

Mr. Rapson  
Room 35  
2013-14  
Skyline High School

## AP English Literature and Composition Course Outline

### General Description

Welcome! As this is a college level class, you are expected to keep pace with the daily and outside reading, reading responses, class notes, journal writing and exercises, essays. **If / when you need help from me, please do not hesitate to ask.**

We will be reading and analyzing a wide variety of literary genres including poetry, short stories, plays and novels with an emphasis on the study of literary elements such as plot, character, point of view and symbolism. Through daily close reading, frequent writing and whole class and small group discussions, you will develop the ability to work with and gain appreciation of how and why writers use language as they do. Close readings will form the basis of your writing, which will include personal, analytical, and evaluative journals and essays.

**All students are expected to take the College Board AP English Literature and Composition Examination in May.**

If you cannot reach me on campus, the best way to contact me is through email at [jeffrapson@gmail.com](mailto:jeffrapson@gmail.com) or [jeff.rapson@skylinehs.org](mailto:jeff.rapson@skylinehs.org). Additionally, you will become very familiar and interactive with our class blog, [www.jrapson.wordpress.com](http://www.jrapson.wordpress.com). Students absent from class are expected to use this site to stay current with the class content and homework assignments. Daily work can be sent to a fellow student via email on the day of the absence; that fellow student is to print the assignment for submittal on time. **No late work can be credited for any reason unless there is a valid, prearranged reason.**

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### Course Objectives:

1. To prepare students for the rigors of college level English.
2. To be prepared for the AP English Literature Examination.
3. To prepare students to write college level essays through intensive practice in literary analysis, personal and emotional response, assessment of artistic and human value, organization, and use of secondary critical sources.
3. To develop and practice thought processes, discussions and habits that foster clear, concise writing.
4. To review the elements of writing such as diction, style, tone, rhetorical purpose, technique and strategy, as well as audience, form, structure, and syntax.
5. To become familiar with literary elements such as setting, point of view, symbolism, and theme and literary terms like allusion, ballad, climax,

epigram, flashback, heroic couplet, irony, limerick, naturalism, scansion, tragic flaw, soliloquy, and sonnet.

6. To increase student academic vocabulary by 1,000 words through the learning of new words and in depth study of roots, etymology, historical influences, word relationships, connotation and denotation. Recognition vocabulary forms the major part of the learning objective; active vocabulary makes up the balance.
7. To formulate and construct thoughtful, logical reasoning as means of analysis and evaluation.
8. To train students to use literary and academic research and argumentation as a means to develop and construct their own positions in both written and oral communication.
9. To develop functional stylistic, literary, rhetorical and academic vocabulary.
10. To become more proficient writers, thinkers and students of English.

### **How These Objectives Will Be Reached**

Through consistent reading, writing and discussion students will increase their analytical, evaluative and communicative skills. The writing process will include:

- prewriting techniques such as journal writing, mapping, brainstorming and note-taking; organizing ideas using such tools as outlines and graphic organizers;
- drafting and revising;
- editing and
- final draft production.

Students will complete such specific writing assignments as effective paragraph writing; analytical essays; compare and contrast essays, and a research paper. There will also be frequent in-class essays to help prepare students for the AP test and college work.

Equally important to the reading and writing component is that this class is student-centered; that is **students will be often required to lead discussion both individually and through groups. The best way to learn is through discovery, expression and by making mistakes. Students will gain more from this class and achieve better results by their contributions to class discussion.**

Credit Value: 5.0

Complete California Framework of Reading/Language Arts is available at [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov).

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### **Primary Texts**

*The Bedford Introduction to Literature, 7<sup>th</sup> edition.*

## *Sound and Sense*

### **NOT REQUIRED BUT HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:**

- 1) *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster (2003).  
This is an entertaining, insightful and useful guide about what it means to **read** a work of literature. You can find this for less than \$10.00 on [www.half.com](http://www.half.com) and other internet sites. Well worth it.
- 2) A 2013 AP English Literature and Composition test preparation guide.  
There are several different versions in the marketplace and all are useful. Some of the more popular companies are *Cliff's*, *Princeton Review* and *Barron's*. They all cost roughly the same and are available at bookstores and the internet .
- 3) Purchase some, if not all of the titles listed below. You cannot go wrong by owning these great works and you will be able to annotate your own copies, which will definitely aid you in this class. They can be purchased incredibly cheaply. For example, if you go to [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and look for used copies, typically they can be had for as little as \$1.00 (plus shipping)!

