

# AP ENGLISH LITERATURE & COMPOSITION

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

AP English Literature is a college-level course that helps students hone their critical literary analysis skills. Through intensive reading and writing assignments, students will explore language, character, action, and theme. Students will also write compositions representing a variety of genres, including literary analysis, exposition, argument, narrative, and creative writing. This course meets the rigorous standards of the College Board and is designed to prepare students for the AP English Literature and Composition exam.

## **COURSE GOALS:**

- To improve critical thinking and analytical skills to be measured through writing practice and studying literary analysis.
- To expand use of college vocabulary to better describe and understand the literary works studied.
- To dig further into the meanings of language, diction, imagery, use of details, style, and structure.
- To develop the skills and knowledge necessary to score well on the AP exam in the spring.
- To promote imagination and improve abilities to respond to all literature.
- To evaluate the historical, cultural, social, economic, political, religious, psychological, and philosophical influences on the author and his or her work.
- To analyze the literary and social impact of a work.

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS:**

This course is designed to be rigorous in both work and thought in order to mimic a college freshman English course and to prepare students to be successful on the Advanced Placement exam. As a result, students will be held to high academic and behavioral expectations.

Students are expected to read each assigned text in a timely manner and carefully. Close readings of texts will require more time than pleasurable reading and will likely require multiple readings and annotation. Students should anticipate receiving nightly reading assignments as part of the course.

Additionally, all students are required to abide by the Mercer Student/Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct, which includes academic integrity and personal responsibility for learning. Some of the key qualities that define an exceptional student are as follows:

*Attendance & Attitude:*

- Consistent attendance
- Arrives to class on time
- Comes ahead of time to get work if he/she knows that he/she is going to absent
- Takes initiative to make up work if absence is due to sickness
- Is alert and maintains a positive and engaged attitude
- Is prepared to answer questions when addressed
- No other work/cell phones out during class
- Shows respect for the teacher, the other students, the classroom, and the classroom materials

*Work Ethic & Effort:*

- All assignments are completed and on time
- Consistently demonstrates hard work and effort
- Freely participates in class discussions with insightful comments or raises thoughtful questions
- Seeks additional help via teacher conferencing, peer-reviews, or other means as needed

*Composition & Analysis:*

- Writing showcases insight and understanding of texts with well-explained, specific support
- Writing demonstrates effective composition through well-structured, well-written compositions
- Writing is the student's own original work

Failure to meet academic or behavioral expectations may result in the following: a '0' without the chance to make up an assignment, moving seats, a phone call home, detention, etc.

### **COURSE OF STUDY:**

Because Mercer students study literature by genres in their sophomore year and American literature in their junior year, the bulk of reading for this year will be British and European literature. The overall purpose of the course is to expose students to a variety of literature and to have them interact with literature on a high level. The course is designed in a thematic fashion in order for students to make connections across genres and time periods, to focus on a deeper understanding of the texts, and to evaluate literary elements. The unit outline below is subject to change at the teacher's discretion.

**I. Unit 1: The Epic Hero?**

- A. Selections of Anglo-Saxon poetry
- B. *Beowulf* translated by Seamus Heaney
- C. *Grendel* by John Gardner

**II. Unit 2: Sonnets & Shakespeare**

- A. Selections of sonnets
- B. *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare

**III. Unit 3: The Male and Female Perspective**

- A. Selections of short stories and poetry
- B. *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen

**IV. Unit 4: Isn't It Romantic?**

- A. *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley
- B. Selections of Romantic poetry
- C. One of the following novels: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde, *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte, *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte, or *Dracula* by Bram Stoker

**V. Unit 5: Satire & Society**

- A. Selections of short stories
- B. *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde

**VI. Unit 6: The Loss of Civilization**

- A. Selections of poetry from World War I and World War II
- B. *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding

**REQUIRED MATERIALS**

Students are expected to bring the following materials **every day** to class:

1. Binder **or** folder
2. Notebook
3. Chromebook
4. Novel/play/anthology/text
5. Writing utensil
6. Set of highlighters

## **HOMEWORK AND GRADING POLICY:**

Grading will come from a variety of sources: pop quizzes on reading, short writing assignments, essays, speeches, projects, homework, objective tests, and essay tests.

