

AP Literature and Composition- Fort Cherry HS – Instructor--Ben Maxin

Course Overview

The *AP English Literature and Composition* course will prepare students, wishing to gain a beginner's college course based on college writing and literature. The course will enable students to increase writing and analytical skills as they prepare for college. The course will adhere to the syllabus, but will allow additional textbooks as well as other supplementary works.

Our district is divided into four nine-week segments. Students will write throughout the year. Students will complete two formal research papers using MLA formatting, as well as various writing assignments. All assignments will be based on AP recommended reading assignments in the form of abstracts and journaling. Assignments will be within three to six pages in length depending on the assignment weight. We will study both British and English authors throughout the year. [SC1, SC2, SC3, SC4, SC5, SC6, SC7, SC8, SC9, SC10-15]

Students will use two textbooks, *The Norton Reader 13th edition* and *Perrine's Literature; Structure, Sound & Sense*, as a guide for literary research. We will review writing structure and explore rhetorical theory. Classes will include short lectures and formal writing practices integrated into the various units.

Students will analyze poetry throughout the year. We will begin poetry lessons with a review of, *Poetry; The Elements of Poetry*, from, *The Bedford Introduction to Literature Reading, Thinking, Writing*. Lectures will include: literary devices, figurative language, word choice, etc. Students will read assigned AP suggested poems using the technique, *Talking to the Text*, to decipher and comprehend meaning. Students will compare ideas with peers and write a group essay on various literary schemes. [SC1, SC2, SC3, SC4, SC5, SC6, SC7, SC8, SC9, SC10-15]

This course is designed to comply with the curricular requirements described in the *AP English Literature and Composition* course.

Course Planner/Student Activities

Topic/Unit: Literary Analysis in Writing [SC1, SC2, SC3, SC4, SC6, SC11-15]

Approximate number of weeks: 2 (Summer Assignment)

Essential Questions: How does F. Scott Fitzgerald utilize literary devices in his text? How do individual life choices impact a community?

Once students turn in the summer reading assignment, I will grade, edit, and provide suggestions for revision. Students will engage in an informal discussion concerning *The Great Gatsby*.

Advanced Placement English 12 - Summer Assignment

The Great Gatsby prompts

- Complete the study guide – note page numbers and paraphrase the exact quotes as evidence to support your answers.

- Complete the three essay questions at the end of the study guide. Please submit one typed, double-spaced page for each prompt. Use the standards of 12-point font size and Times New Roman.
- Using legitimate Internet sources, type **at least a ½ page, double-spaced paragraph for each of your searches.**

Only one source is needed for each area of interest. Cite the Internet source web address at the end of each paragraph:

- o Cultural aspects of the setting and time period.
- o Historical aspects of the setting and time period.
- o Biographical aspects of the setting and time period.
- o Connect *The Great Gatsby* content to your findings

ESSAY TOPICS FOR *THE GREAT GATSBY*

1. Explain why it was inevitable that Gatsby fail in reaching his dream. Provide three reasons and explain how these reasons contribute to his failure.
2. What message does Fitzgerald have for the reader in terms of the American Dream and/or dreaming in general? What does he have to say about people's ethics and morals?
3. Select three symbols Fitzgerald uses in *The Great Gatsby*. Be sure to explain how it relates to the theme.

Topic/Unit: The Tragic Figure in Literature [SC1, SC3, SC6, SC7, SC8, SC11-15]

Approximate number of weeks: 4

Essential Questions: How does James Joyce treat the classical principles of the tragic figure in his nineteenth century novel? To what extent do the cultural and religious expectations of a society impact the roles of women in the 1800s?

Students will be assigned the book, James Joyce's *Dubliners*. They will be assigned sections to read and will be tested on reading comprehension as well as completing a short essay based on a specific prompt.

Topic/Unit: Poetry [SC3, SC5, SC7, SC8, SC9, SC10, SC11-15]

Approximate number of weeks: 4

I use *The Bedford Introduction to Literature* when reading poetry. The Bedford has most of the poems we will study throughout the school year. Students will study nineteenth century poets as well as contemporary poets. Some of the poets we will study are: John Updike, Robert Francis, E.E. Cummings, Matthew Arnold, Emily Dickinson, William Wordsworth, Robert Browning, and Langston Hughes. We will read most of the poems during class as we discuss and draw interpretations from the poems.

Students are required to post journal entries on the poems we are reading. They will write on questions they may have as well as independent analyses on each poem we read. They will discuss their individual interpretations during class and compare each other's findings. Students will write a poem using theme, style, structure, and literary devices. Students will present their poetry to the class and the student audience will interpret the speaker's poems as part of their journal entry work.

Students will read poetry throughout the school year. The poems chosen will be related to the thematic units we study. The poems used will provide another perspective on the theme we will currently be studying.

