

AP Literature Syllabus

School Year 2025-26

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Office hours: before or after school by appointment and during Mentor



Course Description:

Course Title: AP Literature

Course Overview

This course is structured to strengthen the effectiveness of students' writing through close reading and frequent practice at applying the knowledge and skills universities and colleges typically expect students to demonstrate to receive credit for an introductory college literature course and placement into a higher-level literature course. The AP English Literature and Composition course aligns to an introductory college-level literature and writing curriculum.

Course Description

The AP English Literature and Composition course focuses on reading, analyzing, and writing about imaginative literature (fiction, poetry, drama) from various periods. Students engage in close reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature to deepen their understanding of how writers use language to provide meaning. As they read, students consider a work's structure, style, themes, and use of figurative language, imagery, and symbolism. Writing assignments include expository, analytical, and argumentative essays that require students to analyze and interpret literary works.

This course will be taken for Advanced Placement credit by taking the AP Literature and Language exam in May. AP (Advanced Placement Credit)

- **Credit:** This course is traditionally AP credit, meaning your chosen college or university could accept credit for this class if their criteria are met.
- **Fees:** A sitting fee is allotted for the exam (\$75). This fee will be paid by the district.

Course Objectives

The learning activities, assignments, and exams in this course assess your mastery of these learning objectives:

- ☐ Adopt appropriate tone, voice, and level of formality.
- ☐ Respond to the needs of different audiences.
- ☐ Understand how genres shape reading and writing.
- ☐ Understand a written assignment as a series of tasks.
- ☐ Be aware that it usually takes multiple drafts to complete a successful text.
- ☐ Understand the social and collaborative aspects of the writing process.
- ☐ Learn to critique their own and others' work.
- ☐ Control such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- ☐ Conduct college-level research using a variety of sources, both online and print
- ☐ Construct literary arguments supported by evidence and analysis.

Teaching Philosophy:

As an educator, my guiding principles and values center on the belief that all students have an innate desire to learn and succeed. This intrinsic motivation is the cornerstone of my teaching philosophy. In my classroom, I strive to create an inclusive environment where every student feels valued and

supported. This aligns with the College Board's equity and access statement, which advocates for allowing all students to succeed in rigorous academic programs. I ensure that my teaching practices and classroom policies reflect this commitment by differentiating instruction to meet diverse learning needs and fostering a culture of respect and collaboration.

My values are also closely aligned with Collegiate's core values, which emphasize the importance of academic excellence, integrity, and intellectual curiosity. I integrate these values by setting high expectations for my students, modeling ethical behavior, and encouraging students to take an active role in their learning communities. Albert Einstein's words also inspire me: "Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think." These insights reflect my commitment to fostering critical thinking and intellectual growth in my students.

In my educational philosophy, the student's role is that of an active participant in the learning process. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning, set goals, and track their learning and thinking. I explicitly demonstrate this in my classroom by creating a student-centered learning environment where students have a voice in their learning experiences and are encouraged to take risks and learn from their mistakes. For example, I use formative assessments and feedback to help students reflect on their learning progress and identify areas for improvement. I also provide opportunities for student-led discussions and projects, where students can explore topics that interest them and share their insights with their peers. By fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning, I aim to empower students to become lifelong learners and active contributors to their community.

This syllabus for AP Literature incorporates a variety of learning experiences that align with my belief in the intrinsic motivation of students and the importance of preparing them for success beyond high school. One specific learning experience that demonstrates this is the literature circles, where students work in small groups to read and discuss a novel of their choice. This activity not only promotes a love of reading but also allows students to take an active role in their learning, collaborate with their peers through positive discussions, and develop their analytical skills.

My philosophy of education is guided by the belief that all students want to learn and achieve success. Most importantly, I am committed to being a lifelong learner myself, continually seeking new knowledge and innovative teaching methods to inspire my students to love learning for life. I strive to instill a passion for lifelong learning in my students, ensuring they remain curious, informed, and motivated throughout their lives.