Homework is a necessity for success in this course. Homework will be given often throughout the course of the semester to ensure student understanding. Homework may be collected for its accuracy, checked for completion, or used to develop classroom discussions. Studying is expected and is the most important homework you can do. Study vigorously and study often. Pop quizzes on nightly assigned reading should be expected.

Students will be expected to participate in classroom discussions regarding the works that we read. The student will earn one 'point' each time that he/she **meaningfully** participates in our literature circle discussions. At the end of each unit, the teacher will calculate the 'average' number for the class, and this will be how much the discussion points are worth for the unit. The student's grade will be determined by the number of times that he/she participated out of the class average. For example, if the class average is 20 points and the student has participated 15 times, the student will receive a 15/20 on the discussion points for the unit. Please note that students who receive over the 'average' amount will not be awarded extra points.

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Students should complete their own work. Plagiarism is stealing from someone else's work. This includes, but is not limited to, copying another student's work, allowing another student to copy your work, using AI to write or edit a paper, copying a source word for word without citing the information, etc. If a student plagiarizes on an assignment or cheats on a quiz/test, or if a student allows another student to copy his or her work, the following consequences will apply:

1. The student will receive a zero (0) on the assignment and receive a consequence (after-school detention, Saturday detention, and/or suspension) based upon the level of the infraction.
2. The student's name will be reported to the office and filed in the event of future violations. Repeated violation could result in removal from class, a non-passing grade, and/or a disciplinary hearing.

Since AP Literature and Composition is designed to mimic a college-level course, late work will not be accepted for credit. "I left it at home" or "I forgot..." or "I must have lost it..." still make the work late, and therefore, not accepted for credit! The only exception is in the case of an **excused absence**. All make-up work must be met by the deadline established with the teacher.

Grades will be broken down into the following distribution:

- Quizzes and Tests (including pop quizzes, objective tests, passage multiple-choice quizzes, and timed FRQ essay tests): 50%
- Other Written Assignments, Dialectical Journals, and Projects: 40%
- Literature Circle Discussion Points: 10%

## **OTHER POLICIES**

Cell Phone Policy: Electronic devices (cell phones, earbuds, smart watches, iPods, etc.) should be put away unless otherwise instructed by the teacher. Any contact with parents/guardians must be made through the office! *First Offense:* The student will receive an after school detention. *Second Offense:* The student will receive a Saturday detention. *Third Offense and Beyond:* The student will be required to turn in his or her cell phone at the front office at the beginning of each school day.

Absent Work Policy: Students will be expected to check Google Classroom for any assignments that he/she needs to make up due to an absence. The student is responsible for completing make-up work and rescheduling tests with Ms. Renkin. Keep in mind that there is one day for make-up for each day absent - THIS INCLUDES TEST AND QUIZZES.

Food and Drink Policy: Food and drinks are not permitted in class. Students must put their food and drinks away in their lockers before coming to class.

## **GOOGLE CLASSROOM:**

Students are expected to join Google Classroom. All assignments will be posted to Google Classroom, so in the case of an absence, students can check Google Classroom for work that needs to be made up. Additionally, students will be required to submit some assignments on Google Classroom. Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate online behavior on Google Classroom.

Google Classroom Code: pnih2w3

## **AP EXAM INFORMATION:**

Students have the opportunity to take the AP Literature and Composition exam. This exam will occur at 8 a.m. on May 8, 2023. Registration for the exam takes place in the fall. More information regarding how to sign up for the AP exam will be given at a later date. **Students who are unable to take the exam on this day MUST schedule an alternative date IN ADVANCE if they want the opportunity to take the exam.**

## **CONTACT THE TEACHER:**

Ms. Breanna Renkin  
Reading 7, English 8, & AP English 12  
[brenkin@mercerc.k12.pa.us](mailto:brenkin@mercerc.k12.pa.us)

\*Parent-teacher conferences must be scheduled through the guidance office. You can contact the guidance office at 724-662-2272 ext. 20.

By signing, you acknowledge understanding of the course requirements, goals, & policies.  
Please include any information that you would believe is valuable in helping me support your  
child through this course.

Print Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/GuardianSignature: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information: