

AP Literature Syllabus  
2025  
Mr. Robles/Mr. Wilson

Welcome to a new year. We will spend most of our time reading, talking, and writing about literature. Because some of you have never engaged in this sort of rigorous literary criticism, you should expect to overcome a bit of a learning curve at the start of the semester. That's normal and nothing to worry about. Just two important reminders: Keep up with your reading and read carefully (think about what you've read!). Do those two things and most everything else will fall into place.

Our primary text this semester is Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry and Drama, Eleventh Editions by X. J. Kennedy & Dana Gioia. Please note that we do not have time to cover every single possible detail that could be on the AP exam in this combined class. Instead, the goal is to make sure that we focus on skills within the classroom and provide opportunities to broaden your understanding of the field at home. These will be most heavily used for the informational parts of the chapters. We will also rely heavily on your use of Google Classroom for assignments and pdf files.

Throughout the semester, we will have in-class reading/discussion as well as outside reading/writing. Most of the poetry and the plays covered will be read during class time; this opens up time at night to read longer fiction, or work on skills. The reason for doing this is to have what usually is considered the denser or more difficult literature (aka not prose) covered in class, while not taking a hit on the amount of literature we cover. You will need to keep up with reading. Currently, I am working on a good formula to use with the combo class when it comes to reading. To give you an idea of what had been used, the usual daily page workload was a range of 45-60 pages a day, depending on the difficulty of the selection when the Literature course was taught in a semester. (Again, please note that this is here only for a reference to what had been considered normal).

Students are always welcome to purchase a personal copy of the literature we read if they wish to take notes or prefer their own material. While most pieces of literature will have free options, there is one book that will likely need to be purchased this semester: *East of Eden* by John Steinbeck (will be read towards the end unless there is a major unforeseen circumstance).

## Class Focus

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### First week in class

We will start off the semester by going over the foundation of understanding literature (aka your summer reading assignment). The ability to know when references are made greatly increases your understanding of literature and can oftentimes make things more enjoyable. We will have tests on the prerequisite reading assignments on an announced day in the first two full weeks of school. Novel discussion of *Pride and Prejudice* will coincide within our first full unit. We will also do a mini-intro to literature through poetry to learn about close reading and interpretations. Once this ends, we will be following the 9 units the College Board has suggested to use:

Unit 1: Short Fiction I: In our first unit of short fiction we will be focusing on the structure and setup of a story. This is where we begin the journey of learning how to separate our emotional responses to text from the analysis we give to the text.

Unit 2: Poetry I: In our first unit of poetry we will focus on learning about the basic ways of understanding syntax and figurative language.

Unit 3: Longer Fiction or Drama I: Unit 3 will focus on a study of two related novels. This will give us a chance to not only practice the skills of the first two units in a larger text, but to start talking about comparative analysis of text.

Unit 4: Short Fiction II: Now that the basics are in place, it is time to practice. We will be focusing more on quick analysis of short fiction in discussion and writing.

Unit 5: Poetry II: We will put into practice our analyzation skills into a deep dive of one poet, analyzing changes throughout a lifetime of work.

Unit 6: Longer Fiction or Drama II: We will look at two Shakespeare plays, learning how to approach, understand, and analyze drama.

Unit 7: Short Fiction III: We will have a final review of short fiction on more complex pieces.

Unit 8: Poetry III: This unit will focus on review for the test using a variety of verse options.

Unit 9: Longer Fiction or Drama III: The final piece before the exam will be *East of Eden*. We will review all skills necessary for the AP exam using this text.

More details on these units will be given as we come to them in class. After the AP Exam in May, there is a final unit that will be chosen by the students in class. As we approach that time more information will be given on this final unit.

Literary Terms – Literary Terms should be memorized and used throughout the remainder of your education.

Every field has its own special language, its jargon. Literature is no different. Many of these terms (starting on the next page) you'll know already, but some will be new. As we go through the works this semester, we'll introduce or review most of the listed terms. These are not the only literary terms that there are. This is only a beginning list for you to reference. Throughout the semester, you will be exposed to other terms not on this one. This is here for a quick reference if needed. It is suggested that in the first week you look over this list and look up any that you do not currently know.

### Literary Terms -- Drama/Fiction

Antagonist (the most significant character or force that opposes the protagonist)/protagonist (the central character of the story who initiates the main action of the story)

Catharsis (A purifying or figurative cleansing of the emotions, especially pity and fear, described by Aristotle as an effect of tragic drama on its audience)

Character (dynamic, flat, round, static, stock)

Comedy/Tragedy

Comic relief

Conflict

Crisis

Deus ex machina (literally, “a god from a machine” – the phrase now refers to any forced or improbable device in plot resolution)

Farce

Foil

Hubris (overweening pride, outrageous behavior, or the insolence that leads to ruin)

Monologue/Dialogue/Soliloquy/Aside

Point-of-view

-first-person/third-person

-(limited) omniscient

Prologue/Epilogue

Plot (Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, Denouement)

Tragic Flaw

### Literary Terms -- Poetry

Alliteration

Assonance

Blank verse

Cacophony/euphony

Caesura

Conceit

Connotation/denotation

Consonance

Couplet

Dirge

Dramatic monologue

Elegy

End-stopped line/enjambment

Epic

Foot

Free verse

Iamb

Image

Imagery

In medias res (literally, “in the middle of things” – a narrative device of beginning a story midway in the events it depicts, usually at an exciting or significant moment)