**Supplementary Texts** – We will be studying from the following works.

#### **A. Drama**

*Hamlet* by William Shakespeare (1600)  
*Macbeth* by William Shakespeare (1605)  
*The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams (1945)  
*A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams (1947)  
*The Crucible* by Arthur Miller (1952)  
*Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller (1949)  
*A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry (1959)  
*Fences* by August Wilson (1985)  
*Joe Turner's Come and Gone* by August Wilson (1988)

#### **B. Novels**

*Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen (1813)  
*Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley (1818)  
*The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne (1850)  
*Madame Bovary* by Gustave Flaubert (1856)  
*Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad (1902)  
*The Stranger* by Albert Camus (1942)  
*Black Boy* by Richard Wright (1945)  
*1984* by George Orwell (1949)  
*Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison (1952)  
*Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury (1953)

*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey (1962)  
*Going After Cacciato* by Tim O'Brien (1978)  
*Beloved* by Toni Morrison (1987)

### **C. Poetry and Short Stories**

Various titles throughout *Sound and Sense* and *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition

### **More Important Stuff**

- Literary analysis and discussion are the central components of this class.
- Students will be routinely writing in several forms such as analytical, emotional and critical.
- Throughout the year students will reflect on or respond to readings and to issues by writing formal responses, investigations, or analyses.
- Students will learn research skills, evaluate and cite primary and secondary sources (following the *MLA* format) for papers of comparison, analysis and evaluation. Students will use research for formal, in-class analytical presentations.
- There is heavy emphasis on vocabulary.
- All work must be double-spaced and typed in 12 point Times New Roman font, neat, legible and free of careless errors such as misspelled words.
- All papers must be headed with student's full name, date, subject, period and signature in the upper right hand corner. Sloppy or illegible work will be returned ungraded.
- Homework is posted daily on the class blog, [www.jrapson.wordpress.com](http://www.jrapson.wordpress.com)
- Unexcused late work is not accepted unless there is a **VALID REASON**.

### **What you will need to bring to class every day:**

1. **A great attitude.**
2. **A willingness to work.**
3. **Your curiosity, open-mindedness and a willingness to learn.**
4. **A pen or pencil; pen is preferred.**
5. **Lined paper.**
6. **Two notebooks – one for notes, vocabulary, assignments, etc. The other will be used as a your journal.**
7. **A lot of post-it notes.**
8. **A highlighter.**
9. **Colored pencils.**

## **10. A folder for your writing.**

### **Vocabulary Notebook**

You will dedicate a large section of your notebook to our weekly vocabulary lists. Typically there will be a list of 15-25 words each Monday of which you will be tested on Friday.

### **Honor Code**

Do not cheat. For one thing, you will lose my trust and respect, which neither you nor I want. Secondly, I would rather you tell me ahead of time that you are unprepared or do not understand something rather than resort to dishonesty. It's not worth it and I always find out when a student is cheating. Cheating on any assignment will result in a failing grade on that assignment and referral to the administration.

### **Attendance Policy**

You are expected to be in class, **seated**, on time, each day. We go bell to bell so be physically and mentally ready to go. Unexcused absences are to be cleared within 5 school days after return to class. It is the student's responsibility to secure missed work from another student or the website.

### **Class Format**

Learning targets based on the California Reading/Language Arts Framework are posted daily on the website and in class. Here is the structure of a typical day:

1. Journal writing, quizzes, warm-up activities, discussion of the day's learning target – 15 minutes.
2. Roundtable discussions - 15 minutes.
3. Each table shares with the class - 10 minutes.
4. Whole class discussion, writing, note taking, final words – 15 minutes

### **Grading Policy/ Student Evaluation**

**Grading is accumulative over the semester.** All assignments given are noted and/or evaluated. The grade depends on the evaluation of the student's response in aggregate for the following areas:

*Homework* – A large portion of your homework is reading. You can expect an average of 25 pages of reading per night. If you do not keep up with the reading, you likely will not be successful in this class. Additionally you typically will be required to write some sort of response to that night's reading, which you will share in class the following day.

*Class participation* – This is big. Studies have concluded that students are much more likely to learn and be engaged when they take "ownership" of the material through

discussions with their peers rather than passively listening to a lecture or from the usual four or five students each day. The more you participate in discussion, the more you will get out of this class. My goal is to frequently hear from all of you. I often am the facilitator of class discussions, but **you will drive them**. I will be assessing you on your eagerness to contribute, willingness to risk ideas, frequency of responses and general verbal contributions to the class, as well as your ability to work with other students and/or within a small group.

*Vocabulary* – At minimum, you will cultivate a list of roughly 25 new words per week; this translates to about 1000 words for the school year.

*Writing* – You will be writing frequently and your writing is expected to develop in correctness, clarity, organization, and rhetorical expression.

### **Grading Categories**

<i>Reading and/or literature responses and other homework:</i>	<b>25 %</b>
<i>Class participation</i>	<b>25 %</b>
<i>Writing and major assessments</i>	<b>25 %</b>
<i>Tests and quizzes</i>	<b>25 %</b>

\*Will include vocabulary, reading and major concept tests and quizzes.

The grading scale for point percentages is as follows:

97% and above	=	A+
92 – 96%	=	A
88 - 91%	=	A-
85 – 87%	=	B+
82 – 84%	=	B
80 – 81%	=	B-
78 – 79%	=	C+
73 – 77%	=	C
70 – 72%	=	C-
68 – 69%	=	D+
63 – 67%	=	D
60 – 62%	=	D-
Below 60%	=	F

Your signature below confirms students have read this document and agree to follow the course guidelines. Please detach the signature form and **return to Mr. Rapson no later than August 31**

Student name and signature

Period

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Student addresses for emails and texts

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Parent (s) name (s) and signature (s)

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Parent(s) email address (es) and phone number (s) \_\_\_\_\_

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Anything that you would like Mr. Rapson to know regarding your son/daughter?:

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