TEXTS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS: For most units, students will select their novels or plays from a choice of six or seven for reading/literature circle discussion, group work, and some assessments. Small groups may suggest other texts of comparable complexity, structure, and style. Students will analyze short fiction passages from the primary texts, short stories, or past AP English Literature short fiction prompts. Students will analyze poetry from a range of literary periods; some of these poems will be taken from past AP English Literature poetry prompts. Also, students are encouraged to independently expose themselves to a range of classical and contemporary poetry through "Poem-A-Day" through the Academy of American Poets. Even with such freedom of choice, students or parents may find that texts are controversial from a specific cultural viewpoint, "including depictions of nationalities, religions, ethnicities, dialects, gender, or class" (CED 117). According to the College Board, "AP students are not expected or asked to subscribe to any one specific set of cultural or political values, but are expected to have the maturity to analyze perspectives different from their own and to question the meaning, purpose or effect of such content within the literary work as a whole" (CED 117). Readings or discussions in class concerning controversial topics are sensitively handled and restricted to appropriate academic discussions. Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher with any concerns.

Primary Texts: For most units, students will select from novels or plays that align with specific themes, skill development, and stylistic characteristics of a literary period. Because these texts are meant to be read and discussed in small groups, options are limited to six or seven.

Class Readings and Discussions:

First Semester

- “The Garden Party”
- “Trifles”
- How to Read Literature Like a Professor by Thomas C. Foster
- The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka
- “The Importance of Being Earnest” by Oscar Wilde
- “Girl”
- “Everyday Use”
- “Charles”
- “Lamb to the Slaughter”
- “The Veldt”
- “I Stand Here Ironing”
- “A Rose for Emily”
- “Musée des Beaux Arts”
- “Women”
- “Metaphors”
- “To An Athlete Dying Young”
- “A Noiseless Patient Spider”
- “The Black Walnut Tree”
- “The Wood-Pile”
- “The Drone”
- “Oxygen”
- “The Convergence of the Twain”
- Other selected stories

Second Semester (*pending, more to add in Spring 2026*)

- “Rime of the Ancient Mariner”
- Selected American Short Stories and Plays \
- *Hamlet*
- Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

Independent Reading: Each Semester, there will be one additional independent novel assigned to you. Select a novel from the attached list for each semester.

Course Policies

Course Participation

To get the most out of this course, you will need to be an active participant and learner. The content of this course will be accelerated to address all of the course goals and objectives. Being prepared and engaging in the coursework is essential.

Attendance

Attendance will be taken during the first 10 minutes of each class period. It is imperative that each student is present during this timeframe, or they will be marked tardy or absent.

Academic Integrity

"If you didn't write it, you have to cite it. Cite every line, every time."

Collegiate School of Medicine and Bioscience expects all students to abide by ethical academic standards. Academic dishonesty—including Artificial Intelligence, plagiarism, cheating, or copying the work of another, using technology for illicit purposes, or any unauthorized communication between students to gain an advantage during an examination—is strictly prohibited. Collegiate's Academic Integrity Policy covers all school-related tests, quizzes, reports, class assignments, and projects, both in and out of class. The purpose of Collegiate's Academic Integrity Policy is to prepare students for the reality created by the technology explosion, for the world of college and beyond, where cheating and plagiarism have dire consequences. All writing must include internal citations and a works cited page. Fabricated sources are common with generative AI (ie, Chat GPT, Grok), which is why we need to cite them every time.

Consequences:

Refer to the student handbook

Submitting Work

- Coursework must be submitted electronically via Teams or Turnitin.com per the instructor's discretion. Assignments must be formatted using MLA guidelines.
- **Completion vs. Best Work:** The instructional goals of this course are to address the learning standards specified for this course and are grade-level specific. The assignments given are based on these standards, and students' performance will be assessed based on their mastery of these standards. Assignments will not be graded on completion but on the level of mastery reflected. The grades received on all assignments are not based on completion but must reflect the best work of the student to show the level of mastery.

Late Work Submission:

All assignments must be complete and meet the expectations provided in the assignment details to be reviewed for a grade. Assignments must be submitted on the designated due dates. Otherwise, there will be a **20% deduction** on all late assignments. **Late work will not be accepted or graded after the assignment closes. Assignments close 7 days from the original due date. Please be sure to observe ALL the assignment details provided in Teams.**

It will be at the instructor's discretion to accept and review any assignments not submitted by the final due date.

