**AP English Literature and Composition**

**Mr. Bright**

**College Board Approved Syllabus**

**Course Overview:**

Students in this college–level course read and analyze predominantly American literature

written in a variety of time periods, from 19th Century through the contemporary period. Students will also read some works from the English literature canon for historical and/or literary context. This course will provide students with the intellectual challenges and workload consistent with a typical undergraduate literature class. At the culmination of the course, the students will take the AP English Literature and Composition Exam given in May. Based on their scores, they may be granted advanced placement, college credit, or both at colleges and universities throughout the United States.

**Writing Assignments:**

Throughout the year, students will demonstrate an understanding and mastery of Standard English through their writing. Sophisticated writing style, logic, organization, deep analysis, and vocabulary building will be emphasized during the writing process. In addition, the balance between generalizations and specific, illustrative detail will be discussed as well as use of rhetoric including tone and a voice appropriate to the writer. Students will be given specific techniques to increase coherence in their revisions. They will develop a broad vocabulary and use words appropriately to show denotative accuracy and connotative resourcefulness. AP Literature students write for a variety of reasons: 1) to inform their reader that they understand passages from poetry, and longer works such as novels and plays, 2) creatively to demonstrate knowledge of the organization, structure, and style techniques of poetry and prose, 3) to explain complex ideas and issues that require research and development, 4) to analyze various pieces interpreting the author’s meanings based on careful observation, use of extensive textural support, and an understanding of historical and social values, and 5) to compose under time constraints, producing papers that show both complexity and sophistication. 6) to understand that writing is a process and requires frequent revision through independent proofreading and/or feedback from peers and the instructor.

7) to demonstrate broad vocabulary and the ability to write with varied and sophisticated sentence structures. 8) to demonstrate both logic and organization in their writing.

**Reading Assignments:**

This course includes an intensive study of rich and representative works such as those authors cited in the *AP English Course Description.* The works selected require a careful, deliberative reading that yields multiple meanings. While the College Board does not mandate any particular authors or reading list, this is a college-level course, therefore expectations are appropriately high, and the reading workload is challenging. Students are expected to come to class with the works read and annotated. Careful planning and time management is essential to a student’s success in the class, and careful reading leads to in-class discussion which reveals a student’s understanding and evaluation of the piece and contributes toward the strengthening of his/her own composition ability. Students will also be taught specific strategies for building a broad vocabulary while reading sophisticated works of literature.

***Assigned literary works:***

*-Indian Killer,* Sherman Alexie

*-Beowulf*, translator: Burton Raffel

*-Grendel*, John Gardner

-*The Scarlet Letter*, Nathaniel Hawthorne

*-Hamlet,* William Shakespeare

*-Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead,* Tom Stoppard

-*Cats Cradle*, Kurt Vonnegut

-*The Crucible*, Arthur Miller

*-Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison

*-Catcher in the Rye,* J. D. Salinger

*-A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur’s Court,* Mark Twain

*-Leaves of Grass,* Walt Whitman

-*Collected Poems of Emily Dickinson*

**First Quarter: Close Reading and Annotation of Text. Evaluation of summer reading assignment. Examination of AP Literature and Composition exam. Poetry pairings. Definition and expository essays.**

**Texts**:  
*The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven,* Sherman Alexie

*Beowulf,* author unknown

*Grendel* John Gardner  
*The Scarlet Letter,* Nathaniel Hawthorne

The course opens with an evaluation of the summer reading assignment, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven.* Students will complete a close reading-assignment for stylistic elements, satire, and humor.

**Major Assignments**:

After the close reading, student will prepare for the in-class graded discussion. They will prepare questions on the literal and interpretive levels which lead to a higher level of critical thinking on the novel as a whole. After discussion, students will write a documented expository essay on existentialism and social identity and prepare for the in-class timed writing essay using AP quality prompts on the “work as a whole” in preparation for Question 3 on the AP Exam. Before final instructor evaluation of the essay, students will conduct peer reviews in a workshop setting, then hand in their revised papers for instructor feedback. Logic and organization will be emphasized with techniques to improve coherence. Students will then be given a timed essay assignment based on Question 3 of the AP exam.

**Additional Assignments**:

In conjunction with every major literary work, students will analyze and interpret poetry. They will review the literary devices poets use to convey tone. Students will work on an extended definition essay outside of class in conjunction with the poetry and form handouts, and will analyze contemporary styles of poetry with traditional forms such as Shakespearean sonnets. Students will conference with the instructor during the writing and revision process before the essay is handed in for final evaluation. Sophisticated writing style, logic, organization, deep analysis, and vocabulary building will be emphasized during the conferencing. In addition, the balance between generalizations and specific, illustrative detail will be discussed as well as use of rhetoric including tone and a voice appropriate to the writer. Students will be given specific techniques to increase coherence in their revisions.

