



English Department Curriculum Guide

English Literature and Composition – AP

Course Description

This yearlong college course is designed to prepare students for the AP English Literature and Composition exam given in May of each year. Students selecting this elective are presumed to have developed solid skills, are highly motivated, thoroughly enjoy reading great literature, and look forward to both written and oral analysis. Students also work in groups to edit plays, find thematic links that run through various literary texts, and work to explicate complicated poems. Students not only read poetry; they create their own and read it aloud. When students engage in critical research papers, they rely both on the text and Internet sites such as JSTOR. Previous success (B or higher) in an honors English 11 or AP Language class is required. Requirements: Summer reading; also, any student who enrolls in an AP course is required to take the AP exam in May.

AP Literature is typically taken by students in 12th grade at Hanover High School but is open to Juniors as well. These Seniors take an accelerated course of studies culminating in the AP Literature test at the end of the year. According to the AP English Literature and Composition website, the “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 the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure.”

Study Habits Required for Success:

1. Close reading of texts: Students should be reading 30 - 45 minutes per night, at a minimum
2. Utilize outside reading materials such as literary criticism and associated texts to enhance learning
3. Annotate texts for ease of analysis (notes should not include a summary)
4. Stay after with the teacher to ensure expectations prior to submitting a draft as necessary
5. Read all written work aloud to catch errors
6. Be prepared to engage in multiple timed writings throughout the year



Content Standards, Materials, Student Products

[Curriculum Frameworks - Grade 12 ELA](#) and [AP English Literature and Composition Course and Exam Description](#)

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) identifies six key knowledge and academic skills for English language arts students. In accordance, each term AP Literature students will:

DESE#1: Read complex texts independently.

- a. "Literature and Composition: Reading, Writing, and Thinking" (textbook)
- b. "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" by James Joyce
- c. Individualized novel selected for each student from the AP Common Titles
- d. 100 Best Loved Poems collected by Phillip Smith
- e. Macbeth (film)
- f. Hamlet (film)
- g. Othello (film)
- h. Uncharted Territory

DESE #2: Writes effectively using and/or analyzing sources.

- a. Poetry Analysis
- b. Prose Fiction Argument
- c. Literary Argument
- d. Presentations on Poetry and Other Topics
- e. Uses Annotation techniques

DESE #3: Builds and presents knowledge after conducting research.

- a. Literary Term Tracker Slide Presentation
- b. Analysis of Historical Context for different texts
- c. Research into poetry and presentation of individual poems to class
- d. Multiple limited-word responses to literary topics throughout the year

DESE #4: Uses context to determine meaning or words and phrases.

- a. Annotates poetry and prose with a focus on syntax and rhetoric.
- b. Conducts detailed analysis of diction choices in literature.
- c. Consideration of cultural and historical language context in language study.
- d. Reads literary criticism with an attention to mature and nuanced vocabulary.

DESE #5: Can identify, assess, interpret, describe, analyze, and explain matters of "civic" life.

- a. Reads fiction with maturity, respect, and global consideration.
- b. Considers author's tone when analyzing literature
- c. Makes connections between fictional characters and circumstances to real world experiences/civic circumstances.

DESE #6: Have the capacity to listen and the ability to communicate in ways that are accessible to others.

- a. Participates in conversations of contrasting views with maturity and respect.
- b. Listens to peer and teacher perspectives, even those in opposition to their own, and formulate a thoughtful response.
- c. Engage in thoughtful discussion after reading others essays
- d. Can modulate their own verbal delivery dependent upon audience needs.



Subject: English Literature and Composition – AP

Units	Essential Questions
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the purpose of literature in today's world? How does literature form a "web" that presents the interconnected nature of humanity? To what extent does literature exist as a window, a door, or a mirror?
Poetry: Close Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What considerations do we have to make when looking at Poetry? How does the unique structure of poetry represent challenges and opportunities?
Fiction: Close Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What considerations do we have to make when looking at and analyzing fiction? How do the unique structures of poetry represent challenges and opportunities?
The Big Picture (Elements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In what ways are poems, dramatic works, and fictional stories governed by such elements as Plot, Theme, Symbol, Character, and Figurative Language (amongst others)?
Love and Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do works about love and relationships tell us about the human condition? How do works within these topics act as mirrors, doors, or windows for us to see ourselves and our world through? How does the interplay between different types of love (romantic vs. platonic, familial vs. interpersonal, etc) influence the creation of great works of literature?
War and Peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does conflict center much of our lives as readers and writers? How does the existence of conflict narratives show us mirrors, windows, and doors that are relevant even in our own (relatively) peaceful lives? What counterpoint is provided between stories of peace with stories of conflict?



Units	Essential Questions
Identity and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does literature enable us to authentically (perhaps the only way) represent ourselves to the world at large? ▪ In what ways does literature and its portal-like qualities enable us to forge an understanding with people who do not share the same identity or culture (intersectionality) with us?
Home and Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What does literature have to say about what makes a home, a home? What does it mean when home is transitory? ▪ What is the nature of the found family, and how does that interact with literature? ▪ How is family and home a predictor of the future life of a particular speaker?
Conformity and Rebellion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How is rebellion a necessary aspect of life?
Tradition and Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What does literature - across a wide variety - have to tell us about the qualities of tradition and progress? ▪ What does the tension between tradition and progress have to tell us as readers?
Vocabulary and Grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is the purpose of applying grammar and mechanics skills? ▪ What is the purpose of communication? ▪ Where do words or phrases come from? ▪ How does word choice affect meaning?