Arthur L. Johnson High School
Advanced Placement Literature and Composition

Summer Assignment 2020
Mrs. Poskay

AP English Literature and Composition will be a demanding college-level course. You will be expected to function at a high intellectual level, complete lengthy reading and writing assignments, develop insight about literature, improve your writing, and carry on as a responsible adult at all times. You must be able to think and work independently and hold yourself to high standards. In all ways, I teach this course as a college instructor would. I will guide, support and coach you, but you must take risks, show initiative, and fulfill all obligations on your end. To acquaint yourself with the general description and expectations for the AP English Literature and Composition course, I recommend that you visit the College Board Advanced Placement Program website and read specifically about the AP Literature and Composition course. There you will also find study skills, reading tips, sample questions, and other information about the exam and the course.

The summer assignments for AP Lit are designed to enhance your analysis of literature, broaden your knowledge of literary terms that are commonly used on the exam and acquaint yourself with numerous literary works, which will be the focus of the first marking period of school.

Materials for Class in September-

1. Binder (3 ring) with 4 sections: Major Literary Works, AP Practice, Lit Terms and Vocabulary, Poetry
2. Pens/Pencils/Highlighters

Assignments:

1. Read and annotate the following four works of literature. If you would rather buy yourself a copy of the books so that you can write in them directly, that is fine with me; otherwise, keep detailed notes in a binder rather than adding post-it notes to the works themselves. Notes should include observations, questions, quotes that struck you for any reason. You will respond to AP prompts on the four books within the first marking period of school. Each book will be covered extensively when class begins in the fall.
   - *Oedipus the King* or *Oedipus Rex* (the second play in the collection- you do not need to read all three plays) have notes and reading completed by September 6.
   - *Things Fall Apart* - Chinua Achebe - notes and reading completed by September 13.
   - *The Poisonwood Bible* - Barbara Kingsolver - notes and reading completed by September 25.
   - *Song of Solomon* - Toni Morrison - notes and reading completed by October 15.
2. Learn the root word list (will help on SAT and ACT as well)
3. Any words on the SAT Vocabulary List Grade 12 that you don’t know should be learned over the summer.
4. The starred* literary terms on The Glossary of Literary Terms for the AP English Literature and Composition Exam must be learned for September. You will have your first quiz (random selection) within the first two weeks of class. Study however it works for you. If you want to make flashcards, do that. If something else works better for you, that’s fine as well.
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1. abet
to support or encourage someone; especially someone who has done something wrong

2. abeyance
suspension; temporary cessation

3. abhor
to hate very, very much; to detest

4. abstruse
hard to understand

5. amorphous
shapeless; without a regular or stable shape; bloblike

6. acumen
keenness of judgment; mental sharpness

7. adage
a traditional saying; a proverb

8. adroit
skillful; dexterous; clever; shrewd; socially at ease

9. affluent
rich; prosperous

10. allusion
an indirect reference (often to a literary work); a hint

11. aloof
uninvolved; standing off; keeping one's distance
12. **ambiguous**
   unclear in meaning; confusing; capable of being interpreted in different ways

13. **assiduous**
   hardworking; busy; quite diligent

14. **auspicious**
   favorable; promising; pointing to a good result

15. **axiom**
   a self-evident rule or truth; a widely accepted saying

16. **baroque**
   extravagantly ornate

17. **benevolent**
   generous; kind; doing good deeds

18. **blithe**
   carefree; cheerful

19. **bucolic**
   charmingly rural; rustic; countrylike

20. **careen**
   to swerve; to move rapidly without control; to lean to one side

21. **caricature**
   a portrait or description that is purposely distorted or exaggerated, often to prove some point about its subject

22. **catharsis**
   purification that brings emotional relief or renewal

23. **chicanery**
   trickery; deceitfulness; artifice; especially legal or political

24. **clandestine**
   concealed or secret; usually for an evil or subversive purpose
38. **extol**
   to praise highly; to laud

39. **facetious**
   humorous; not serious; clumsily humorous

40. **fastidious**
   meticulous; demanding; finicky

41. **fervor**
   great warmth or earnestness; ardor; zeal

42. **flagrant**
   glaringly bad; notorious; scandalous

43. **flippant**
   frivolously disrespectful; saucy; pert; flip

44. **futile**
   useless; hopeless

45. **garrulous**
   talkative; chatty

46. **histrionic**
   overly dramatic; theatrical

47. **hubris**
   arrogance; excessive pride

48. **iconoclast**
   one who attacks popular beliefs or institutions

49. **idiom**
   an expression whose meaning is different from the literal meaning of the words; a language or dialect used by a group of people

50. **indulgent**
   lenient; yielding to desire
64. mitigate
   to moderate the effect of something

65. munificent
   very generous; lavish

66. neophyte
   a beginner; novice

67. nomenclature
   a set or system of names; a designation; a terminology

68. nuance
   a subtle difference or distinction

69. obfuscate
   to darken; to confuse; to make confusing

70. ominous
   threatening; menacing; portending doom

71. omniscient
   all-knowing; having infinite wisdom

72. onerous
   burdensome; oppressive

73. orthodox
   conventional adhering to establish principles or doctrines, especially in religion; by the book

74. paradigm
   a model or example

75. paragon
   a model or pattern of excellence

76. peripatetic
   wandering; traveling continually; itinerant
90. rhetoric
    the art of formal speaking or writing; inflated discourse

91. saccharine
    sweet; excessively or disgustingly sweet

92. suffuse
    to cover; overspread; to saturate

93. superfluous
    extra; unnecessary; redundant

94. supercilious
    haughty; patronizing; behaving as though one thinks one is superior to others

95. surmise
    to conjecture; to guess

96. surreptitious
    sneaky; secret

97. thwart
    to prevent from being accomplished; to frustrate; to hinder

98. ubiquitous
    being everywhere at the same time

99. usurp
    to seize wrongfully

100. virulent
    extremely poisonous; malignant; full of hate
THE GLOSSARY OF LITERARY TERMS FOR THE AP ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION EXAM

We’ve put an asterisk (*) beside the handful of terms that you absolutely must know.

Abstract An abstract style (in writing) is typically complex, discusses intangible qualities like good and evil, and seldom uses examples to support its points.

Academic As an adjective describing style, this word means dry and theoretical writing. When a piece of writing seems to be sucking all the life out of its subject with analysis, the writing is academic.

Accent In poetry, accented refers to the stressed portion of a word. In “To be, or not to be,” accents fall on the first “be” and “not.” It sounds silly any other way. But accent in poetry is also often a matter of opinion. Consider the rest of the first line of Hamlet’s famous soliloquy, “That is the question.” The stresses in that portion of the line are open to a variety of interpretations.

Aesthetic, Aesthetics Aesthetic can be used as an adjective meaning “appealing to the senses.” Aesthetic judgment is a phrase synonymous with artistic judgment. As a noun, an aesthetic is a coherent sense of taste. The kid whose room is painted black, who sleeps in a coffin, and listens only to funeral music has an aesthetic. The kid whose room is filled with pictures of kittens and daisies but who sleeps in a coffin and listens to polka music has a confused aesthetic. The plural noun, aesthetics, is the study of beauty. Questions like What is beauty? or, Is the beautiful always good? fall into the category of aesthetics.

Allegory An allegory is a story in which each aspect of the story has a symbolic meaning outside the tale itself. Many fables have an allegorical quality. For example, Aesop’s “The Ant and the Grasshopper” isn’t merely the story of a hardworking ant and a carefree grasshopper, but is also a story about different approaches to living—the thrifty and the devil-may-care. It can also be read as a story about the seasons of summer and winter, which represent a time of prosperity and a time of hardship, or even as representing youth and age. True allegories are even more hard and fast. Bunyan’s epic poem, Pilgrim’s Progress, is an allegory of the soul, in which each and every part of the tale represents some feature of the spiritual world and the struggles of an individual to lead a Christian life.

Alliteration The repetition of initial consonant sounds is called alliteration. In other words, consonant clusters coming closely crammed and compressed—no coincidence.

Allusion A reference to another work or famous figure is an allusion. A classical allusion is a reference to Greek and Roman mythology or literature such as The Iliad. Allusions can be topical or popular as well. A topical allusion refers to a current event. A popular allusion refers to something from popular culture, such as a reference to a television show or a hit movie.

Anachronism The word anachronism is derived from Greek. It means “misplaced in time.” If the actor playing Brutus in a production of Julius Caesar forgets to take off his wristwatch, the effect will be anachronistic (and probably comic).

Analogy An analogy is a comparison. Usually analogies involve two or more symbolic parts, and are employed to clarify an action or a relationship. Just as the mother eagle shelters her young from the storm by spreading her great wings above their heads, so does Acme Insurers of America spread an umbrella of coverage to protect its policyholders from the storms of life.

Anecdote An anecdote is a short narrative.

Antecedent The word, phrase, or clause that a pronoun refers to or replaces. In The principal asked the children where they were going; they is the pronoun and children is the antecedent.

Anaphora - the repetition of an initial word or phrase

"Every day, every night, in every way, I am getting better."
Canto The name for a section division in a long work of poetry. A canto divides a long poem into parts; the way chapters divide a novel.

*Caricature A portrait (verbal or otherwise) that exaggerates a facet of personality.

Catharsis This is a term drawn from Aristotle’s writings on tragedy. Catharsis refers to the “cleansing” of emotion an audience member experiences, having lived (vicariously) through the experiences presented on stage.

Chorus in drama, a chorus is the group of citizens who stand outside the main action on stage and comment on it.

Classic What a troublesome word! Don’t confuse classic with classical. Classic can mean typical, as in Oh, that was a classic blunder. It can also mean an accepted masterpiece, for example, Death of a Salesman. But, classical refers to the arts of ancient Greece and Rome and the qualities of those arts.

Coinage (neologism) A coinage is a new word, usually one invented on the spot. People’s names often become grist for coinages, as in, Oh, man, you just pulled a major Wilson. Of course, you’d have to know Wilson to know what that means, but you can tell it isn’t a good thing. The technical term for coinage is neologism.

Colloquialism This is a word or phrase used in everyday conversational English that isn’t a part of accepted “schoolbook” English. For example, I’m toasted. I’m a crispy-critter man, and now I’ve got this wicked headache.

Complex, Dense These two terms carry the similar meaning of suggesting that there is more than one possibility in the meaning of words (image, idea, opposition); there are subtleties and variations; there are multiple layers of interpretation; the meaning is both explicit and implicit.

*Conceit, Controlling Image In poetry, conceit doesn’t mean stuck-up. It refers to a startling or unusual metaphor, or to a metaphor developed and expanded upon over several lines. When the image dominates and shapes the entire work, it’s called a controlling image. A metaphysical conceit is reserved for metaphysical poems only.

Connotation, Denotation The denotation of a word is its literal meaning. The connotations are everything else that the word suggests or implies. For example, in the phrase the dark forest, dark denotes a relative lack of light. The connotation is of danger, or perhaps mystery or quiet; we'd need more information to know for sure, and if we did know with complete certainty that wouldn't be connotation, but denotation. In many cases connotation eventually so overwhelms a word that it takes over the denotation. For example, livid is supposed to denote a dark purple-red color like that of a bruise, but it has been used so often in the context of extreme anger that many people have come to use livid as a synonym for rage, rather than a connotative description of it.

Consonance The repetition of consonant sounds within words (rather than at their beginnings, which is alliteration): A flock of sick, black-checkered ducks.

*Couplet A pair of lines that end in rhyme:

But at my back I always hear,
Time’s winged chariot hurrying near.

—From “To His Coy Mistress” by Andrew Marvell
Euphemism A word or phrase that takes the place of a harsh, unpleasant, or impolite reality. The use of passed away for died, and let go for fired are two examples of euphemisms.

Euphony When sounds blend harmoniously, the result is euphony.

Explicit To say or write something directly and clearly (this is a rare happening in literature because the whole game is to be “implicit,” that is, to suggest and imply).

Farce Today we use this word to refer to extremely broad humor. Writers of earlier times used farce as a more neutral term, meaning simply a funny play; a comedy. (And you should know that for writers of centuries past, comedy was the generic term for any play; it did not imply humor.)

Feminine rhyme Lines rhymed by their final two syllables. A pair of lines ending with running and gunning would be an example of feminine rhyme. Properly, in a feminine rhyme (and not simply a double rhyme) the penultimate syllables are stressed and the final syllables are unstressed.

First person narrator See point of view.

Foil A secondary character whose purpose is to highlight the characteristics of a main character, usually by contrast. For example, an author will often give a cynical, quick-witted character a docile, naive, sweet-tempered friend to serve as a foil.

Foot The basic rhythmic unit of a line of poetry. A foot is formed by a combination of two or three syllables, either stressed or unstressed.

Foreshadowing An event or statement in a narrative that suggests, in miniature, a larger event that comes later.

Free verse Poetry written without a regular rhyme scheme or metrical pattern.

Genre A subcategory of literature. Science fiction and detective stories are genres of fiction.

Gothic, Gothic novel Gothic is the sensibility derived from gothic novels. This form first showed up in the middle of the eighteenth century and had a heyday of popularity for about sixty years. It hasn’t really ever gone away. The sensibility? Think mysterious gloomy castles perched high upon sheer cliffs. Paintings with sinister eyeballs that follow you around the room. Weird screams from the attic each night. Diaries with a final entry that trails off the page and reads something like, No, NO! It COULDN’T BE!!

Hubris The excessive pride or ambition that leads to the main character’s downfall (another term from Aristotle’s discussion of tragedy).

Hyperbole Exaggeration or deliberate overstatement.

Implicit To say or write something that suggests and implies but never says it directly or clearly. “Meaning” is definitely present, but it’s in the imagery, or “between the lines.”

In medias res Latin for “in the midst of things.” One of the conventions of epic poetry is that the action begins in medias res. For example, when The Iliad begins, the Trojan war has already been going on for seven years.

Interior monologue A term from novels and poetry, not dramatic literature. It refers to writing that records the mental talking that goes on inside a character’s head. It is related, but not identical to stream of consciousness. Interior monologue tends to be coherent, as though the character were actually talking. Stream of consciousness is looser and much more given to fleeting mental impressions.

Herculean Couplet—Two rhymed lines of iambic pentameter verse.
**Meter** Poetic rhythm measured in feet.

Metaphysical conceit See conceit.

**Metonym** A word that is used to stand for something else that it has attributes of or is associated with. For example, a herd of 50 cows could be called 50 head of cattle.

**Nemesis** The protagonist's archenemy or supreme and persistent difficulty.

**Neologism** See coinage.

*Objectivity and Subjectivity* An objective treatment of subject matter is an impersonal or outside view of events. A subjective treatment uses the interior or personal view of a single observer and is typically colored with that observer's emotional responses.

*Omniscient narrator* See point of view.

**Onomatopoeia** Words that sound like what they mean are examples of onomatopoeia. Boom. Splat. Babble. Gargle.

*Opposition* One of the most useful concepts in analyzing literature. It means that you have a pair of elements that contrast sharply. It is not necessarily “conflict” but rather a pairing of images (or settings or appeals, etc.), whereby each becomes more striking and informative because it’s placed in contrast to the other one. This kind of opposition creates mystery and tension. Oppositions can be obvious. Oppositions can also lead to irony, but not necessarily so.


**Parable** Like a fable or an allegory, a parable is a story that instructs.

*Paradox* A situation or statement that seems to contradict itself, but on closer inspection, does not.

**Parallelism** Repeated syntactical similarities used for effect.

**Paraphrase** To restate phrases and sentences in your own words; to rephrase. Paraphrase is not analysis or interpretation, so don’t fall into the thinking that traps so many students. Paraphrasing is just a way of showing that you comprehend what you’ve just read—that you can now put it in your own words. No more, no less.

**Parenthetical phrase** A phrase set off by commas that interrupts the flow of a sentence with some commentary or added detail. Jack's three dogs, including that miserable little spaniel, were with him that day.

**Parody** The work that results when a specific work is exaggerated to ridiculousness.

**Pastoral** A poem set in tranquil nature, or even more specifically, one about shepherds.

**Pathos** See bathos.

**Periodic sentence** See loose sentence.

**Persona** The narrator in a non-first-person novel. In a third person novel, even though the author isn’t a character, you get some idea of the author’s personality. However, it isn’t really the author’s personality because the author is manipulating your impressions there as in other parts of the book. This shadow-author is called the author’s persona.

*Personification* Giving an inanimate object human qualities or form. The darkness of the forest became the figure of a beautiful, pale-skinned woman in night-black clothes.

**Plaint** A poem or speech expressing sorrow.
*Stanza* A group of lines in verse, roughly analogous in function to the paragraph in prose.

*Stock characters* Standard or clichéd character types: the drunk, the miser, the foolish girl, etc.

*Stream of consciousness* See point of view.

*Subjective* See objectivity.

*Subjunctive Mood* If I were you, I'd learn this one! That's a small joke because the grammatical situation involves the words "if" and "were." What you do is set up a hypothetical situation, a kind of wishful thing: if I were you, if he were honest, if she were rich. You can also get away from the person and into the "it": I wish it were true, would it were so (that even sounds like Shakespeare and poetry). Go to page 64, question 15 for the perfect example: "Were one not already the Duke..."

*Suggest* To imply, infer, indicate. This is another one of those basic tools of literature. It goes along with the concept of implicit. As the reader, you have to do all the work to pull out the meaning.

*Summary* A simple retelling of what you've just read. It's mechanical, superficial, and a step beyond the paraphrase in that it covers much more material and is more general. You can summarize a whole chapter or a whole story, whereas you paraphrase word-by-word and line-by-line. Summary includes all the facts.

*Suspension of disbelief* The demand made of a theater audience to accept the limitations of staging and supply the details with imagination. Also, the acceptance on an audience's or reader's part of the incidents of plot in a play or story. If there are too many coincidences or improbable occurrences, the viewer/reader can no longer suspend disbelief and subsequently loses interest.

*Symbolism* A device in literature where an object represents an idea.

*Syntax* See *diction*.

*Technique* The methods, the tools, the "how-she-does-it" ways of the author. The elements are not *techniques*. In poetry, *onomatopoeia* is a *technique* within the element of rhythm. In drama, *blocking* is a *technique*, as is *lighting*. Concrete details are not *techniques*; but tone is. Main idea is not a *technique*, but opposition is.

*Theme* The main idea of the overall work; the central idea. It is the topic of discourse or discussion.

*Thesis* The main position of an argument. The central contention that will be supported.

*Tragic flaw* In a tragedy, this is the weakness of character in an otherwise good (or even great) individual that ultimately leads to his demise.

Travesty A grotesque parody.

Truism A way-too-obvious truth.

Unreliable narrator See point of view.

Utopia An idealized place. Imaginary communities in which people are able to live in happiness, prosperity, and peace. Several works of fiction have been written about utopias.

Zeugma The use of a word to modify two or more words, but used for different meanings. He closed the door and* his heart on* his lost love.

*Villanelle* A poem in six stanzas: the first five have 3 lines and the last has 4. The first and last line of Stanzas 1-4 turns repeating as the final line of the next 4 and then are rejoined as the last 2 lines of poem.