

AP Literature and Composition

Mr. Nerf

2018-2019

INTRODUCTION

An AP course in English Literature and Composition prepares students to become skilled in reading, evaluating, and analyzing a variety of fictional genres, including prose (primarily novels and plays) and poetry. I introduce my course to my students by telling them the following:

You have undertaken a formidable task. You will read many different works of literature. You will write numerous essays that require you to think and communicate intelligently. You will complete a college-level research paper. Your preconceived notions of the universe will be challenged. And you may feel that you are constantly struggling to keep your head above water. However, my sincerest hope is that you will walk (or crawl) away from this course with an appreciation for fine literature, an increased confidence in your own abilities to communicate effectively, a more mature world view, and a more complete understanding of your purpose for having traveled the long, arduous road of AP English with your eager, if slightly maniacal, guide.

In keeping with the requirements set forth by the AP College Board, this course follows the curricular requirements described in the *AP English Language and Composition Course Description* (the “Acorn” book).

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TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

At its core, this course exposes students to a variety of literature from different genres and periods and challenges them to consider the following:

- How literature helps us understand ourselves and other people;
- How literature speaks universally to people from different cultures and different eras;
- How literature is an attempt by humans to understand the world in which they live.

This is a college-level course and my expectations of each student’s performance are justifiably high. Students are expected to commit to a significant amount of time outside of class in order to complete the coursework required of them. Often, this work involves long-term writing and reading assignments, so effective time management may be the most important quality for a student to possess. Because of the demanding curriculum, students must already possess sufficient command of mechanical conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.) and an ability to read written works that could be assigned in a college literature course.

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to

- read carefully and critically about imaginative literature and explore multiple interpretations;
- understand the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure for their readers;
- understand and write critically on a work’s structure, style, and themes as well as such smaller-scale elements, such as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone;
- understand the social and historical values a literary work reflects;
- make careful observations of textual detail, establish connections among their observations, and draw from those connections a series of inferences leading to an interpretive conclusion about the work’s meaning and value;
- evaluate a work’s artistry and quality and use textual evidence to make and explain one’s judgments;
- understand literary tradition and the complex ways in which imaginative literature builds upon the ideas, works, and authors of earlier times;
- explain clearly, cogently, even elegantly, what they understand about literary works and why they interpret them as they do;
- develop a stylistic maturity to their writing by using a wide-ranging vocabulary, a variety of sentence structures, a logical organizational pattern, a balance of generalization with specific illustrative detail, and an effective use of rhetoric;
- interpret a literary work to uncover in the work an idea which can be communicated to others using compelling literary evidence;
- recognize and use the four kinds of literary evidence: direct quotes, paraphrasing, summarization, and opinions of competent literary critics;
- listen perceptively and discuss intelligently all matters, literary and otherwise;
- write competently using generally accepted rules of grammar, spelling, usage, and mechanics;
- develop excellence in written communication using conventional processes—prewriting, drafting, revision, and proofreading.

The standards listed above are taken from the *AP English Literature and Composition Course Description* (the “Acorn” book).

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COURSE TEXTS

The following text will be provided by Douglas Anderson School of the Arts and will be used in class and at home:

- *Perrine's Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense, eighth edition* by Thomas R. Arp and Greg Johnson, eds.

The following texts must be acquired by the student and brought to class on the appropriate dates:

QUARTER ONE

- *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien
- *As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner (I think this novel is available for free online.) Due date 9/25, 26

QUARTER TWO

- *Perrine's Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense* will be used 10/16/18-12/21/18. Specific poems and due dates TBD. Most poems will be available online.
- *Blood Wedding* by Federico Garcia Lorca (obtain copy from my website and read by 12/4/18)

QUARTER THREE

- *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain due by 1/8/19 (I think this novel is available for free online.)
- *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen due by 2/7/19

QUARTER FOUR

- *Othello* by William Shakespeare due by 3/26/19

Furthermore, film versions of these works or documentaries about the works and/or the authors may be viewed and discussed in class. Your initials indicate your permission to read and discuss the literature and to view and discuss the films.

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Required Materials

You are solely responsible for being prepared for class (paper, pen, book, etc.). You may not disrupt class by asking a peer or your teacher for supplies. Students will need the following: a collegiate dictionary and a thesaurus (at home), regular access to a word processor, a printer, and the internet, dark black or blue ink pens for all written assignments, reams of paper, a sturdy binder or folder in which to keep class materials, effective time management skills, and the assigned literary work which must be brought to class every day. Because we live in an era in which access to the internet is no longer a luxury, each student should be able to access my classroom website in order to obtain handouts, assignments, deadlines, notices, and other information pertinent to his or her success in this course. **Any student who does not have access to the internet at home must consider one or more of the following options:**

- Use the computers in the school library before school, after school, or during lunch time;
- Call a friend who has internet access and get the required information from him or her;
- Bring your own printer paper to my class before the 1st period warning bell or during Power Hour and print the handout material.

