

Course Syllabus

AP Literature and Composition

Contact Information

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Course Overview

As stated in the AP English Literature and Composition Course Description, this 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. As they read, students consider a work’s structure, style, and themes, as well as its use of figurative language, imagery, and symbolism. Writing assignments include expository, analytical, and argumentative essays that require students to analyze and interpret literary works” (7).

AP Literature and Composition is a college-level course and, as such, requires the reading and discussion of college-level material, which may include controversial ideas, mature content, profanity, or emotionally challenging subjects (including mental illness and sexual assault). The AP Course Description document also states, “Issues that might, from a specific cultural viewpoint, be considered controversial, including depictions of nationalities, religions, ethnicities, dialects, gender, or class, are often represented artistically in works of literature. AP students are not expected or asked to subscribe to any one specific set of cultural or political values, but are expected to have the maturity to analyze perspectives different from their own and to question the meaning, purpose, or effect of such content within the literary work as a whole” (117). Students and/or parents who object to a particular text may, after contacting the teacher, elect to substitute a work chosen by the teacher which is equally rigorous, and which fulfills the objectives of the assignment.

Big Ideas and Enduring Understandings

“The big ideas and enduring understandings serve as the foundation of the AP English Literature and Composition course and enable students to create meaningful connections among course concepts. They are threads that run throughout the course and revisiting them and applying them in a variety of contexts helps students to develop deeper conceptual understanding” (15).

- **CHARACTER:** Characters in literature allow readers to study and explore a range of values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, and cultural norms represented by those characters.
- **SETTING:** Setting and the details associated with it not only depict a time and place, but also convey values associated with that setting.
- **STRUCTURE:** The arrangement of the parts and sections of a text, the relationship of the parts to each other, and the sequence in which the text reveals information are all structural choices made by a writer that contribute to the reader’s interpretation of a text.
- **NARRATION:** A narrator’s or speaker’s perspective controls the details and emphases that affect how readers experience and interpret a text.
- **FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE:** Comparisons, representations, and associations shift meaning from the literal to the figurative and invite readers to interpret a text.
- **LITERARY ARGUMENTATION:** Readers establish and communicate their interpretations of literature through arguments supported by textual evidence.

Required Texts

- *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*, Kennedy and Gioia
- *Othello*, Shakespeare
- *1984*, Orwell
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Hurston
- Various short fiction, prose, and poetry (found in the Course Reader)

Our MVHS library has copies of all the books we will be reading this year; however, students are encouraged to purchase their own copies of the texts, which will allow them to highlight and annotate as we read and discuss together.

Required Materials

- A 3-ring binder with an AP Literature and Composition folder/divider
- College-ruled loose leaf paper
- Blue and/or black pens
- Dry-erase markers
- 3x3 Post-it notes

Technology Expectations

Students will have access to school-issued Chromebooks to use as an instructional tool in the classroom. Students will be expected to utilize technology daily to access classwork, submit assignments, research, and word-process. Unauthorized use of personal devices (cellphones, tablets, headphones/earbuds) in class may result in a referral and device confiscation, so all students are expected to silence and store their personal devices for the entire class period. Students bring devices at their own risk; Murrieta Valley High School is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged property. Students will be expected to access technology (including the internet) outside of class time to reference and print online resources and materials, research, word-process writing pieces, print documents, access course content and grades, submit assignments, and more.

Behavior Expectations

Students are expected to “Do Everything the R.I.T.E Way, the Nighthawk Way” in the classroom and on campus.

| Respect | Integrity | Teamwork | Excellence |
|---|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Come to class every day, on time, and prepared to learn• Listen attentively while Mrs. Baladez is speaking• Stay focused, complete assignments, and turn in all work on time• Value the opinions of others and treat people with kindness• Use appropriate language | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respond appropriately when given directions• Stay positive and set a good example for others• Take responsibility for your actions• Show academic honesty• Use materials for their intended purpose | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work collaboratively and cooperatively with others• Take turns to speak, quietly listening when others are speaking• Keep hands, feet, body, and personal objects to yourself at all times• Help create a welcoming, accepting environment• As a group, contribute ideas and manage workload equally | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask clarifying questions and communicate your needs• Manage your time effectively• Utilize independent problem-solving techniques• Commit to always give your best and produce high-quality work• Be goal-oriented and always strive for more |

Consequences

Inability to adhere to course expectations will result in the following consequences:

- **1st Offense:** Dialogue between teacher and student with clarified expectations
- **2nd Offense:** Loss of time or privileges and/or parent communication
- **3rd Offense:** Parent communication, detention or low-level referral, establish plan for improvement
- **4th Offense:** Parent communication, OCI, or office referral

Depending on the severity of the infraction, consequences may vary and are up to the teacher's discretion.

