



Syllabus

AP Literature & Composition

C. Glassel – WPHS

GOALS: Students will, upon completion of the course, be able to read, understand, analyze, and write coherently about complex literature. Students need to be able to recognize and understand the complex meanings that lie beneath the surface of the text. However, recognition and understanding are not enough. They are the beginning. For literature to have any significance, it must intersect with our lives. Thus, students must also be able to draw connections between life and the themes and profundities of the work. Through writing and other various media, students must demonstrate their understanding of the work and its relevance to human existence. The demonstration of understanding forces students to make concrete the abstract, to shape formless understanding into a tangible, communicable whole.

MEANS: Accomplishing the task that lies before us requires instruction and a great deal of practice. The following list of works is subject to alteration as the needs of the class dictate. However, it should provide everyone with a clear idea of the types (and level) of literature we will read and analyze throughout the year in an effort to hone our skills.

- **Summer reading:** To establish key themes we will revisit throughout the year, to provide me with a baseline reading of their skill levels, and to practice their analysis and composition skills, students will read the assigned novel and complete the summer-reading project (available on my Google Classroom site).
 - Summer reading packet
 - “The Gernsback Continuum” by William Gibson
 - *The Peripheral* by William Gibson
- **Establish expectations:** Before going into too much depth, we need to establish the basic expectations for AP work. The students need a clear understanding of the new level of rigor associated with taking (and passing) a senior AP class.
 - AP course description
 - AP writing rubric
 - Sample AP Literature test
- **Introduction to literary analysis:** Following the initial clarification of expectations, we will begin the year by practicing basic analytical skills, examining several established critical theories, and applying those skills and theories to high-interest, level-appropriate short stories, music, film, art, and poetry. We will, in the beginning, limit the scope and complexity of the assignments and focus on basic skills such as explicating, identifying theme, identifying literary elements, connecting literary elements to theme, etc. At this stage, even simple analytical tasks will be difficult enough for the majority of students. Throughout the first semester, we will continue practicing and re-teaching until students demonstrate enough proficiency to justify moving on to larger, more complex works.
 - *Texts and Contexts 4th Edition* by Steven Lynn
 - *How to Read Literature like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines* by Thomas C. Foster

- *Perrine's Literature: Structure, Sound and Sense* by Thomas R. Arp
 - "Troll Bridge" by Neil Gaiman
 - "Stone Mattress" by Margaret Atwood
 - "Siren Song" by Margaret Atwood
 - "Requiem" by Christopher Douglas
 - "My Last Duchess" by Robert Browning
 - "Straight to You" by Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds
 - "Easy/Lucky/Free" by Bright Eyes
 - "Boom Boom Mancini" by Warren Zevon
 - "There, There" by Radiohead
 - "The Mercy Seat" written by Nick Cave, sung by Johnny Cash
 - "Pet" by A Perfect Circle
 - "The Rocking Horse Winner" by D. H. Lawrence
 - "The Secret Goldfish" by David Means
 - "Brownies" by Z. Z. Packer
 - "Chivalry" by Neil Gaiman
 - "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson
 - "The Destructors" by Graham Greene
 - "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" by Dylan Thomas
 - "Sleep Now in the Fire" by Rage Against the Machine
 - Numerous short films and other short fiction yet to be named
- **Intermediate and advanced literary analysis:** Now that students are proficient at using basic analytical skills, we move on to larger, more complex texts and, correspondingly, larger and more complex assignments (including the dreaded formal analysis paper).
- "Diving Into the Wreck" by Adrienne Rich
 - "These Things" by Charles Bukowski
 - "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" by T. S. Eliot
 - "Things We Knew When the House Caught Fire" by David Drury
 - "Murder Mysteries" by Neil Gaiman
 - *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck
 - *1984* by George Orwell
 - *Brazil* written and directed by Terry Gilliam
 - *Firefly* by Joss Whedon (full season) and *Serenity* by Joss Whedon
 - "Barn Burning" by William Faulkner
 - "Tedford and the Megalodon" by Jim Shepard
 - "The Devil on the Staircase" by Joe Hill
 - *Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare
 - *Othello* by William Shakespeare
 - "Grail" by Harlan Ellison
 - *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* written by Charlie Kaufman and directed by Michel Gondry
 - "The Almanac of Last Things" by Linda Pastan
 - "since feeling is first" by e. e. cummings
 - "The Second Coming" by William Butler Yeats
 - "The Hollow Men" by T. S. Eliot
 - "War's End" by Adam Haslett
 - "A Temporary Matter" by Jhumpa Lahiri
 - "That Evening Sun" by William Faulkner
 - "Proving Up" by Karen Russell
 - *Run Lola, Run* written and directed by Tom Twyker
 - *Upstream Color* written and directed by Shane Carruth

- **AP Test Preparation:** While practicing the test itself is not the central focus of the course, it is necessary as all students will take the AP test as their final. Of primary importance is helping the students become comfortable writing cohesive essays in forty minutes. Additionally, they need to be familiar with the test format and the types of questions asked and be able to dissect the questions. Beyond that, their individual aptitudes and skill sets will determine their performance.

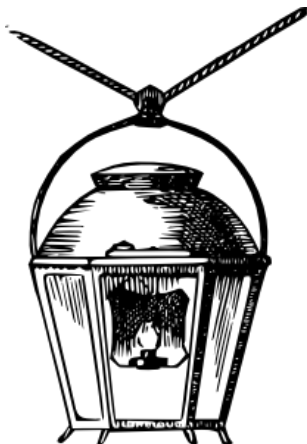
GRADING: This course will adhere to the Advanced Placement guidelines regarding academic expectations. Toward that end, no retakes are allowed. It is vital that students learn to budget their time and energy in preparation for the adult world of employment and responsibility. Moreover, as this course offers students the opportunity to earn college credit, I am bound to assess them at a college level. That means that regurgitating facts and parroting opinions is no longer sufficient. In order to succeed in this class, students will need to bring their own ideas to the table and be prepared to defend them in cogent, well-crafted language.

Unlike prior English classes, AP Literature and Composition focuses primarily on literary analysis. Our goal is to teach students a new way of examining and understanding story. Understanding and remembering the plot is now the *baseline* expectation. The coursework assumes that students read quickly, capably, and above their grade level. Students who do not will struggle with both the amount of reading and the difficulty of the works.

That struggle, however, is not without reward. Students who enroll in AP courses receive a significant boost to their weighted grade. Those grade points are, as previously stated, a reward and *not* a gift. Meeting baseline expectations in a senior AP course does not warrant an “A.” It warrants a “C” which indicates average work completed on time. In order to earn their accustomed grades, students must be prepared to work hard, learn from corrections, and adjust to the rigor of the course.

A (100 – 90)	=	EXEMPLARY WORK WHICH EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS FOR A STUDENT OF THIS GRADE LEVEL
B (89 – 80)	=	GOOD WORK WHICH NOT ONLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS, BUT—IN SOME AREAS—EXCEEDS THEM
C (79 – 70)	=	DECENT WORK WHICH MEETS EXPECTATIONS BUT DOES NOT EXCEED THEM
F (69 – 0)	=	SUBPAR WORK WHICH DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS FOR A STUDENT OF THIS GRADE LEVEL

NO RETAKES



STUDENT

I acknowledge that I have been made fully aware of the rigors and requirements inherent to AP courses and agree to abide by those requirements. I understand that failure to meet those requirements will adversely affect my grade and may result in removal from the AP course in question in order to best serve my academic needs. I further understand that the window for voluntary withdrawal from the course ends seven (7) days after class begins. Additionally, I acknowledge that I have been informed that enrollment in this class constitutes an agreement that I will take the AP Literature and Composition test as my final exam. Finally, I understand that failure to submit this signed form by the first day of class will result in my removal from the AP course in question.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

PARENT / GUARDIAN

I acknowledge that I and my student have both been made fully aware of the rigors and requirements inherent to AP courses. I understand that my student's failure to meet those requirements will adversely affect his/her grade and may result in their removal from the AP course in questions in order to best serve their academic needs. I also understand that the window for voluntary withdrawal from the course ends seven (7) days after class begins. Furthermore, I acknowledge that I have been informed that enrolling my student in this class constitutes an agreement that he/she will take the AP Literature and Composition test as his/her final exam. Finally, I understand that failure to submit this signed form by the first day of class will result in my student's removal from the AP course in question.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