Topic/Unit: Writing with a Purpose [SC2, SC3, SC4, SC6, SC8, SC9, SC10-15]

Approximate number of weeks: 6

Essential Questions: How does George Orwell portray government's use of psychological manipulation to control society in *1984*? To what extent does the role of information (or dis-information) impact the actions of people?

"If people cannot write well, they cannot think well, and if they cannot think well, others will do their thinking for them."

~ George Orwell

Prompt - In *1984* the protagonist, Winston, attempts to "stay human" in the face of a dehumanizing, totalitarian regime. How does the governing body in *1984* exploit certain tendencies, weaknesses and even strengths that human beings possess in order to, ironically, control and dehumanize humankind? Based on Winston's fate, what is Orwell ultimately arguing (advocating, criticizing and/or warning against)?

☒ Samples of questions you may want to address in your essay:

☒ What qualities define being "human"?

☒ How does the Party exploit human nature/human characteristics to maintain control over the citizens of Oceania? – what does this say about political power and individual freedom? Why does it matter?

☒ How is it possible to turn a rebel into a faithful supporter of the government?

☒ Explain how techniques of surveillance, oppression and torture are related to human nature.

☒ What is the power of fear?

Once students have finished the novel, *1984* we will have a class discussion about government control and the manipulation of the people. Throughout the reading, students have been working on a study guide, which accompanies the novel. We will use the study guide as a tool for discussion. When students have finished a review, using the study guide they will take a comprehensive test on *1984*.

Topic/Unit: Use Characterization in Literature [SC2, SC3, SC5, SC6, SC7, SC8, SC11-15]

Approximate number of weeks: 6

Essential Questions: What are the causes of Hamlet's mental deterioration throughout the play? How does William Shakespeare portray the character of Hamlet?

Students will read *Hamlet* during class, they will have study guides and journal entries to complete each night. The journal entries will be submitted daily and should include questions as well as predictions concerning the mental deterioration of Hamlet. We will spend some time each day discussing student concerns, questions, and predictions in order to help student comprehension.

Students will be using a Hamlet Insanity Fever Chart to track their ideas, observations, and progressive deterioration of Hamlet's sanity. Students will complete a fever chart for each act of the play. They will use quotes and note the actions of Hamlet in order to observe the characterization of Hamlet. Students will write an explanation concerning the charting of Hamlet's actions and include acts and page numbers so that they have access to the information they have retrieved from the play. They will use the information from their Fever Charts as evidence for the arguments presented when writing essays.

--- **CANTERBURY TALES** --- [SC1, SC2, SC3, SC4, SC5, SC6, SC8, SC11-15]

Topic/Unit:

Approximate number of weeks: 4

Students will read one story per day. The Canterbury Tales are listed on The Canterbury Tales handout. The readings will take place at home students will answer one essential question each day. We will discuss any questions, interpretations, and thoughts students may have. Once they finish the assignments students will take a test on The Canterbury Tales

from: The Canterbury Tales: "The Prologue"

Essential Question: How does literature shape or reflect society In the Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*?

"The Pardoner's Tale"

Essential Question: "The Pardoner's Tale" emphasizes a very popular verse from the Book of Timothy in the New Testament: "The love of money is the root of all evil", can greed be good?

The Wife of Bath's Tale"

Using "The Wife of Bath's Tale" Imagine ourselves as listeners to the tale, we can recognize how the exemplary material, the conventions of the plot, and the explicit moralizing on gentility "raise in respective ironic, paradoxical, and hortatory (to strongly encourage) form or speech.

Essential Question: What does the problem of "dignity in fallen human nature" mean? Can you argue that Chaucer's works are best understood orally?

--- **A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE** --- [SC2, SC3, SC4, SC6, SC7, SC8, SC9-15]

Topic/Unit:

Approximate number of weeks: 5

Students will independently read *A Streetcar Named Desire*. They will answer journal entries as they read. We will discuss the reading from the day before as well as answer questions. We will touch upon the essential questions so students can begin drawing conclusions in order to present arguments based on the play.

Essential Questions – *A Streetcar Named Desire*, by Tennessee Williams

☐ How do we construct our own gender roles, relations, and identities? How do our society and culture reinforce particular forms of masculinity and femininity?

☐ How does social class impact our identities and our relationships with others? What does the class conflict in the play reveal about American society in the 1940s?

☐ In what ways does fantasy help and harm people who struggle to confront reality?

☐ In what ways can humans' primal desires be destructive forces?

☐ How does Williams use symbolism to develop the themes in the play?

--- **HEART OF DARKNESS** --- [SC2, SC3, SC4, SC5, SC6, SC8, SC9-15]

Topic/Unit:

Approximate number of weeks: 4

Essential Questions: To what extent do the mores of a particular time period define the tragic condition? How does the novel work on many levels to create a unified effect?

How does the definition of the tragic hero apply to the characters of the novel? What themes of mythology transcend time periods and how are they embedded in the human psyche?

In what ways are the themes of the *Things Fall Apart* reflected in the work? Is man in control of his destiny? How does man justify the existence of evil in the world? How does a particular society justify the existence of evil?

How does Conrad develop the characters of Marlow, Kurtz, and the Intended? How are the characters reflective of the society in which they live?

What can we learn about ourselves in a study of the characters of the novel? How does Conrad's diction affect our understanding of the novel?

What is close reading? What allusions are present in the novel? How can we create and use graphic organizers? How can we develop vocabulary and relate to words through denotation and connotation? How do we utilize textual evidence to create arguments and exemplify ideas?

This unit, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, will teach students to hone interpretation skills. I will assist them through the novel by guiding them through close readings of particular passages (which we will do as a class, then they will work in pairs or small groups, and finally individually), and allowing them to process information both verbally through class discussions and in writing via journals and essays. By the end of this unit, students will have further developed interpretive skills through close reading and analysis of the text, and continue to reinforce the importance of supporting their opinions with appropriate evidence from the text. With these skills, they will be able to access other complex text such as: novels, poems, or expository texts.

--- **THE HOBBIT** --- [SC2, SC3, SC6, SC8, SC11-15]

Topic/Unit:

Approximate number of weeks: 4

Essential Questions:

- 1. How do the decisions and actions of characters reveal their personalities?**
- 2. How can a person's decisions and actions change his/her life?**
- 3. What factors define a person's identity in *The Hobbit*? Do individuals have any power over who they become, or are their characters entirely determined by static factors such as family and race?**
- 4. What is the role of wealth in *The Hobbit*? Discuss various characters' attitude toward property and material goods. Whose viewpoint does the novel seem to endorse, if any?**
- 5. How does Tolkien's use of song in *The Hobbit*. What purpose do they serve in the story? What do the songs reveal about the characters who sing them?**

6. What is the attitude toward property and material wealth that emerges in *The Hobbit*. What are the pitfalls of possessiveness and materialism?

7. What is Bilbo Baggins searching for? What success does he have in finding it? What does his success, or lack of it, mean for him and others?

The Hobbit will be the last novel students will read. It is a book most students enjoy given the fact it is considered to be in the genre of fantasy. It is a fairly easy book to read and students should not have trouble reading the book. Students will have assigned readings every day and we will have an informal discussion on the previous day. Discussions will be short given the simplicity of the novel. We will continue on with our study of poetry and other projects during class time.

Textbooks and Other Materials:

Literature Works List:

- ☐ Novels and Anthologies
- ☐ *The Great Gatsby* – F. Scott Fitzgerald
- ☐ *Dubliners* – James Joyce
- ☐ *The Heart of Darkness* – Joseph Conrad
- ☐ *The Awakening* – Kate Chopin
- ☐ *Angela's Ashes* – Frank McCourt
- ☐ *The Hobbit* – J.R.R. Tolkien
- ☐ *1984* – George Orwell
- ☐ *The Canterbury Tales* – Geoffrey Chaucer

☐ **Plays**

- ☐ Hamlet – Shakespeare
- ☐ A Streetcar Named Desire – Tennessee Williams

☐ **Poetry**

- ☐ Various poems from; *Songs of Experience* – William Blake
- ☐ Emily Dickenson
- ☐ “After great pain, a formal feeling comes-”
- ☐ “Because I could not stop for Death”
- ☐ “A loss of something ever felt I”
- ☐ Langston Hughes
- ☐ “Song for a Dark Girl”
- ☐ “Red Silk Stockings”
- ☐ “Bad Man”

Various poems from *The Bedford Introduction to Literature Reading, Thinking, Writing* and the AP English Language and Composition Handbook.

Textbooks:

- ☐ *The Bedford Introduction to Literature; Reading, Thinking, Writing* – Bedford/St. Martin's, Boston
- ☐ *The Language of Composition; Reading, Writing, Rhetoric* – Bedford/St. Martin's, Boston
- ☐ *The Norton Reader* – W. W. Norton & Company/New York

- ☞ *Perrine's Literature; Structure, Sound, Sense* – Wadsworth/Boston
- ☞ *The Prentice Hall Reader* – Prentice Hall/St. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey
- ☞ *Ways of Reading; an Anthology for Writers* – Bedford/St. Martin's, Boston

Websites:

- ☞ AP Central – apcentral.collegeboard.com
- ☞ Word masters challenge – www.wordmasterschallenge.com

Other Supplements:

- ☞ AP English Literature and Composition – Workshop Handbook
- ☞ AP English Language and Composition – Workshop Handbook
- ☞ AP English Language and Composition; Rhetoric in Pre-20th Century Texts – Curriculum Model

Students, Parents/Guardians,

In addition to the syllabus, please review the contract below:

COURSE GOALS

1. Instructional activities will be presented to develop reading, writing, research, speaking, and listening skills.
2. Proficiency in the composition of various types of essays and journaling.
3. Students will review and use MLA formatting and if time allows, students will present conclusions based on the research conducted.
4. Extensive critical analysis of various works from all literary genres.
5. Students will read class novels independently.

ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE ACTIVITIES

1. Daily reading assignments.
2. Homework related to readings.
3. Participation in classroom discussions.
4. Essay writing and journaling.
5. Research project with presentation.
6. Group projects (peer editing).
7. Other activities pertinent to content of the course.

ASSESSMENTS

1. Follows the Fort Cherry grading system.
2. All assignments must be turned in on time. Points will be reduced to half credit when turned in a day late. Students, who turn in a project two days late, will earn a quarter of the overall grade. If an assignment is not turned in, it will result in a zero and an incomplete grade for the nine week grading period as well as the school year.
3. Graded homework assignments not completed by the due date will be graded as a zero - no exceptions.

To Parents/Guardians

Please feel free to contact me at any time. The most efficient means of communication is through email. Periodically, throughout the day, I check email for notification from parents, administrators, etc. Since I am teaching during the day it is difficult to accept phone calls. If you need to speak to me over the phone, please call between 2:49 and 3:19.

Ben Maxin
bmaxin@fortcherry.org
Phone: 724.796.1551 (High School Ext.)

Please read the syllabus and sign below. Students will be given points for returning the syllabus contract. Once the student and parent/guardian sign; cut the bottom portion off and return it to me within the first week of school. Make sure you keep the syllabus for reference

I have read the syllabus and understand what is required to complete AP Literature and Composition.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent signature _____ Date _____

| Scoring Components | Page(s) |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <p>SC1 The course includes an intensive study of representative works such as those by authors cited in the AP English Course Description. By the time the student completes English Literature and Composition, he or she will have studied during high school literature from both British and American writers, as well as works written in several genres from the sixteenth century to contemporary times</p> | <p>1,2,4, 11-15</p> |
| <p>SC2 The course teaches students to write an interpretation of a piece of literature that is based on a careful observation of textual details, considering such elements as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism and tone.</p> | <p>3,4,5,6 11- 15</p> |
| <p>SC3 The course teaches students to write an interpretation of a piece of literature that is based on a careful observation of textual details, considering the work’s structure, style and themes.</p> | <p>1,2,3, 4,5,6 11- 15</p> |
| <p>SC4 The course teaches students to write an interpretation of a piece of literature that is based on a careful observation of textual details, considering the work’s social, cultural and/or historical values.</p> | <p>1,3,4 5 11- 15</p> |
| <p>SC5 The course includes frequent opportunities for students to write and rewrite timed, in-class responses.</p> | <p>1,2,3, 4,5,6, 11- 15</p> |
| <p>SC6 The course includes frequent opportunities for students to write and rewrite formal, extended analyses outside of class.</p> | <p>1,2,3, 4,5,6, 11- 15</p> |
| <p>SC7 The course requires writing to understand: Informal/exploratory writing activities that enable students to discover what they think in the process of writing about their reading (such assignments could include annotation, free writing, keeping a reading journal, reaction/response papers, and/or dialectical notebooks).</p> | <p>2,4,5, 11- 15</p> |
| <p>SC8 The course requires writing to explain: Expository, analytical essays in which students draw upon textual details to develop an extended interpretation of a literary text.</p> | <p>2,3,4,5 6, 11- 15</p> |

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| SC9 The course requires writing to evaluate: Analytical, argumentative essays in which students draw upon textual details to make and explain judgments about a work's artistry and quality. | 2,3,4,56, 11- 15 |
| SC10 The course requires writing to evaluate: Analytical, argumentative essays in which students draw upon textual details to make and explain judgments about a work's social, historical and/or cultural values. | 2,3, 11- 15 |
| SC11 The AP teacher provides instruction and feedback on students' writing assignments, both before and after the students revise their work that help the students develop a wide-ranging vocabulary used appropriately. | 11- 15 |
| SC12 The AP teacher provides instruction and feedback on students' writing assignments, both before and after the students revise their work that help the students develop a variety of sentence structures. | 11- 15 |
| SC13 The AP teacher provides instruction and feedback on students' writing assignments, both before and after the students revise their work that help the students develop logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques to increase coherence. Such techniques may include traditional rhetorical structures, graphic organizers, and work on repetition, transitions, and emphasis. | 11- 15 |