Lyric

Meter  
Octave  
Ode  
Pentameter  
Quatrain  
Refrain  
Repetition  
Rhyme

- end/internal
- masculine(a rhyme of one syllable words (fox & socks) or a rhyme on the stressed final syllables (contrive and survive))
- feminine (a rhyme of two or more syllables with a stress on a syllable other than the last (turtle & fertile))
- exact (a full rhyme in which the sounds following the initial letters of the words are identical in sound (follow & hollow, go & slow))
- slant (a rhyme in which the final consonant sounds are the same but the vowel sounds are different (letter & litter, bone & bean))
- eye (or visual) (rhyme in which the spelling of the words appears alike but the pronunciations differ (laughter & daughter, idea & flea))

Scansion  
Sonnet (English, Italian)

Stanza

Stress

Literary Terms -- Common elements

Allusion

Apostrophe

Diction

Euphemism

Flashback

Hyperbole

Irony

- dramatic (the reader/audience knows information characters do not)
- verbal (the meaning intended by the speaker differs from the meaning understood by least one other character – note: sarcasm is a subtype of verbal irony, not the same thing)
- situational (or cosmic) (where fate or destiny appears to play a cruel joke on human hopes (see Morrisette, Alanis, or consider the unsinkable *Titanic*))

Metaphor

Mood

Prose

Satire

Symbol

Theme

Tone

Understatement

Verse

### Attendance:

Below is listed the updated attendance policy as stated in the Student Handbook:

Any student absent more than six (6) days, excused or unexcused, in any class in a semester will need to follow the protocol below to ensure they do not fail due to attendance.

- Students with greater than 6 absences, but less than 10 absences will need to complete make-up time for absences 7, 8 and 9 during the attendance make-up blocks provided by the school.
- Students with 10 or more absences must make up time for absences 7, 8 and 9, and complete an appeal form to be considered by the attendance appeal committee.

Please note, that within this class, especially when it pertains to reading longer texts it is important to keep up with reading, even when not in class, when possible. Sometimes it gets hard when missing many days in a row to catch up and continue doing what is going on in class. I can more easily work with missing assignments due to absences than not reading what is assigned.

### Grading

The overall goal of this class is for college preparation and college credit. With these goals, the grading will also reflect a collegiate classroom. We will have two designations of types of grades this semester—the “Minor” grade and the “Major” grade. Minor grades will typically consist of classwork, quick homework assignments, reading checks, small quizzes, paper drafts, etc. Major grades will typically consist of unit tests, final major papers, and projects. Students will know at the time something is assigned if it will count as a minor or major grade. Please note that, just as in college, within this class, performance is what will count most. Most grades will fall under the “Minor” grade status, so that means that when a “Major” grade does come around, it will count substantially, hence the category designation.

Socratic Seminars: Seminars can count as a minor or major grade depending on the purpose of the seminar. The type of grade will be designated prior to the day of the seminar. While I know that not everyone is as comfortable talking in front of others, discussion is an important element of a collegiate class. For the first seminar of the year, a minimum grade of a 70 will be given for no participation but active listening with no distractions. After the first seminar, students will need to turn in a written commentary on the subject of the seminar prior to the beginning of the discussion to get the minimum of a 70, otherwise no participation will result in a 0. More details on this will be given in class as needed.

9-weeks:

25% minor grade

75% major grade

Prerequisite Reading Tests: These will count as  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a major grade and only done in the first grading period of a semester.

### Late Work

Late work will not be accepted unless an extension was agreed to prior to the due date. This is a collegiate level class. As such, it is your responsibility to keep your teacher up to date on any issues that affect your classwork. Not every reason will be given an extension, but it is important to let me know when something is happening. During this time of “learning in a pandemic,” I do understand that there are a variety of reasons that could affect your ability to keep up with work for this class. Most of the work for this class leads into what we will be doing the next class period. Please make sure you keep me up to date on things that affect your ability to participate within this class.

#### Concerning Work on Google Docs or other Google Apps

It is expected that students turn in the document that they have been working on throughout the entirety of the assignment. Students should not just copy and paste from another document to turn in a “clean copy.” It is important to see all of the work that is done. When looking at the history, a lack of shown work suggests the usage of AI generated work or plagiarized work, both results in a 0 as explained in a section below. In the event that something happens that the student is unable to show this document, it is the student’s responsibility to communicate with the teacher about the situation prior to submitting the assignment. This can be done through the private comments on the assignment.

#### Concerning Work That Isn’t Yours

It has gone through many formats over the years. In all regards, forms of cheating are not looked highly upon. Where in the past copying work may have been the extent of possibilities, in today’s world, AI generated and/or plagiarized work has also entered as ways people turn in some work and will not be accepted. I do not go out of my way to try and find every possible use, but if something is noticeable or flagged, it will be investigated. If this work is deemed not the work of the student, it will receive a 0. I will go over what is considered plagiarism within the first week of the semester. If you either missed that explanation or feel you need a reminder as the semester progresses it is the student’s responsibility to ask for clarification on what is or isn’t considered plagiarism. This class has been designed to prepare students for expectations at the collegiate level. While in high school we are talking about receiving a 0, turning in plagiarized or AI generated work at college or later can lead to worse consequences that can include: being expelled from the university, loss of scholarships, academic probation/suspension, and being sued.

#### AP Exam

You are required to take the AP Exam at the end of the school year.

#### Questions?

Feel free to contact one of us via e-mail when you need some help. Remember that communication is always important.

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