AP English Literature & Composition

Preview Syllabus

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#roaplit

Thanks for considering AP Literature, a class designed only for seniors excited to explore literature, philosophy, and culture criticism in unexpected ways! While there are several goals for the course, you can expect:

- Preparation skills for the AP Exam in May which can earn you college credit
- Thoughtful and provocative novels and poetry, from 1600 to present day
- Advanced skills in composition, especially in literary analysis
- Practice in strengthening impromptu writing, especially as offered in college coursework
- Provocative discussion both in class and on line
- A blended learning experience

**What is Blended Learning?**

Our class will take place both online and off-line; that is, much of the work we do will be on websites, through podcasts and video, etc. But unlike an online class, our physical meeting time will be spent exploring the topics and conversations we began or continued online. This way you get more skills practice than traditional courses and we maximize our time together by digging at the complexities and problem-points in novels and philosophies we encounter.

**The End of Theory Online RPG:** 33% of the course will be a skills-practice Moodle game that challenges students to solve mysteries, stage debates, and even combat each other over issues in literary analysis. Students earn experience points over “grades,” and the game plot reveals larger consequences of the work we do as university students and beyond.

**Discussion Forums:** 33% of the course is set up as an open forum environment for students to explore ideas from class, test parts of papers, examine their reading comprehension, etc., posting anonymously if they wish.

**Traditional Assignments:** The final 33% of the course is comprised of essays, impromptu writings, and other more standard class-based grades.
What Do We Read?

Poetry, plays, and novels from 1600 to the present are featured in the course. While the reading list changes from year to year (and students can help select it each spring), I traditionally offer, among others:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ralph Ellison’s <em>Invisible Man</em></th>
<th>A Shakespeare comedy</th>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Conrad’s <em>Heart of Darkness</em></td>
<td>An absurdist play by Albee</td>
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<td>Edwin Abbott’s <em>Flatland</em></td>
<td>A Japanese and/or African novel</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Victorian mystery</td>
<td>A featured poet analysis unit</td>
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Is There Summer Work?

Of course! The required summer work also varies from year to year, but often includes:

- Reading a short required novel and composing a 2-3 page essay on it
- Posting about the novel on the Discussion Forums
- Some introductory exercises on Moodle/End of Theory to introduce you to the story and teach basic game mechanics (maybe 90 minutes of required work).
- An optional novel choice for additional credit.

Is the Work Hard?

All AP courses are challenging! The most difficult part of my course is not in the amount of work, but the independence you take in completing work across extended due dates, budgeting time, etc. The real challenge—at least it should be—is in processing the difficult ideas from this course, not the volume of work.

The most successful AP Lit students join the class because they love literature, love idea, and aren’t afraid to take risks to see how far their thinking can take them. But why ask me? Talk to any of our seniors this year! They’ll be happy to tell you what we do!

What Should I Do Now?

1. Talk to seniors taking the course; and come talk to Mr. Chisnell about it!
2. Become a lurker on Chisnell.com to see what we’re doing (Sorry, End of Theory is closed to you!). There is also more detailed information on what I outlined here.
3. Start thinking: How much do I want to meet the great ideas that literature offers, even when they are, at times, uncomfortable?

Ready? I am!