annotation, free-writing, journals, blogs, and readers' response essays. Some of the prompts are related to the text currently assigned, and others are based on literary excerpts read in class with immediate responses required. In addition, timed writings are assigned and evaluated using the AP rubric. Sample essays are studied to improve students' understanding of the expectations.
- Quizzes are given over the required reading assignments in order to hold students accountable for their reading. Essay exams are written at the end of each semester; prompts for these exams are open questions from former AP exams.

Grading

- In short, students write 11 essays, one reflective journal over one of the two summer readings, and two final exam essays. They post entries to the class blog periodically over the course of the school year and complete reading quizzes over the assigned readings and poetry terms. They also receive grades for group presentations as well as AP packets. Misc. assignments may include the college interview and AP reading cards in preparation for the exam in May.
- A summer reading essay worth 100 points is completed for Invisible Man in which students are asked to write 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) outside criticism about the text and either affirm, refute, or qualify the criticism cited.
- A journal of reflective responses to specific quotations from Catcher in the Rye worth 50 points is our second assessment piece for the summer reading required for the course. This assignment is an example of writing to understand, an approach that helps students grapple with what they think about the text.
- Students participate in a college unit in which they go through a process of attending a mock college interview (optional) and constructing a keystone college essay worth 100 points. After students go through self evaluation and peer evaluation before the teachers extensively revise the first draft of the college essay before a final draft is submitted.
- Students write 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) in analyzing the three novels taught after the college unit: The Tin Flute, From Sleep Unbound, and Black Rain. These essays are worth 100 points each.
- Students write six timed writings worth 50 points each including two timed writings over old poetry prompts, two timed writings over universal prompts, and two timed writings over prose.

- The group presentations include mini-lessons over poetry terms worth 15 points and full-lesson presentations worth 100 points over The Inferno.
- Last, students are required to post on the class blog to devoted threads for each unit. They are to post a response worth 10 points for each entry in responding to a specific passage from the text by a required deadline and periodically are required to read peers' postings and affirm, refute, or qualify that peer's response. The goal of these postings is twofold: to write for an audience of their peers and to write to understand, an approach that helps students grapple with what they think about the text being discussed.
- Students examine models of previous college essays and sample AP timed writings. Students extrapolate from these models benchmark characteristics to model in their own writing.
- The teacher gives both narrative feedback and points to help students improve as writers in some of the following areas: voice, integration of evidence, wide-ranging vocabulary, rhetorical strategies, and coherence.
- The teacher conferences with students both before and after they write their essays as needed. Teachers share sample papers from previous years for the aforementioned units for those students who want models of well-written work, and they discuss specific goals to address in future writings.

Course Syllabus

August 15-16, 2006

- I will collect your research papers and your six-entry handwritten journal at the beginning of the block.

August 17-18, 2006

- I will discuss the college unit--begin thinking about your mock interview and start gathering college essay questions.
- You will begin working on the AP packets over Invisible Man

August 21-22, 2006

- We will work in pairs and groups of three to reach consensus on your answers for the AP packet for Invisible Man, and we will review the correct answers and make notes on packets.

August 23-24, 2006

- We will review the answers from the Invisible Man packets for the third passage and turn in your packets for a completion grade.
- We will have a Socratic seminar over Invisible Man in class today. The topic: Is Ellison proposing a solution to a problem or observing a recurring behavior in society?
- View sample class blogs on IM (including a sample response) from last year's class

August 25-28, 2006

- In preparation for our Socratic seminar, we're going to work on an activity called "You Be the Shrink"
- We will have a Socratic seminar over The Catcher in the Rye. We will also include "The Yellow Wallpaper" in our Socratic seminar, so please bring both texts to class today. Question: What IS "normal"? What does "normal" look like?

August 29-30, 2006

- We will view the Frontline video entitled "Secrets of the SAT" which offers an excellent perspective on the college admissions process.
- Time permitting, we will complete our first exercise in writing a personal narrative

August 31-September 1, 2006

- Listen to David Sedaris' Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim.
- Meet in small groups to reach consensus about your decisions on the sample essays and brainstorm a list of the criteria for the "yes" essays and why the "no" essays didn't work for you.

September 5-6, 2006

- Your first set of personal narratives are due.
- I will share advice in writing your college essays today.
- I will share Ines's Harvard essay and their feedback on how she did
- Distribution of the Yale packet

September 7-8, 2006

- I will share tips from a presentation from our Yale rep a few years back.
- Complete personal narrative essay assignment two.

September 11-12, 2006

- Share first sentences
- I will discuss the mock interviews.
- Discuss self analysis prior to the interview

- Discuss the [rubrics](#) that will be used to grade your college essays and that will serve as a guide during your peer editing session in our next class.

September 13-14, 2006

- Turn in your articles about yourselves
- Complete peer editing process with a minimum of 3 other people using [the rubric](#) discussed in our last class
- College talk

September 15-18, 2006

- Turn in your second draft of your college essays
- College talk

September 19, 2006

- College talk

September 20, 2006

- College talk

September 21, 2006

- College talk

September 22, 2006

- College talk

September 25-26, 2006

- Mock interviews continue this week.

September 27-28, 2006

- In G4, I will return your graded Invisible Man essays, and we will discuss [the tip sheet](#).

September 29-October 2, 2006

- Quiz over pages 49-87
- Continue discussion of The Tin Flute

October 3-4, 2006

- Continue discussion of The Tin Flute

October 6-9, 2006

- Quiz over The Tin Flute
- Continue discussion of The Tin Flute

October 10-11, 2006

- College essays are due.
- Discuss [tips for writing an AP essay](#) in G4
- Continue discussion of The Tin Flute

October 12-13, 2006

- Discuss [tips for writing an AP essay](#)
- Continue discussion of The Tin Flute

October 16-17, 2006

- Quiz over The Tin Flute
- Continue discussion of The Tin Flute

October 18-23, 2006

- Quiz over The Tin Flute
- Continue discussion of The Tin Flute

October 24-25, 2006

- review The Tin Flute in preparation for your in-class essays

October 26-27, 2006

- Final discussion of The Tin Flute
- Write your in-class essay for The Tin Flute

October 30-31, 2006

- Write your in-class essay for The Tin Flute

November 1-2, 2006

- Discuss [AP Reading Record Cards](#)
- Today's lesson is about the context in which From Sleep Unbound was written. We will discuss the notion of translation of texts

- Next, we will begin to consider the notion of family. We must always ask, when reading a text about another culture, whether the characters in the text are indicative of the people of that time or whether they are, in fact, the exception.

November 3-6, 2006

- Quiz over From Sleep Unbound
- Discuss From Sleep Unbound
- Read the directions to color-marking prose and poetry passages
- Complete a [color marking](#) of the xeroxed copy of the first two pages of From Sleep Unbound

November 7-8, 2006

- Briefly discuss your [color markings](#) in small groups and then share your conclusions with the entire class
- Quiz over From Sleep Unbound
- Discuss From Sleep Unbound

November 9-10, 2006

- Quiz over From Sleep Unbound
- Socratic Seminar: Marriage

November 13-14, 2006

- Quiz over From Sleep Unbound
- Discuss From Sleep Unbound

November 15-16, 2006

- Quiz over From Sleep Unbound
- Discuss From Sleep Unbound

November 17-20, 2006

- Quiz over From Sleep Unbound
- Discuss From Sleep Unbound

November 21-22, 2006

- Discuss From Sleep Unbound

November 27-28, 2006

- Discuss tone, the integration of evidence in your essays, questions to ask when reading prose, and some general issues with those Tin Flute essays I have graded thus far.
- Discuss From Sleep Unbound
- Discuss this fairly complex [blog posting](#) as an example of a more multi-layered, nuanced analysis of the text

November 29-30, 2006

- Receive copies of Black Rain, the Japanese aesthetics packet, and the "Eleven" packet of model essays.
- Discuss From Sleep Unbound

December 1-4, 2006

- Discuss models and introduce Japanese unit

December 5-6, 2006

- Quiz over the Japanese aesthetics packets and your reading of Black Rain
- discuss Japanese aesthetics packets
- Discuss Black Rain

December 7-8, 2006

- Discuss "Eleven" sample essays and scores in small groups and reach consensus before defending scores to the entire class.
- Quiz over reading of Black Rain
- Discuss Black Rain
- Homework: read pages 76-109 of Black Rain

December 11-12, 2006

- Quiz over reading of Black Rain
- Discuss Black Rain
- Susie is coming to do a college talk for the first half of the block; be prepared with questions.

December 13-14, 2006

- Quiz over reading of Black Rain
- Discuss Black Rain

December 15-18, 2006

- Discuss Black Rain

December 19, 2006

- Discuss Black Rain

December 20, 2006

- Final Exam

December 21, 2006

- Final Exam

December 22, 2006

- Final Exam

January 8-9, 2007

- view Black Rain

January 10-11, 2007

- Review sheet on writing about style for AP essays
- view Black Rain

January 12-16, 2007

- Quiz over reading of Black Rain
- view Black Rain

January 17-18, 2007

- Quiz over reading of Black Rain
- Discuss Black Rain
- I will share the [poetry terms](#) with all of you and have you sign up for your presentation of terms

January 19-22, 2007

- Quiz over reading of Black Rain
- Read Act One of All My Sons

January 23-24, 2006

- poetry terms "alliteration" through "assonance"
- All My Sons

- Timed Writing: Prose

January 25-26, 2007

- poetry terms "ballad meter" through "conceit"
- All My Sons
- Discuss out-of-class packet

January 29-30, 2007

- Socratic seminar for All My Sons: discuss allegiance to country versus allegiance to family.
- Cherry Orchard

January 31-February 1, 2007

- poetry terms "dramatic poem" through "extended metaphor"
- Cherry Orchard

February 2-5, 2007

- Poetry Quiz One over terms 1-20
- poetry terms "euphony" through "free verse"
- Cherry Orchard
- We will discuss [noted strengths and weaknesses of your papers](#) and discuss the importance of pre-planning as well as some general tips on how to attack a prose excerpt on the AP exam.