**Comparative Literature:**

After reading *Beowulf* and *Grendel,* students will write a compare/contrast essay using researched, documented critical reviews of the works and authors. The themes explored will be archetypal heroes, Definitions of good vs. evil, and cultural perspectives and norms. Students will also complete peer review forms (outside of class) with a designated partner and revise their papers before handing them in for final evaluation.

Instructor feedback will emphasize logic and organization.

**Collateral Reading:**

Students will read *The Scarlet Letter* independently. They will prepare questions for the in-class discussion at the end of the book and have an in-class timed writing with an AP quality prompt. Extensive textural support is the foundation of this independent reading section.

**Grammar and Style:**

During the quarter, students will be working on an independent “Grammatical Structures” notebook which reviews grammar and writing techniques (syntax, punctuation, parallelism) which they find in AP quality works and which they will document with MLA citations. Students will utilize these structures in their writing during the quarter.

Also during the quarter, students will be presenting mythological and literary allusions weekly to aide in the recognition and understanding of allusions in literature and in their own writing.

**Additional AP Exam Assignments:**

The students will practice the multiple choice segment of the AP test. Discussion of techniques to facilitate high scores are discussed and practiced. The students will also practice the Question #2 close reading, and Question #3, open-ended AP prompts with their current readings or using selections from the AP prompts.

**Second Quarter: Continued close reading and annotating. Drama Unit focus. Introduction to Shakespeare, the Modern Period and Poetic Elements.**

**Texts:**

*Hamlet,* William Shakespeare  
*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead,* Tom Stoppard

*Cat’s Cradle,* Kurt Vonnegut

*The Crucible,* Arthur Miller

**Major Assignments:**

The second quarter focus is on reading and responding to Drama.

The students will read *Hamlet* and complete Reading Logs, responding to literary elements, stylistic devices, characterization, artistry, quality, etc. They will practice close reading with an AP quality prompt twice during the reading. At the end of the play, they will write an argumentative in-class timed writing evaluating the artistry and quality of the work as a whole. Students will conference with the instructor during the writing and revision process before the essay is handed in for final evaluation. Sophisticated writing style, logic, organization, deep analysis, and vocabulary building will be emphasized during the conferencing. In addition, the balance between generalizations and specific, illustrative detail will be discussed as well as use of rhetoric including tone and a voice appropriate to the writer. Students will be given specific techniques to increase coherence in their revisions. When conferences are complete, students will rewrite their papers based on instructor feedback. Students will also be asked to document the reasons for the revisions.

The Shakespearean play is followed with the reading of the modern Absurd Theater play *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead.* At the end of this unit the students will write a “compare and contrast” paper of both plays using an AP quality prompt. Students will revise this paper in a student workshop setting before submission to the instructor for final evaluation. The instructor will emphasize vocabulary, logic, and organization in the feedback with specific techniques to improve coherence in their revisions.

**Additional Assignments:**

In conjunction with every major piece, the students will read poetry and analyze various poems. Tone and Theme development will be stressed.

Students will also read *Cat’s Cradle*. The unit begins with discussion of the dystopian/utopian philosophy. Multiple Choice passages are practiced several times during this read. Several topics for writing assignments are provided, including the journey of a character, point of view, and the development of motif. Modern Period values, research and documentation, and the persuasive essay will also be emphasized.

Students will complete a persuasive essay, peer review forms in designated groups of three, and hand in all drafts of the paper along with the final copy and peer review forms for final evaluation. Logic will be emphasized in the instructor feedback.

**Collateral Reading:**

The students will read *The Crucible* on the own. They will keep a reader response journal addressing stylistic elements, diction, detail, imagery and how they contribute to tone. Extensive textural support is required in this independent reading. The final writing assignment emphasizes period values and the importance of allegory. This analytical essay will be the subject of individual student/instructor conferences before the final paper is submitted for evaluation. Sophisticated writing style, logic, organization, deep analysis, and vocabulary building will be emphasized during the conferencing. In addition, the balance between generalizations and specific, illustrative detail will be discussed as well as use of rhetoric including tone and a voice appropriate to the writer. Students will be given specific techniques to increase coherence in their revisions.

**Grammar and Style:**

The students continue with the Grammatical Structures notebook and practice writing with the elements of the second quarter.

The students continue with mythological allusion activities.

**Additional AP Exam Assignments:** The students will practice the multiple choice segment of the AP test. Discussion of techniques to facilitate high scores will be discussed and practiced. The students will also practice the Question #2, close reading and Question #3, open-ended AP prompts with their current readings.