NOTE: You MAY NOT print any required handouts in my classroom immediately prior to or during our scheduled class time.

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Work Load

This is a college-level course which prepares students for the Advanced Placement Test administered during the student's senior year. Students should be aware of the rigor, intensity, and scope demanded of students in this course. The students will be required to complete a number of timed analytical essays and a college-level research paper during the school year. This course will further develop students' abilities as skilled readers of prose and poetry written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts and as skilled analysts and writers who can compose in a variety of modes and for a variety of purposes. The writing content will focus upon both brief and lengthy analytical essays. Readings will include works written by famous authors of fiction and poetry. Students will have some sort of AP Literature homework on most nights, weekends, and holidays. **Students who enter the course with deficiencies in reading and/or writing will experience difficulties. Each student who does not read at or above grade level will find some of the reading assignments and most of the AP multiple-choice passages to be difficult. Students who experience difficulty passing the tests, essays, and other assignments should take every opportunity to complete revisions and other makeup assignments and to attend tutoring sessions offered by the teacher. Students who are experiencing difficulties with the required assignments should gain more practice with AP-level materials by using test prep books available from book stores.**

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Student Expectations, Progress toward Standards, and Safety Nets

Yearly, the Development Committee of the AP College Board prepares a three-hour English examination that gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the skills and abilities required in a typical freshman-level college literature course. The AP Examination in English Literature and Composition employs multiple-choice questions to test the students' skills in comprehending and analyzing literary prose and poetry passages. Students are also asked to demonstrate their skill in composition directly by writing analytical essays. Although the skills tested in the examination remain essentially the same, there may be some variation in the types or formats of the essay questions from year to year.

In this course, a student's quarterly grade will be determined *primarily* by his or her success in the following types of assignments: essays (first drafts are worth 300 points each; revisions replace first draft grades and are the single best way for a student to improve his or her class average),

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tests (100 points each), research paper assignments (200 points each for quarters 1-3; **the final draft is worth ½ of the 4th quarter grade**), class work and homework (50 points each), and projects/seminars (100 points). Class work/ homework assignments are designed to help students learn the skills and concepts required to master the course objectives. Such assignments, by their design, will be graded more leniently. Students will receive full credit (50 points) for following teacher's directions and attempting all requirements to the best of their abilities. Students may receive ½ credit (25 points) or no credit (0 points) if I determine that the student did not make a legitimate attempt to complete the assignment and/or follow my instructions. Quarterly grades will be determined by the percentage of points earned.

All class work and homework assignments must be made up in a timely manner in accordance with DCPS policy in the event of a student's absence from class. Any absences from class caused by arts-related requirements are excused per school policy; however, the student must make plans with me prior to the absence with regard to any assignments that are due. Late assignments (ones that are late without legitimate excuse) will receive a failing grade: 50% per school day late, not including weekends or holidays. The late penalty begins immediately upon the day and period the assignment is not submitted. **A student may not receive full credit for the assignment if he or she submits it after I have collected the work from the rest of the class. Each day of school is counted toward the penalty; therefore, a student who waits until the next meeting date of class will have already accrued a 100% penalty since it will have been two school days since the original due date of the assignment.** A student who is legitimately absent on the due date of an assignment is not penalized. He or she must submit the assignment upon the return to my class **with an acceptable note of explanation written at the top of the assignment. At the top of all make-up work (tests included), the student must write a note informing me why the work is being submitted on a date later than the assignment was originally due. Failure to provide the note will result in a 5-point grade penalty.** On some occasions, I may be reviewing the essay or the test when you return to class. In that case, I will have you complete the work during that class period in a location that does not allow you to participate in the review of the assignment. **The student is solely responsible for initiating any and all makeup tests, essays, or assignments.** I do not have time to chase after missing work. If the student wants to earn a grade for the missing work, he or she must do what is necessary to complete and/or submit the work in a timely manner.

The quarter grades are determined based upon DCPS grading guidelines: A=90-100%; B=80-89%; C=70-79%; D=60-69%; F=0-59%. **During the fourth quarter, the final draft of the research paper is worth ½ of the entire fourth quarter grade.**

Safety nets designed for this course include, but are not excluded to, the revising of essays (the revision process includes class sessions of peer evaluations, self-evaluations, modeling, and teacher commentary), the repeated practice of necessary AP skills through in-class and homework assignments, "completion grades" that allow the student to earn relatively "easy grades" while learning how to acquire and use the analytical skills required of this course, and the potential of dropping low test/essay grades (the number of which will be determined by me each quarter). Students who have a D or F average in my course are expected to attend tutoring or Power Hour sessions to receive extra help.