Assignment Feedback

In this course, getting feedback on your writing is a critical component of learning. Therefore, you will receive feedback on the majority of your writing assignments. More specifically, you will see feedback on two levels: the microlevel and macrolevel of writing.

- **Microlevel:** On this level of feedback, I will help you learn to identify and fix errors in grammar and mechanics. I will highlight patterns of error (but not every error in your writing) to get you to spot and correct these errors in future writing. These errors may include comma mistakes, pronoun errors, subject-verb agreement, sentence structure, citation, and more.
- **Macrolevel:** On this level, you will receive feedback on what I consider “higher order” writing concerns. These include issues surrounding the organization and development of ideas, thesis/main idea construction, depth of research, clarity, audience, and more.

As you learn throughout this course, the goal is that you will make fewer errors, learn to proofread your writing effectively and become a more attentive reader and writer on various levels.

Grade Composition

<i>Individual Papers, Projects, and Presentations</i>	30%
<i>AP Test Preparation (Tests and Quizzes)</i>	30%
<i>Participation: Group Projects and Presentations</i>	20%
<i>Final Exam</i>	15%
<i>Homework</i>	5%

- *Prompted Writing will be scored using the 0-6 AP scoring rubrics and scoring guides*
- *Papers, Projects, Presentations, and Homework will be graded using rubrics that draw from the language of both the Common Core State Standards and the AP Lit rubrics. Grades will be assigned using a 10-point scale where A+ to A- = 90-100, etc.*

90-100%	A	Excellent Performance
80-89%	B	Good Performance
70-79%	C	Average Performance
60-69%	D	Not Mastering Concepts
0-59%	F	Unsatisfactory Performance

EXPLANATION OF KEY CLASSROOM CONCEPTS: Essential understandings and skills related to characterization, setting, structure, narration, and figurative language will spiral through all units. Literary Analysis skills are specifically articulated at the end of each explanation.

- **Use of Past Prompts:** While the prompts, designated scores for student samples, and scoring commentary for 1999-2017 found on AP Central have not been officially retrofitted, the classroom teacher will retrofit selected prompts to use thematically and to teach scaffolded literary analysis skills. Essays from 1999-2023 will be referenced as upper or lower-half essays. The teacher will provide direct instruction by showing examples of successful thesis statements, topic sentences, paragraph development, and conclusions. Anchor prompts for units may be switched out. Students may not be aware that they are working with past prompts early in the year.
- **Prompted Writing:** Students will be given opportunities to write past AP prompts for both formative and summative assessments. Students will write benchmark essays for all three FRQ’s at the beginning of the school year as a formative assessment. Students will have opportunities to adapt anchor prompts throughout their units of study to address the concerns of their selected texts. For example, students may review the 2009 Edward Field “Icarus” prompt, then adapt it to write about an assigned poem, such as Carol Ann Duffy’s “Mrs. Sisyphus.” Prompted writing may also be used as a

summative assessment at the end of a semester or school year. Students will have an opportunity to revise their most prompted written essays. Prompted writing will be evaluated by focusing only on the skills that have been taught during and before a particular unit. Sometimes students may only write a thesis statement or a paragraph. As the year progresses, prompted writing scores will go into the Tests and Quizzes category (30%). (LAN 7.A-7.E)

- **Major Papers:** Major Papers consist of analytical, argumentative essays. Most prompted writing essays will be revised. Students will have multiple opportunities to write and rewrite drafts before turning in the final essay, complete with a title page and a works cited page. Students will submit outlines and drafts to the teacher for comments and participate in peer review sessions. Extended papers will be revised at least once. Through the drafting stages, the teacher will provide explicit instruction and feedback on how to develop appropriate and effective diction and syntax, achieve logical organization and coherence, and balance evidence and commentary. Major Papers will be graded using rubrics that draw from the language of both the Common Core State Standards and the AP Lit scoring rubrics. (LAN 7.A-7.E)

- **Major Projects and Presentations (Group and Individual):** Presentations may include small group PPT presentations where students each write a paragraph and share their analysis about different “shifts” of the same poem, or they might be more formal. Students will have multiple opportunities to write and rewrite drafts before turning in the final essay, complete with a title page and works cited page. Students will submit outlines and drafts to the teacher for comments and participate in peer review sessions. Extended papers will be revised at least once. Through the drafting stages, the teacher will provide explicit instruction and feedback on how to develop appropriate and effective diction and syntax, achieve logical organization and coherence, and balance evidence and commentary. Major Papers will be graded using rubrics that draw from the language of both the Common Core State Standards and the AP Lit scoring rubrics. (LAN 7.A-7.E)