Please remember that **academic integrity** is essential for success in this course. Students who complete assignments and give their work to others or students who reproduce and submit other students' work will **both** receive consequences for academic dishonesty. Consequences include receiving a zero on the assignment without the ability to make up lost points, parent communication, and an office referral.

Cell phone use during class will result in a referral; consequences according to the MVHS Cell Phone Policy are stated below.

- **1st Referral:** Phone confiscated until the end of the school day, warning
- **2nd Referral:** Phone confiscated, phone call home, morning detention
- **3rd Referral:** Phone confiscated (parent pick-up required), phone call home, morning detention, OCI for remainder of class period
- **4th+ Referral:** Same consequences as a 3rd referral, but additional OCI or suspension can be implemented due to defiant behavior

Grading

All grades will be determined using the following grading scale: 90-100% (A), 80-89% (B), 70-79% (C), 60-69% (D), 0-59% (F). The following weighted categories will be used to make up every student's grade: Writing: 40%, Reading: 25%, Speaking & Listening: 20%, Language: 15%. This course offers students a weighted grade, so expectations are high for student performance and demonstration of proficiency.

Handwritten submitted work should be neat and legible, written in pen (blue or black ink), on smooth (no tears, crumples, folds, or spiral edges) college-ruled paper. Some assignments will need to be word-processed using Microsoft Office 365 and submitted to Canvas. Processed writing pieces should be typed using MLA format and submitted to Turnitin.com.

In class, students will work independently and in cooperative learning groups. Any unfinished classwork is then considered homework (in addition to any other homework assigned), due the following class period. In order to receive full credit, work must be submitted by the specified deadline. Late work will be accepted up to **one calendar day** past the due date, but will only receive half credit. Please communicate with Mrs. Baladez ahead of time if you know that you won't be able to submit an assignment by the deadline. No credit will be given if work is not turned in or if work is submitted after the one day grace period. All assignments will be posted on Canvas for student reference. **There will be no opportunities to receive extra credit.**

Absences

If students are absent, they are expected to check Canvas to find out what they missed. It is the student's responsibility to catch-up (read, take notes, etc.) and make up any missed assignments so they are ready to continue with the coursework the following class period. All make-up work must be submitted by the next class following the absence, in order to receive full credit. If a student is absent on the day something is due, it is still the student's responsibility to submit the assignment electronically by the due date (if additional time is needed, the student must communicate with Mrs. Baladez to arrange a plan for submission). If students are absent on the day of a test, quiz, or timed writing, they are responsible for making up that assessment before or after school, during lunch or Office Hours (by appointment only) within one calendar week from the absence; make-ups will not be offered past the one-week deadline.

Policies

At school, students are expected to use the bathroom before school, during passing periods, break, and lunch. However, in the case that students need to use the restroom during class time, they may sign out, take a pass, and go. A limited number of students will be permitted to go each period and if the privilege is abused, students may not be allowed to use the restroom during class time. Students may have bottles of water in class, but no other food or drink is permitted (including gum). Students will not be able to leave during class time to get a drink of water.

If students show academic dishonesty by plagiarizing someone else's work (which includes using a source without citing it) or by giving their work for another student to copy, they will receive a zero on the assignment without the ability to make up the lost credit. Students will submit some written work through Turnitin.com, which generates a Similarity Report based on the uniqueness of the writing. If students submit work with a high Similarity Index with excessive identified similarities, they may receive a zero on the assignment without the ability to make up the lost credit. It is very important that students work independently to submit their own original work.

Communication is key! Mrs. Baladez communicates best via email and will always work to respond to messages in a timely fashion. Office Hours is a great opportunity to speak with Mrs. Baladez one-on-one or to receive additional help. Grades will be updated regularly on Aeries; Canvas agenda, assignments, and scores on individual assignments will also be up-to-date. Please be sure to download the Aeries app and the Canvas app (there is one for students and different one for parents) to stay in contact. Mrs. Baladez will always send mass communication through "Parent Square." Please take advantage of the many opportunities to maintain a connection between home and school.

Syllabus Agreement Form

After reading the syllabus with a parent/guardian, click the link below (or scan the QR Code with your device) to access a Syllabus Agreement form. By completing the form, you are acknowledging that you and your parent/guardian have read and understood the course policies and expectations.

[Syllabus Agreement Form](#)