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Student Integrity and Decorum

All students are here to learn and make adequate progress toward meeting the course standards. Therefore, students are expected to be active participants in the learning process and uphold the academic integrity policy. Students are also expected to maintain an acceptable level of behavior. Since disruptive behavior is a disservice to the learning process, those students engaging in such behavior will be dealt with according to teacher, school, and county policies. While there will be ample opportunities for students to collaborate on some assignments, each student must be aware that **he or she is required to submit original work free from plagiarism. No electronic devices may be used during the completion of any test or timed essay.** More and more, electronic devices can be used for cheating. Appropriate action will be taken if electronic devices are used; such action may include assigning a grade of zero, giving the device to the dean, and/or writing a referral. I will require students to submit some essays and parts of the research paper via the Turnitin web-based plagiarism detection application. Students who seem to have plagiarized their work will have a chance to defend and explain their work to me. If I determine that any part of an assignment was plagiarized, I will assign a grade of zero (0) and I will follow DCPS guidelines with regards to disciplinary actions, if necessary.

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Miscellaneous Class Policies and Procedures

- Punctuality is essential. Late work is unacceptable; absences can be detrimental.
- Some assigned work must be typed. See the composition format instructions below. If a student experiences unavoidable technical glitches, **a handwritten homework assignment will be accepted if accompanied by a note of explanation from a parent/guardian. Essay revisions and formal research paper assignments may never be handwritten.**
- **Under no circumstance will I accept work written in pencil.** Such work will receive a grade of zero and may not be resubmitted at a later date for full credit.
- **You are solely responsible** for being prepared for class (paper, pen, book). **You may not** disrupt class by asking a peer or your teacher for supplies. Submitted **paper must be free from jagged or uneven edges.** Have pride in the work that you submit.

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- **Due to the availability of my class website, all assignment due dates and test dates will be posted. Students are required to access the site to get any missed work.** Students should submit the assigned work upon their immediate return to class. My website affords you the opportunity to return to class with the necessary assignments ready to be submitted. I strongly suggest that you take home all notebooks and texts related to this class because you may need them in case of an unexpected absence. **All class work and homework assignments must be made up in a timely manner in accordance with DCPS policy in the event of a student's absence from class. Any absences from class caused by arts-related requirements are excused per school policy; however, the student must make plans with me prior to the absence with regard to any assignments that are due.** Late assignments (ones that are late without legitimate excuse) will receive a failing grade: 50% per school day late, not including weekends or holidays. The late penalty begins immediately upon the day and period the assignment is not submitted. **A student may not receive full credit for the assignment if he or she submits it after I have collected the work from the rest of the class. Each day of school is counted toward the penalty;** therefore, a student who waits until the next meeting date of class will have already accrued a 100% penalty since it will have been two school days since the original due date of the assignment. A student who is legitimately absent on the due date of an assignment is not penalized. He or she must submit the assignment upon the return to my class **with an acceptable note of explanation written at the top of the assignment. At the top of all make-up work (tests included), the student must write a note informing me why the work is being submitted on a date later than the assignment was originally due. Failure to provide the note will result in a 5-point grade penalty.** On some occasions, I may be reviewing the essay or the test when you return to class. In that case, I will have you complete the work during that class period in a location that does not allow you to participate in the review of the assignment. **The student is solely responsible for initiating any and all makeup tests, essays, or assignments.** I do not have time to chase after missing work. If the student wants to earn a grade for the missing work, he or she must do what is necessary to complete and/or submit the work in a timely manner.
- Long-term research paper assignments and the poetry project must be **submitted on or before their original due dates.** Even “legitimate” absences can affect their scores. Because the assignments are long-term ones, *your careful planning is required to avoid last-minute panics of anxiety if/when something goes wrong. Don't come to me after the fact with a sob story. I am warning you now that ALL your research paper assignments must be submitted on time.*
- I am not an IT tech, so I cannot solve your technical problems, nor do I accept technical glitches as an excuse for an assignment being submitted at a late date. You must find a way to solve your technical issue and submit the work on time. If all else fails, write the work by hand and submit a note from a parent or guardian that explains why the work can't be submitted in a typed format.
- **If you are absent on a test day or an essay day,** I may be reviewing the essay or the test when you return to class. In that case, I will have you complete the work during that class period in a location that does not allow you to participate in the review of the assignment.
- **I will have a Help Day calendar available for you to sign up for tutoring, makeup work, or other reasons. You must schedule your appointment on the calendar prior to the day or days that you plan to attend.**
- If a student misses school for an extended period of time due to illness, I will work with him/her in order to alleviate the burden brought on by the extenuating circumstances. A parent/teacher conference, in person or by telephone, must be initiated as soon as possible. I can be reached at perfj@duvalschools.org, or you can call the Guidance Department and make an appointment to meet with me.
- **THERE ARE NO SHORTCUTS IN THIS CLASS.** All reading and writing assignments should be completed in order to gain the skills necessary to pass the AP exam in May.
- Unless you provide a doctor's note, I restrict access to the hall pass for emergencies only. The student may not use the pass to retrieve items from a locker. Any student who is out of the room for an inordinate amount of time may receive a referral for skipping class.
- **DO NOT BRING COFFEE, TEA, SODA, OR JUICE INTO MY CLASS.** Water is permitted if you do not leave condensation stains on the desktops.
- Cliffs Notes and other analytical aides are no substitute for reading the literature. **Do not bring them to class. I will confiscate such materials.**