**Third Quarter: Continued Close Reading and Annotating. Satire, irony, Contemporary Era.**

**Texts:**

*Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison

*Catcher in the Rye,* J. D. Salinger  
*A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court*, Mark Twain

**Major Assignments:**

The students will read *Invisible Man* and focus on character analysis in connection to the literary period and Harlem Renaissance. Various philosophies are researched and the character reactions based on history and culture are explored in the culminating AP quality in-class write. Motif development and importance to the work as a whole will also be a part of the writing assignment. After the timed writing, students will conduct peer reviews in a workshop setting and be given additional time to revise their essays before handing them in for final evaluation. Students will also be asked to document the changes they made to the essay based on peer feedback. Logic, organization, and vocabulary will be emphasized in the instructor’s feedback with specific techniques to improve coherence.

To continue the study of satire and irony, students will read *The* *Catcher in the Rye*. Students will relate the culture and values of the Modern and Post World War Two periods to previous historical and literary periods. The writings focus on close reading assignments and AP style prompts. Students will be complete an additional timed writing assignment followed by a peer review session. Graded discussion ends the unit.

**Additional Assignments:**

In conjunction with every major piece, the students will continue to read and analyze various poems. This unit emphasizes the dramatic monologue and a summary of important poetic elements of rhythm, rhyme, and recognition of how figurative language contributes to the purpose, artistry and quality of the piece. Students will read, compare, and analyze two poems of their choice written in this genre, and write an analytical essay outside of class. In class, students will be broken into groups of four for peer reviews and they will revise their essays before submission.

**Grammar and Style:**

The students will continue their use of the Grammatical Structures notebook with an emphasis this quarter on clauses and phrases. Finding these structures in pieces of quality writing and then working with those same structures in their own writing elevates the quality and varies the style of their work.

Allusions will continue to be emphasized with references to various cultures and time periods as the focus.

**Collateral Reading:**

Students will read *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court* independently. The syntax, vocabulary and narrative technique of the Nineteenth Century will be emphasized. Close reading practices and Reader Response entries allow the students practice on short responses to various prompts. Students will be given chances for peer review prior to turning in essays and chances for re-writing after conferencing with the instructor. Sophisticated writing style, logic, organization, deep analysis, and vocabulary building will be emphasized during the conferencing. In addition, the balance between generalizations and specific, illustrative detail will be discussed as well as use of rhetoric including tone and a voice appropriate to the writer. Students will be given specific techniques to increase coherence in their revisions. Graded discussion ends the unit.

**Additional AP Exam Assignments:** The students are given a chance to practice the multiple choice segment of the AP test. Discussion of techniques to facilitate high scores are discussed and practiced. The students are also given a chance to practice the Question #2, close reading and Question #3, open-ended AP prompts with their current readings or using selections from the AP prompts.

**Fourth Quarter: Introductory Chapters. AP Test Review and Preparation. Documented Essay (Research Paper).**

**Texts:**

*-Leaves of Grass,* Walt Whitman

-*Collected Poems of Emily Dickinson*

During this quarter, students work on quality AP works to review various aspects of literature. They will also choose their own independent reading.

**Major Assignment:** The final major assignment is the research paper. This paper requires all the major steps in writing, prewriting (graphic organizing), outlining, rough draft writing, peer review prior to due date, teacher conferencing during the writing process, and final evaluation of the process. Sophisticated writing style, logic, organization, deep analysis, and vocabulary building will be emphasized during the conferencing. In addition, the balance between generalizations and specific, illustrative detail will be discussed as well as use of rhetoric including tone and a voice appropriate to the writer. Students will be given specific techniques to increase coherence in their revisions. The subject is a Triple Document. The students choose one quality book to read. They also find another piece of literature (poetry, short stories, or plays) and one more medium (art, sculpture, film—non print) that relate to their novel in theme. They make connections in a five to six page, MLA documented essay.

The final book for the quarter is *Leaves of Grass* by Walt Whitman. The final graded discussion centers on the individual and his philosophy, reflecting Whitman’s self-examination and vision of the United States before, during, and after the Civil War. Students will also read selected poems of Emily Dickinson for comparison and analysis of artistry and quality. Outside of class, students will write an analytical essay contrasting and evaluating the vastly different styles of the Dickinson and Whitman. Students will conference with the instructor during the writing and revision process before the essay is handed in for final evaluation. Sophisticated writing style, logic, organization, deep analysis, and vocabulary building will be emphasized during the conferencing. In addition, the balance between generalizations and specific, illustrative detail will be discussed as well as use of rhetoric including tone and a voice appropriate to the writer. Students will be given specific techniques to increase coherence in their revisions. Graded discussion after close reading is the unit’s final focus.

**Additional Assignments:**

During this time, the students will review major works of literature. They will compare and contrast the opening chapters to the works, and review style and theme. They will prepare book review cards and write book summaries to prepare for Question 3 of the AP test.

This is also the final MC review and the last close reading practice.

This is also the final poetry review time. Students will prepare one page analysis of the major elements of poetry (imagery, figurative language, sound, tone and theme) and how the poet uses these for his/her purpose(s).

**AP Testing: Students take the AP Literature and Composition Test in May.**