February 6-7, 2007

- poetry terms "heroic couplet" to "internal rhyme"
- Timed Writing: Prose (open notes)

February 8-9, 2007

- poetry terms "lyric poem" through "metonymy"
- Master Harold and the Boys
- Complete packet in class

February 12-13, 2007

- poetry terms "mixed metaphors" through "oxymoron"
- Master Harold and the Boys
- Timed Writing: Universal (closed notes)

February 14-15, 2007

- poetry terms "paradox" through "poetic foot"
- Master Harold and the Boys

February 16-20, 2007 (the 16th is a half day)

- Poetry Quiz Two
- poetry terms "pun" through "rhyme royal"
- Hamlet

February 21-22, 2007

- poetry terms "rhythm" through "sestet"
- Act One Quiz
- Hamlet

February 23-26, 2007

- poetry terms "simile" through "structure"
- Hamlet
- Discuss out-of-class packet

February 27-28, 2007

- poetry terms "style" through "syntax"
- Act Two Quiz
- Hamlet

March 1-2, 2007

- poetry terms "tercet" through "villanelle"
- Hamlet

March 5-6, 2007

- Culminating Test over Poetry Terms
- Act Three Quiz over rest of Act Three
- Hamlet
- Timed Writing: Universal (closed notes)

March 7-8, 2007

- Hamlet soliloquy recitations
- Hamlet

March 9-12, 2007

- Hamlet
- **Timed Packet**

March 13-14, 2007

- Hamlet

March 15-16, 2007

- Hamlet
- Act Five Quiz
- introduce Inferno unit

March 19-20, 2007

- Hamlet
- **Discuss out-of-class packet**

March 21-22, 2007

- Hamlet
- In-class essay over Hamlet

March 23-26, 2007

- Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead

March 27-28, 2007

- Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead

March 29-April 9, 2007

- Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead
- **Timed Writing: Poetry (open notes)**
- Get Inferno books

April 10-11, 2007

- Inferno presentations

April 12-13, 2007

- Inferno presentations
- **Timed Packet**

April 16-17, 2007

- [AP Reading Cards](#) are due
- Inferno presentations

April 18-19, 2007

- Inferno presentations

April 20-23, 2007

- Inferno presentations
- Timed Writing: Poetry (closed notes)

April 24-25, 2007

- Inferno presentations

April 26-27, 2007

- Inferno presentations
- Timed packet

April 30-May 1, 2007

- Canterbury Tales

May 2-3, 2007

- Canterbury Tales

May 4-7, 2007

- I will present a mini-lesson on [preparing for the AP Literature and Composition Examination](#)

May 8-9, 2007

- I will present a mini-lesson on [preparing for the AP Literature and Composition Examination](#)

May 10-11, 2007

- May 10, 2007 AP Literature and Composition Exam is today!

May 14-15, 2007

- view [The Cutting Edge](#)

May 16-17, 2007

- view [The Cutting Edge](#)

May 18-21, 2007

- Special Annual Closing Activity

May 22-25, 2007

- Final Exams

Texts

Allighieri, Dante. [The Inferno](#). Trans. John Ciardi. New York: Signet, 1982.

Chaucer, Geoffrey. [Canterbury Tales](#). Trans. Nevill Coghill. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960.

Chedid, Andree. [From Sleep Unbound](#). Trans. Sharon Spencer. New York: Penguin, 1973.

Chekhov, Anton. [The Cherry Orchard](#). Trans. Emily Mann. New York: Dramatists Play Service, 2000.

Ellison, Ralph. [Invisible Man](#). Philadelphia : Chelsea House Publishers, 1999.

Fugard, Athol. [Master Harold and the Boys](#). New York: Penguin, 1982.

Ibuse, Matsuji. [Black Rain](#). Trans. John Bester. New York: Kodansha, 1969.

Miller, Arthur. [All My Sons](#). New York: Penguin, 2000.

Myer, Michael. [The Bedford Introduction to Literature](#). 5th ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999.

Roy, Gabrielle. [The Tin Flute](#). Trans. Alan Brown. Toronto: McClelland, 1980.

Salinger, J. D. [Catcher in the Rye](#). New York: Chelsea House, 1996.

Stoppard, Tom. [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead](#). New York: Grove Press, 1967.