- **Major Works Data Sheets:** As students read novels or plays, they are required to complete this assignment. Using credible resources, students must research the background of the writer, the cultural and historical contexts of the work, and later in the school year, relevant criticism about the author’s work. Students must focus on characterization, setting, structure, style (figurative language, diction, syntax, etc.), and narration throughout the Major Works Data Sheet. Students must correctly cite sources through MLA parenthetical citations and works cited entries.

- **Socratic/Fishbowl Discussions:** Students will engage in scholarly discourse about both fiction and non-fiction texts. Students may analyze the style or structure of a fictional piece, make judgments about its quality, interpret its meaning, and/or use critical essays or other critical frameworks to analyze a text. Students must come prepared with questions, and they must show evidence of active speaking and listening. Discussions will be evaluated for both preparation and contribution to the discussion using a standards-based rubric. Scores may go into any of the categories (Major Papers and Presentations, Tests and Quizzes, Homework) depending on the purpose of the discussion.

- **Quick-Writes/Journal:** Quick-writes are informal writing assignments that focus on student exploration of a text. Students may be asked to reflect upon, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate elements of a text. Assignments may or may not be graded. If graded, scores will go into the Homework category (5%). (LAN 7.A-7.D)

● **Blogs/E-Portfolios (pending for 2025-26):** Students will publish major papers, projects, and reflections on their blogs or in Class Notebook throughout the year. All assignments will be evaluated before the student publishes materials. Students will benefit from the E-Portfolio, as they will have a tool for personal development through reflections and peer feedback; they will also have a personal learning record and a concrete way of showcasing strengths to admissions counselors, scholarship selection committees, future professors, or future employers. E-Portfolios and Reflections are evaluated at the end of each semester using a standards-based rubric. E-portfolio grades go into the Finals category (15%).

● **Reflective Writing:** Students will be given multiple opportunities to reflect on their work. Each reflection will focus on the description of the task, an interpretation of the scores, and specific measurable steps for improvement. Formal reflections will be posted to student Blogs/E-Portfolios. Most reflection grades go into the Homework category (5%).

● **Personal Progress Checks:** The Personal Progress Check, available through the College Board, is an “online tool that measures student progress through each unit and throughout the year. Made up of formative AP questions, personal progress checks measure content and skills in each unit through multiple-choice questions that are scored automatically and include rationales to explain correct and incorrect answers and free-response questions with AP scoring guidelines teachers can use to evaluate student answers” (“Tools for Teachers”).

● **Creative Writing:** Students will be given various opportunities to internalize a writer’s style or structure through creative assignments. Students will not be evaluated on the quality of the piece; rather, they will be evaluated on to which they incorporated components of the form. Scores will go into the Homework category (5%).

● **Instructional Activities:** A variety of instructional activities will allow students to practice applying the core skills throughout the course. Examples of instructional activities and guiding questions that will be adapted and used can be found on pages 118-132 in the CED Binder. Sample activities have been included in each unit.

● **Use of Film:** Various clips will be used to reinforce themes or to model how to “see and hear” a poem or passage through elements of mise en scene, such as characterization (costumes, hair, makeup, props), setting, camera angles, editing cuts, sound, etc. Students will storyboard passages or poems to help them be more analytical about literary elements within the texts they read.

● **Use of Technology:** Syllabi, calendars, assignments, classroom resources, and grades are accessible through Microsoft Teams. Students may submit major papers online through Teams, College Board, or Turn It In (instructor's discretion.) Students are encouraged to use technology (Google Docs, etc.) to develop materials, collaborate, and peer review. Students are also encouraged to use online resources such as storyboardthat.com to customize their learning experience. Students will track performance through the College Board’s Personal Progress Checks.

