

Spalding High School
Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition 2011-2012
Joshua Todd, instructor

joshua.todd@gscs.org

Website: <http://jatodd.pbworks.com/>

Course Description

AP English Literature and Composition is a year-long college-level course designed to engage students in close reading and critical analysis of rich literary texts as outlined by the *AP English Literature Course Description*. The course is reading and writing intensive. Throughout the year, students will develop skills in various forms of written expression and will prepare extensively for the AP exam in May. Participation in class discussion and learning activities is vital for learning, and each student is expected to come to class each day prepared to contribute.

In their interaction with literary texts and during instruction, students will learn literary terminology and wide-ranging vocabulary (including but not limited to words from literary texts and AP-exam questions) as well as acquire the necessary critical reading and writing (style and conventions) skills to interpret complex works, to write insightful compositions, to develop their own writing style, and to gain proficiency in AP test-taking skills.

An inherent part of the course is timely and detailed feedback from the teacher on writing throughout the writing process and opportunities for revision to aid students in their textual analysis and interpretive skills as well as in the cultivation of their own style of writing. Based on the teacher's assessment of individual student and whole-class weaknesses, instruction will be provided in

- apt use of diction to convey ideas,
- command of syntax (specifically the effective use a variety of sentence structures, including coordination and subordination),
- development of voice and tone in writing,
- organizational patterns and strategies that correspond to purpose and audience, and
- successful defense of interpretations and ideas (especially balancing concrete detail from the literary text with commentary on that detail).

Reading Assignments

The teacher will select British and American works from a variety of genres and time periods ranging from the sixteenth to the twenty-first centuries, acknowledging both the depth and breadth of the course and building upon the literary base of the students from their previous courses. Because the students enter AP English Literature from courses that have focused solely on American literature, the texts chosen are predominantly British. During the summer and academic year, students will have the opportunity to read novels or plays, short prose, and numerous poems in each thematic unit.

Writing Assignments

In this writing intensive course, students will write several short critical papers, performing a close reading of novels and short fiction and explicating poetry and drama. AP rubrics will be utilized in self-assessment, peer assessment, and teacher assessment. In addition to the formal, critical papers, you will write timed essays, informal responses and reflections, and two research based literary analysis papers. All papers written outside of class must be typed using MLA format. Late paper penalties are as follows: **10 points** if handed in late on due date; **15 points** if handed in next day and each subsequent day late. Regardless of the type of writing assigned, all submissions should be written carefully and thoughtfully demonstrating command of vocabulary, conventions, organization, coherence, diction, syntax, voice, and ideas. Students will write about literary works in ways which include but are not limited to the discussion of a work's structure, style, and themes; the evaluation of the impact that social and historical values have upon a work; and the analysis of a writer's use of devices such as figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone to reveal meaning.

Website

The website is designed as both a *supplemental* and *accountability* tool for parents and students. Visiting the site will be a required component of the class. All assignments are posted on the web in advance as well as links to much of the literature covered in class. Students and parents will also find many handouts pertaining to AP Exam preparation. If students are not in class, they should visit the website to find out what was covered in class on any given day.

Fall Semester

"Do I dare / Disturb the universe?": The Quest for Identity and Individuality

Summer Reading

How does environment shape character and identity?

Required: *The Catcher in the Rye* (Salinger)

Choice Novels: *The Awakening* (Chopin), *Jane Eyre* (Bronte), *Wuthering Heights* (Brontë), *Native Son* (Wright)

Short Story Blitz: "Araby" (James Joyce), "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" (Ernest Hemingway), "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" (Ernest Hemingway), "A & P" (John Updike), "Bartleby the Scrivener" (Herman Melville), "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been" (Joyce Carol Oates), "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings" (Gabriel Garcia Marquez), "Yellow Wallpaper" (Charlotte Perkins Gillman), "The Gilded Six-Bits" (Zora Neale Hurston), "Good Country People," "Revelation," (Flannery O'Connor), & "Why I Live at the P.O." (Eudora Welty)

Unit I: In what ways does guilt define the individual?

Atonement (McEwan)

Unit II: How can an individual discover his identity within strict social constraints?

Invisible Man (Ellison)

Unit III: How does an individual transcend society's expectations & develop a sense of community?

Song of Solomon (Morrison)

Unit IV: Is all evil of human origin in this best of all possible worlds?

Candide (Voltaire)

Other: Literary Terms Assignment, writing, writing, writing

Spring Semester

"Much madness is divinest sense": The Search for Purpose in an Imperfect World

Unit V: How does one overcome the social pretensions that exist in modern society?

The Importance of Being Earnest (Wilde)

Unit VI: How do assumptions about race, femininity and masculinity define social expectations?

Othello (Shakespeare)

Unit VII: Can people recover, forgive, and find purpose in a flawed world and achieve their dreams?

Death of a Salesman (Miller)

Unit VIII: Poetry: "Musee de Beaux Arts" (Auden), "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus" (Williams), "How Beastly the Bourgeois Is" (D.H. Lawrence), "Billiards" (Gibson), "The Hollow Men" (T.S. Eliot), "How Annandale Went Out" (Robinson), "To the Mercy Killers" (Randall), "Weary With Toil, I Haste Me to My Bed" (Shakespeare), "What Lips my Lips Have Kissed, and Where, and Why" (Millay), "The Naked and the Nude" (Graves), "To His Coy Mistress" (Marvell), "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (Eliot), "Barbie Doll" (Piercy), "Youth's Progress" (Updike)

Other: Extended Poetry Analysis, writing, writing, writing

Grading Scale

Major assignments: 55%

Daily Grades: 30%

Final Exam: 15%

Note: With each major literary work we will study this year, we will also study thematically related poetry, short fiction (including a unit on Georgia native Flannery O'Connor), and non-fiction. This includes a semester long poetry venture during second semester. *A detailed list of works and due dates can be found on the website during each unit of study.*

Multiple choice and timed writing practice for the AP Exam will be conducted within each unit of study as well. In-class writings will primarily be AP-based examinations, though there will also be quick-response, in-class writings as a basis for discussion. You should also gear up for some Xtreme Multiple Choice Challenge!

Textbooks and Resources

Arp, Thomas, and Greg Johnson. Perrine's Literature Structure, Sound, and Sense. 8th. Heinle, 2001.

Kennedy, X. J., and Dana Gioia. Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama. 9th. New York: Pearson Longman, 2005.

Roberts, Edgar, Writing About Literature. 10th. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003.