

English 12 Advanced Placement—Edwards 2018-19 Syllabus

Syllabus introduction for the trimester format:

This syllabus denotes the Curricular Requirements for the audit in the following manner:

CR-1-- I have read carefully the most recent AP English Course Description...

CR-2—This activity illustrates an intensive study of representative works as cited in the AP English Course Description...

CR-3—The course teaches students to write an interpretation of a piece of literature...

CR-4—The course includes frequent opportunities for students to write and rewrite...

CR-5—The AP teacher provides instruction and feedback on the students' writing assignments both before and after students revise their work...

I have read carefully the most recent AP English Course Description and my syllabus is planned and followed accordingly. (CR-1)

Students are given the opportunity to rewrite essay assignments at various times throughout the year. They may not rewrite all essays, for example, exam essays. (CR-4)

I teach grammar in two ways in this course:

--Every time I return a writing assignment, I make notes on repeated grammar/mechanical/composition errors as I grade and teach these immediately after students have had a chance to read the comments on their essays. Students are held accountable for these errors on all following essays.

--In September we cover a Glossary of Usage Unit comprised of common usage errors. My goal is two-fold, both to improve their composition, but also to review/teach some skills they will certainly encounter on the ACT in October.

American literature is covered junior year in our district and state. AP English Literature and Composition is a senior year course and is primarily, though not exclusively, British literature. Constant reference is made to American writers that students studied as juniors such as Robert Frost, Carl Sandburg, Countee Cullen, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and others. We do read Edith Wharton's *Ethan Frome*. I like the length of this work and the potential study opportunities it offers for symbolism, setting, character, social values, and the framework story. We also read *Oedipus* for its wealth of instructional opportunities that I can connect to Shakespeare and T.S. Eliott, not to mention its potential for study as a source of allusion throughout all literature. *Oedipus* is also an excellent springboard for study of tragedy, hero, and hubris. We sometimes read *Invisible Man*. (CR-2)

Students come to me well-prepared in the 5-paragraph essay—we branch out beyond this format still keeping our focus on organization, support with specific detail, logic, establishing and maintaining voice, and effective use of rhetoric. (CR-5)

We discuss effective use of generalization and specific detail at the beginning of first semester and continue to work on this and other writing skills throughout the year. (CR-5)

Students have worked on subordination and coordination since their eight-grade year. We have a few specific

exercises on subordination and coordination, but student essays are the best place for me to comment and have students to work on their coordination and subordination. Students come to me well-prepared in this area. Throughout the year we discuss strong student writing as well as the best sentences of the writers we read. Complex sentence structure is always part of these discussions. (CR-5)

Any essay my students write is returned with specific attention to appropriate vocabulary, sentence structure, organization, logic, coherence, transition, specific detail, tone, voice, and emphasis. Since my students come to me with preparation in the five-paragraph essay, I take them beyond this format and have found that for my students this practice always involves discouraging excessive repetition. I have writing conferences with my students as needed throughout the year. (CR-5)

We write many AP test essay questions. These essays would fall into the categories of expository, analytical and argumentative writing. They each require students to draw upon textual details either to explain or interpret or to make and explain judgments about the works they are addressing. During the course of the year students will write about fifteen such essays as well as other essays. (CR-4)

Writing first semester is focused on specific skills, areas of need—second semester and especially the last 9 weeks writing is evaluated as a whole, and all previously taught skills are honed in preparation for both college and the AP exam. (CR-4, CR-5)

Informal/exploratory reading responses in and out of class—writing as a form of assessment as well as for them to understand and think—sometimes I have them to write to me about the parts of the literature that they do not understand—I respond and use their responses as a springboard for class discussion—I use this procedure throughout the year—some years I use literary response journals, but not every year (CR-4)

Peer evaluation plays an important role in what we do in this class. I have not listed in this syllabus all the instances that I use peer evaluation because I change it around from year to year; however, I have a standard form that students use that asks the evaluator to comment on focus, organization, diction, syntax, mechanics, introduction and conclusion, use of specific supporting detail and logic--students have the experience not only of writing the essay, but also of evaluating an essay and assuming the role of the grader. I feel that this activity makes them better writers in that it not only makes them read their own writing critically, but it also allows them to see the ideas and writing styles of others. (CR-5)

Textbook—our school is in a disadvantaged rural area. Well over half of our student body is on free or reduced lunch—I use the Prentice Hall British anthology approved by the state and adopted by our school system nine years ago; I supplement with class sets of the novels listed, legally photocopied works, teacher-typed poetry, and other older textbooks that we have used over the 27 years I have taught.