I look forward to this school year. Please mark May 6th, 2026 as your national AP Lit Exam Day.
Ms. Rebecca Dersch

AP LIT Independent Novels

Ancient Texts

800 BC – *The Iliad* - Homer

800 BC – *The Odyssey* – Homer

Neoclassical

1722 – *Moll Flanders* – Daniel Defoe

1726 – *Gulliver's Travels* – Jonathan Swift

1749 – *Tom Jones* – Henry Fielding

1759 – *Candide* – Voltaire

Romantic

Any novel by Jane Austen

Victorian

Any novel by Charles Dickens

1847 – *Wuthering Heights* – Emily Brontë

1847 – *Jane Eyre* – Charlotte Brontë

1850 – *The Scarlet Letter* – Nathaniel Hawthorne

1851 – *Moby Dick* – Herman Melville

1856 – *Madame Bovary* – Gustave Flaubert

1866 – *Crime and Punishment* – Fyodor Dostoevsky

1871 – *Middlemarch* – George Eliot

1877 – *Anna Karenina* – Leo Tolstoy

1881 – *The Portrait of a Lady* – Henry James

1884 – *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* – Mark Twain

1886 – *The Mayor of Casterbridge* – Thomas Hardy

1891 – *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* – Thomas Hardy

1891 – *Billy Budd* – Herman Melville

1895 – *Jude the Obscure* – Thomas Hardy

1898 – *The Turn of the Screw* – Henry James

1899 – *The Awakening* – Kate Chopin

Naturalist

1900 – *Sister Carrie* – Theodore Dreiser

1900 – *Lord Jim* – Joseph Conrad

1902 – *Heart of Darkness* – Joseph Conrad

1906 – *The Jungle* – Upton Sinclair

1911 – *Ethan Frome* – Edith Wharton

Modern

1916 – *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* – James Joyce

1920 – *The Age of Innocence* – Edith Wharton

1924 – *A Passage to India* – E.M. Forster

1925 – *The Great Gatsby* – F. Scott Fitzgerald

1925 – *Mrs. Dalloway* – Virginia Woolf

1926 – *The Sun Also Rises* – Ernest Hemingway

1929 – *The Sound and the Fury* – William Faulkner

1930 – *As I Lay Dying* – William Faulkner

1932 – *Light in August* – William Faulkner

1932 – *Brave New World* – Aldous Huxley

1937 – *Their Eyes Were Watching God* – Zora Neale Hurston

1939 – *The Grapes of Wrath* – John Steinbeck

1940 – *Native Son* – Richard Wright

1947 – *All the King's Men* – Robert Penn Warren

1948 – *Cry, the Beloved Country* – Alan Paton

1949 – *Nineteen Eighty-Four* – George Orwell

Post Modern

1951 – *The Catcher in the Rye* – J.D. Salinger

1952 – *East of Eden* – John Steinbeck

1952 – *Invisible Man* – Ralph Ellison

1952 – *Wise Blood* – Flannery O'Connor

1953 – *Go Tell it on the Mountain* – James Baldwin

1958 – *Things Fall Apart* – Chinua Achebe

1960 – *To Kill a Mockingbird* – Harper Lee

1961 – *Catch-22* – Joseph Heller

1966 – *Wide Sargasso Sea* – Jean Rhys

1972 – *Bless Me, Ultima* – Rudolfo Anaya

1973 – *Sula* – Toni Morrison

1977 – *Ceremony* – Leslie Marmon Silko

1977 – *Song of Solomon* – Toni Morrison

1981 – *Obasan* – Joy Kogawa

1982 – *The Color Purple* – Alice Walker

1985 – *The Handmaid's Tale* – Margaret Atwood

1987 – *Beloved* – Toni Morrison

1990 – *The Things They Carried* – Tim O'Brien

1992 – *All the Pretty Horses* – Cormac McCarthy

2001 – *Atonement* – Ian McEwan

2003 – *The Kite Runner* – Khaled Hosseini

2006 – *The Road* – Cormac McCarthy

2008 – *4,000 Splendid Suns* – Khaled Hosseini

2012 – *Salvage the Bones* – Jesmyn Ward

2012 – *Purple Hibiscus* – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

2014 – *All the Light We Cannot See* – Anthony Doerr

2014 – *Americanah* – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

2017 – *Homegoing* – Yaa Gyasi

2018 – *Where the Crawdads Sing* – Delia Owens