

Ms. Biette's Course Syllabi
Fall 2008

Course Title: AP English Literature and Composition

Instructor: Mrs. Nicole Biette

Room: 209

Meeting Time: Period 4

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Brief Description of the Course

Course Description Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition is a college-level course designed to help students develop the skills required to analyze, discuss, and write about literature on a scholarly level. AP English Literature and Composition is both demanding and intellectually stimulating, and with that in mind, careful reading, analysis, and organization of all material in both written and oral responses is essential. This course is designed to prepare students to take the national AP English Literature and Composition test in May and follows the curricular requirements described in the AP English Course Description. In order to help prepare students for this task, we will cover a significant number of works thoroughly and seek to sharpen skills in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. This will be accomplished through careful attention to textual details and historical context. Students will be responsible for maintaining a reading journal or blog throughout the year. This journal or blog will act as a diary of the reading in that students will keep a log of their reactions to, questions about, and interpretations of what they read on a daily basis. It will include in-class responses to questions designed to engage the students in a dialogue with themselves about the readings, encourage them to be adventurous in their thinking, and ultimately challenge their thoughts about the reading. These entries will be low stakes assignments and will be graded holistically, but they can often form the basis for longer essays written through a recursive process that may involve peer review, self-revision, teacher edits for re-writing, and/or writing conferences. The high stakes, revised essays will be assessed for critical analysis of the literature as well as command of language as recommended by the AP English Course Description in the following way: development and organization of ideas (syntax, transitions, etc), use of clear, coherent, persuasive language (vocabulary and diction), familiarity with the elements of style (rhetorical devices), and attention to precision and correctness (grammar, usage). Though the students' grades are not determined by their score on the AP exam, they are required to take the exam in order to pass the course. Periodic tests both in real time three hour blocks and shorter segments will be administered in the hope of making each student more comfortable with the actual test when it occurs. Also, students are encouraged to participate in the AP Academy offered during the second semester, designed specifically for test preparation and given at no cost to any student, including test preparation books.

Unit Name or Timeframe:

The Family Unit

Topics: Character foil, setting, epistolary style, multiple narrators, protagonist, antagonist, tone. The value of the domestic circle, the roles and relationships determined by the maternal figure, the role and relationships established by, or expected of, fathers in the novel, the role and responsibilities of male children in the novel, and gender roles – how characters fulfill or depart from stereotyped expectations of the male or female character

Novel: *Frankenstein*

Secondary Sources: “A New Life,” The myth of Prometheus

Film: Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1994)

Major Assignments: Reading journal, fever chart, essay prompt taken from open question of past AP exam

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Personal Identity Vs. Traditional Roles

Topics: Setting, Characterization. Love, reputation, social class, and the institution of marriage. We will track and note the significance of the following events: visiting, meals, customs, practices at parties, leisure activities, and marriage and engagement customs in order to discover how these events help to develop the themes of pride and prejudice. We will also track the development of particular characters in relations to these themes and events.

Novel: *Pride and Prejudice*

Secondary Sources: Selected essays and criticisms, short stories, and poems

Film: *Pride and Prejudice* (2005)

Major Assignments: Reading journal, compare/contrast essay of film vs. novel, essay prompt taken from open question of past AP exam

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Corrupting Influences

Topics: Characterization, Imagery, Narrative. Is man inherently good or evil? To what extent is man shaped by the influence of society? Appearance vs. Reality

Novel: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Secondary Sources: Related Readings

Major Assignments: Reading journal, fever chart, essay prompt taken from open question of past AP exam

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Personal Identity and Community Identity

Topics: Allusion, Symbolism. How is identity constructed? How can identity be destroyed? How do social institutions affect identity?

Novel: *Beloved*

Secondary Sources: “African Ideas about the Afterlife,” selected sections from *The Narrative of Frederick Douglas*, poetry by Phyllis Wheatley

Major Assignments: Reading journal, student directed literature circles and Socratic seminars, essay prompt taken from open question of past AP exam

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Allegory

Topics: Allegory, character development, allusion, symbolism, magical realism, historical context. How are names of characters significant? Which characters go through pilgrimages or rites of passage? How are these reflected in their names?

Novel: *Song of Solomon*

Secondary Sources: Toni Morrison's Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech (audio), "A Bronzeville Mother Loiters in Mississippi; Meanwhile a Mississippi Mother Burns Bacon," *The Guitar Lesson*

Major Assignments: Reading Journal, Create a board game of one of the character's "journeys," essay prompt taken from an open question of past AP exam

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Fear Driven Hysteria

Topics: theme, allusion, dystopian literature, historical context. What is McCarthyism? How did it affect the US? Students will compare and contrast the Salem Witch Trials and McCarthyism. What caused the mass hysteria of McCarthyism? How is this evident in *The Crucible* and *Fahrenheit 451*?

Novel: *Fahrenheit 451*

Play: *The Crucible*

Secondary Sources: "Dover Beach," "Tyger," "Crack and the Box," "Will Robots Inherit the Earth?" "The Allegory of the Den"

Film: "That Was the 50's"

Major Assignments: Reading Journal, "editorial," essay prompt taken from open question on past AP exam

Unit Name or Timeframe:

The American Dream

Topics: Character development, symbolism, tone. What is the American Dream? We will focus on the following to determine what Fitzgerald seems to be saying about the American Dream: the Roaring 20's, and symbolism (green, white, silver, gold, ashes, eyes, careers, books, Dan Cody, East vs West Egg, rain, heat, cars, clothes)

Novel: *The Great Gatsby*

Related Readings: Period pieces (Poetry and Short Stories) from the 20's

Major Assignments: Reading Journal, Gatsby poster, essay prompt taken from open question on past AP exam

**English IA Syllabus
2008-2009
Mrs. Biette**

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Period: 2

Course Description: This is a survey course that will focus on history within literature. Reading will be intensive, and we will develop meta cognitive reading strategies with which to approach both fiction and non-fiction. Grammar will be studied with regard to sentence and paragraph development, and our main focus in composition will be organization and unity.

Organization: As a class, we will become a community of learners. The theme in this classroom is “I’m here, you’re here, and we’re in this together.” As such we will work together in order to learn together, create together, and support each other. While reading will be intensive and extensive, we will focus on both independent and cooperative tasks, and discussion will be a major thrust of our course.

Units of Study

Text -*Lord of the Flies*

Historical Period – 1950s and 1960s

Essential Questions – What is our true human nature? How are our human flaws revealed? What do our flaws reveal about us? How does Golding use setting and characters to reveal his ideas about human nature and people? How are his ideas about human nature and people relevant to the historical period?

Movie- First episode of “Lost”

Text – *Rumblefish*

Historical Period – 1970s

Essential Questions - Are the teenagers in *Rumblefish* portrayed accurately? What does this novel reveal about human nature? How are our human flaws revealed? How does Hinton use setting and characters to reveal her ideas about human nature and people? How are her ideas about human nature and people relevant to this historical time period?

Movie- *Rumblefish*

Text – *Night*

Historical Period – 1940s

Essential Questions – What is our true human nature? What does Wiesel reveal to us about human nature? How are his assertions about human nature relevant to this historical time period? How are they relevant today?

Movie – *The Wave*

Text – *Thirteen Reasons Why*

Historical period – present

Essential Questions – Are teenagers portrayed accurately in this novel? How does the author use settings and character to reveal human nature?