Summer Reading

Alan Paton's *Cry the Beloved Country*

Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*

Sophocles' *Oedipus*

1st Trimester (12 weeks)

Summer Reading Unit

Alan Paton's *Cry the Beloved Country*

Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*

Objective test over summer reading works (CR-2, CR-3)

Seminar-style presentations on both works. Topics explore Paton's writing style, themes, imagery, tone, structure of *Cry the Beloved Country*; examination of historical and social values, structure, Biblical parallels, Huxley's themes, social values; examination of 19th and 20th century utopias. (CR-3)

Timed in-class essay AP exam 1991: Students choose one of the above works to respond to this question: Many plays and novels use contrasting places (for example, two countries, two cities or towns, two houses, or the land and the sea) to represent opposed forces or ideas that are central to the meaning of the work. Choose a novel or play that contrasts two such places. Write an essay explaining how the places differ, what each place represents, and how their contrast contributes to the meaning of the work. (CR-4)

Essays are returned with detailed comments; class discussion follows on class writing weaknesses from this set of essays and what to focus upon in next writing (usually focus, planning, diction, appropriate use of generalization, and support with specific detail at this early stage of the year) (CR-5)

British History overview—prehistoric people, Celts, Anglo-Saxons, Romans, Vikings, Romans, Normans, Stonehenge, Hadrian's Wall, Old English, Middle English, Holinshed's Chronicles, Old English passages

Beowulf

"The Seafarer" (CR-2)

Informal/exploratory reading responses in and out of class—writing as a form of assessment as well as for them to understand and think--I have them to write to me about the parts of the poem that they do not understand—I respond and use their responses as a springboard for class discussion (CR-4)

Kennings

Anglo-Saxon poetry characteristics

Epic poem characteristics

Anglo-Saxon hero characteristics

Scanning Old English poetry

MLA style—format, citations

Discussion of and planning in class of *Beowulf* as an Anglo-Saxon hero essay; reminder to focus on question and support with specific details from the work. Brief discussion of organization and the importance of using a variety of sentence structures in writing. (CR-3, CR-4, CR-5)

Beowulf as an Anglo-Saxon hero documented essay written outside of class--Essay is written in MLA format. (CR-4—writing to explain)

Essay returned with detailed comments on writing style with special attention given to MLA style, introduction and incorporation of direct quotations, and support with specific details. Also, commentary on sentence structure as needed. (CR-5)

Perfect spouse personal essay outside of class—informal/exploratory writing—an essay assigned to build confidence in students as writers—light, fun, and practically guaranteed to gain conscientious writers a good

grade at this stage of the game when some may be discouraged. (CR-4)

Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (CR-2)

Extensive notes on pilgrims

"The Nun's Priest's Tale"

"The Pardoner's Tale"

Middle English

Chaucer's social commentary

Optional reading of and reporting on other tales

Pilgrim presentations—students dress as Canterbury Pilgrim and teach themselves to the class

Essay—two pilgrims who could have been friends—expository/analytical essay (CR-3, CR-4)

Objective test on *Canterbury Tales* Unit

Becket video

T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* (CR-2)

Seminar-style group work on *Murder in the Cathedral*

Topics: role of priests; role of chorus; parallels between knights and tempters; Greek drama; passion, purpose and perception; versification

Discussion of focus and organization in writing before timed *MitC* essay (CR-5)

AP essay 1982: In great literature, no scene of violence exists for its own sake. Choose a work of literary merit that confronts the reader or audience with a scene or scenes of violence. In a well-organized essay, explain how the scene or scenes contribute to the meaning of the complete work. Avoid plot summary. (CR-3, CR-4)

This essay challenges students' ability to focus on the question—I have students to read aloud paragraphs from essays that I have pre-selected—we discuss what makes these paragraphs good writing—we also list on the board all the ways the class came up with that the scene of violence contributes to the meaning of the work—we end up with many, which helps weaker students to see the possible ways to approach the essay. Students may rewrite this essay if they wish. (CR-5)

Grammar Review Unit-- misplaced, dangling, and misplaced modifiers; pronoun reference; dashes; colons; semi-colons; commas; subjunctive mood; possessive before gerund; troublesome verbs (CR-5)

Glossary of Usage (CR-5)

9 wks test essay—timed AP essay: "In many plays a character has a misconception of himself or his world. Destroying or perpetuating this illusion contributes to a central theme of the play." Choose a play with a major character to whom this statement applies, and write an essay in which you consider the following: (1) What the character's illusion is and how it differs from reality as presented in the play. (2) How the destruction or perpetuation of the illusion develops a theme of the play. (CR-3, CR-4)

Essay is returned with class discussion of best essays. We discuss effective introductions that state a meaningful thesis and conclusions that are not repetitive but comment. Reminder of Mark Twain's admonition not to use a 50 cent word when a nickel word will do, yet to use a wide range of vocabulary.

(CR-5)

Fall break reading: George Orwell's *1984* (CR-2)

Objective test

Group work and seminar-style presentations on Orwell, comparison to Huxley's *Brave New World*, (xxxx)

Timed in-class essay: Students use *1984* to respond to this AP question: The conflict created when the will of an individual opposes the will of the majority is the recurring theme of many novels, plays, and essays. Select the work of an essayist who is in opposition to his or her society; or, from a work of recognized literary merit, select a fictional character who is in opposition to his or her society. In a critical essay, analyze the conflict and discuss the moral and ethical implications for both the individual and the society. Do not summarize the plot or action of the work you choose. (CR-4)

Essays commented upon, returned, class discussion of others' strengths, weaknesses (CR-5)

Malory's *Morte D'Arthur* (CR-2)

