

**AP English Literature and Composition
2014-2015 Course Syllabus and Policies**

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Welcome to *AP English Literature and Composition*. The College Board created this course to generally follow the curriculum of a college-level introductory literature course. Unlike many other AP courses, this curriculum emphasizes the development of skills as opposed to specific content and, as such, our focus will be on critical reading, writing, and speaking skills. As a result, the course directly relates to the school's vision and Expected School-Wide Learning Results (ESLRs). Unlike the other AP English course, this course focuses on imaginative, creative works of both prose and poetry. As student engagement is important, a variety of strategies will be used to guide you through these assignments.

Texts

I highly recommend you purchase your own texts and build your own library. This way, you are free to mark the text as we study (which is very helpful), as well as have the books and your notes to refer to in later years. Most of the books may be found online for free, as well. We also have copies in the library.

Brief review of the three summer texts: *Catcher in the Rye*, *A Prayer for Owen Meany*, and *A Streetcar Named Desire*

Macbeth, Shakespeare (I recommend the Folger Library editions for Shakespeare)

Hamlet, Shakespeare

Frankenstein, Shelly

Pride and Prejudice, Austen

Their Eyes Were Watching God, Hurston

Two selected by you from a list I will give you, and perhaps another TBD work.

Notebooks

Many times, I will ask you to complete something in your "notebook." This will include informal writing assignments, reflections, grammar work, and notes. You may decide what your notebook will be; it could be a composition book, a spiral notebook, or loose leaf papers stapled together. I will collect the notebooks once a quarter, so you need to make sure you keep it in a safe place and keep it up-to-date.

Writing Assignments

Informal writing will typically be included in the notebook and evaluated according to general thoughtfulness and thoroughness. Most essays will be graded and evaluated based on the College Board's general rubric for AP Literature. A few essays will be process papers, which will require you to create more than one draft, while others will be timed in-class essays. While the AP test will only evaluate your in-class essay writing, learning to draft essays will not only help all of your writing, even timed writing, the skills developed in drafting are critical to later life.

Participation Grade and Literary Experience

Each quarter, as part of your participation in the world of ideas and art, you will be required to complete an additional literary experience. You may complete these by attending the Fall Play/Spring Musical, seeing university or professional stage productions, attending the LA Times Festival of Books, going to an author's speaking engagement, entering writing contests, or engaging in other activities that I deem acceptable. Afterwards you will write a brief reflection about your experience to earn

credit. Over the course of the semester you will also have small assignments whose purpose is to help you prepare and practice, assignments where your writing will not be evaluated, but that I think are still important for you to experience as part of the class. These assignments will simply receive credit or no credit, and at the end of the semester you will receive a participation grade for your completion of these assignments.

Other Assignments

In addition to the writing assignments, participation grade, and notebook, you will have tests, quizzes, and presentations. The tests and quizzes may include reading quizzes to check that you have read, vocabulary and terms quizzes, practice AP test questions, and summative tests on works we have read. The presentations may include group work on background information, thematic work with the literature, and a final student-selected project.

Grades

- Each assignment is weighted by the number of points designated for that assignment. For example, a quiz might be 25, a test or an essay prompt might be 100. The average of all those assignments will determine 90% of the final grade for the semester. The other 10% of the grade will be determined by the participation grade. As SPUSD District Policy states, an A is 90-100%, a B is 80-89%, a C is 70-79%, a D is 60-69% and any grade under 60% is an F.
- As soon as I am able to grade and record a class set of an assignment, it will be updated on Aeries. Anytime you would like to speak with me about a grade, see me after class or email me to set up a time to meet. In the interest of all students' privacy, grades will not be given during class.
- Essays and other major assignments will be docked a letter grade for each school day late.
- You must see me immediately following an absence (or before, or email me from home) to schedule any make-up assignments. Make up essays, tests, and quizzes will be given on a designated day after school or during your study hall period it allows. Make-ups need to be completed in the time allowed (as explained in the *Tiger Guide*.) **Finally, know that if you are on campus the day an assignment is due, the assignment needs to be in my box in the office either when you arrive on campus or before class (depending on when you arrive).**
- No extra credit will be offered.

Availability

I am usually available in room 314 on Even Day brunches Mon-Thu as well as after school (3:00). Students may drop by those times to ask me questions, but adults must contact me to establish an appointment.

Cheating and Plagiarism (see your *Tiger Guide* for more information)

Stealing the words **or the ideas** of others will be considered cheating. When we are studying a particular work you may want to use outside sources in order to better your understanding. In most cases, this is considered acceptable as long as the reading is supplementary to classwork and homework, not a replacement for reading, and if I am aware of it. In the case of outside reading it is not acceptable, however. See me if you are having difficulty. To avoid temptation, make sure you plan your time wisely. Finally, ignorance is never an excuse for lacking academic integrity.

Recommended Reading

- *The Elements of Style*, Strunk and White
- *Woe Is I*, Patricia O'Conner
- *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*, Foster