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Composition Format

- Some homework assignments, all formal research assignments, and all essay revisions must be typed. They **must be double-spaced with standard 1" margins and have a 12-point Times New Roman font.** At the top left of the first page, use the MLA format for headings: on four separate lines in the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, your instructor's name, the course and period, and the date. All successive pages must have your last name and page number at the top right.
- *Two valuable bits of advice: keep a copy of each assignment and always have a rough draft of some type.* Many tears have been shed over computers that have crashed, wiping out days worth of work. Prepare for potential problems.
- All in-class essays, including timed writings, must be legibly written on one side of the page in dark black or blue ink with the appropriate MLA heading at top left of the front page. If I can't read your writing, I can't properly evaluate it. You may be asked to take the assignment home and type it for me. If so, your grade will be reduced by 5 points because I could not read it when it was originally submitted.

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TEACHER ACCESSIBILITY

Conference Periods

- 4th period on A days and 2nd period on B days

Help Day Sessions

- Generally speaking, I will be available for tutoring and make-up work sessions prior to the start of the school day from 7:15-8:00 AM by appointment only. Students must register on my appointment calendar *prior* to the tutoring/makeup day. Do not plan on my availability in the PM. I will rarely be available.
- I am available during Power Hour Monday-Thursday during the first half of Power Hour.

Telephone Accessibility

You may leave me a voicemail message at 346-5620, ext. 256. I will return your call within 24 hours.

Internet Accessibility

Find helpful information on my class website: <https://mrnerf.weebly.com/>.

You may email me directly at nerfj@duvalschools.org. I will return your email within 24 hours, usually on the same day I receive it.

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COURSE PERMISSION FORM

An AP course in English Literature and Composition prepares students to become skilled in reading, evaluating, and analyzing a variety of fictional genres, including prose (primarily novels and plays) and poetry. **Because of the subject matter read in this college-level course, parents are asked to read the list of required literary works in the syllabus and give their consent to the reading material.** This course culminates with the administration of the AP exam in early May. Every student is required to sit for the exam.

I have provided a comprehensive Policy and Syllabus handout for my course. After each of the major divisions on my Policy and Syllabus handout, I have inserted a place for you, the parent, to initial. Your initials provide to me your acknowledgement that you have read my handout and understand my expectations and requirements.

Because of confusion in the past, I am including a reminder on this form that **the FINAL DRAFT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER IS WORTH ½ OF THE 4TH QUARTER GRADE.**

You and your child should read all parts of the Policy and Syllabus handout together and discuss the policies therein. Parents, please initial the designated areas on the Policy and Syllabus handout. If you have any questions about my policies, please call guidance to set up a Parent-Teacher conference. We can meet face-to-face or via telephone. You may forego the guidance office and email me directly at nerfj@duvalschools.org.

Furthermore, **I require your permission for your child to read, study, and discuss the literature required of this course.** If you are unfamiliar with any of the works listed, you might want to go to an Internet site, such as Amazon.com, that provides summary information about such works of literature. **Please be aware that film versions of these works or documentaries about the works and/or the authors may be viewed and discussed in class. Complete the form below and indicate whether or not your child has permission to read all of the required works of literature and to view the film adaptations of those works.**

I, _____, the parent/guardian of _____,
Print parent's/guardian's name **Print student's name**

(Circle or highlight one of the bulleted items below)

- **AGREE** to allow my child to read the works of literature on the syllabus and to view the film adaptations of those works.
- **HAVE RESERVATIONS** about some aspects of the syllabus. *Please note my concerns, which I have written and attached to this form.*

Parent's/Guardian's **Signature**

Date

Student's **Signature**

Class Period