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (CR-2)

MLA guidelines and format for formal research

Determining valid Internet sources

Writing a thesis and outline; taking notes; quoting; internal documentation; works cited page; final copy format; peer evaluation; plagiarism; paraphrasing; transition; introductions and conclusions

Formal research paper on a British topic to reinforce research skills begun with last year's research paper (CR-5)

Peer evaluation with structured evaluation sheet that I designed so that students may help each other with writing and be more aware of their own writing. (CR-4)

Upon return of paper, students have the opportunity to correct mistakes with a rewrite. (CR-4)

Ballads (CR-2)

Writing poetry--short unit—emphasis on figurative language when writing poetry—write a poem for local poetry contest (CR-3)

Writing college scholarship essays—select a college scholarship essay to write (CR-4)

Essays are all different; I respond to each (CR-5)

Development of drama and the Morality play—*Everyman* (CR-2)

Group essays on *Everyman*—stages in Everyman's journey – emphasis on logic, symbolism, structure, themes. Students write this essay in class in groups of 2 or 3. (CR-3, CR-4)

Essay is returned with detailed comments on all elements of writing studied so far with special attention to logic, symbolism, structure, themes. (CR-5)

The Story of English video Part II—“The Mother Tongue”

2nd Trimester (12 weeks)

William Shakespeare—*Hamlet* (CR-2)

William Shakespeare—*Macbeth* (CR-2)

AC Bradley's XXXX title of essay

Group work on *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*—AC Bradley's "Shakespearean Tragedy" (selections), Thomas DeQuincy's "Knocking at the Gate," "Maynard Mack's "The World of Hamlet," Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "From the Lectures of 1811-12, Lecture XII," Sylvan Barnet's "The Text of Hamlet" and "The Sources of Hamlet" (CR-2)

9 weeks' test essay written to address either a character from *Macbeth* or a character from *Hamlet*: AP exam essay 1982: From a novel or play of literary merit, select an important character who is a villain. Then, in a well-organized essay, analyze the nature of the character's villainy and show how it enhances meaning in the work. Do not merely summarize the plot. You may choose a work from the list below, or you may choose another work of comparable quality. (CR-3, CR-4)

Essay is returned with in-depth comment on focus, support by specific example, effective introduction and conclusion, analysis and logic. Student writing is judged more critically at this point for effective use of rhetoric—writers should be maturing. (CR-5)

Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*--Shakespeare in the Classroom video series (CR-2)

Farce, play of mistaken identity, Greek unities; students examine play as an early Shakespearean comedy and look at the influence of Greek dramatic conventions (social and historical values) upon Shakespeare's early writing especially (structure, style). Class examines this play's ability both to instruct and to entertain (theme) (CR-3)

Marlowe—"The Passionate Shepherd to his Love" (CR-2)

Raleigh—"The Nymph's Response" (CR-2)

Pastoral poetry

Students write a modern-day parody (exploratory/informal writing) of either "The Nymph's Response" or "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love" in order to understand the process of writing poetry and better to understand the point of view of each poem. (CR-4)

Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (CR-2)

Existentialism, theater of the absurd

Student group work and formal presentations with handout on Stoppard's view of death, selected existentialists (Kierkegaard, Tillich, and others), theater of the absurd (Becket), existentialist themes, why theater of the absurd reflects the social and historical values of the time (atomic bomb) (CR-2, CR-3)

Sonnets--history, structure, style and popular themes (CR-3)

iambic pentameter, figurative language, Petrarch, Wyatt, Sidney, Shakespeare, Spenser, Neruda, sonnet conventions, Petrarchan, Elizabethan and Spenserian type sonnets; English vs. Italian sonnets (CR-2)

Students write sonnet explications which are, of course, writing to learn as well as learning to write—students

look at poetic devices and how they enhance the meaning of the poems—they draw upon the text of the sonnet to write an extended interpretation of the work—explications are evaluated and most are re-written and re-submitted (CR-4, CR-5)

AP examination poetry essay practice

Hardy's "Convergence of Twain" Students examine poem in groups after a close reading directed by the instructor—in groups students examine structure, style, theme, figurative language, irony, tone—students examine and rate 3 sample AP essays—we discuss the weak and strong points of each essay—students read the head reader's comments on the essay and then (they are unaware of this ahead of time) they write the essay themselves. My hope is that this exercise will help them to pay close attention to class discussions and homework assignments on the poems we study together in class—also, I am trying to build confidence at this point since the poetry is still frightening to some of them. (CR-2, CR-3, CR-4)

Essay evaluated and returned to student and class discussion of all essays (CR-5)

Ben Jonson (CR-2)

"To the Memory of my Beloved Master William Shakespeare"—First Folio, Heminges and Condell, metonymy, (xxxx)

"On My First Son"

"Song to Celia"

Wharton's *Ethan Frome* (CR-2) OR *Invisible Man*

Examination of setting (including cultural and historical values), structure (narrator/flashback), characterization, symbolism, foreshadowing, through seminar-style presentations on criticism by writers such as Bernard, Trilling, Wolfe, Iyengar (CR-3)

1980 AP timed essay: A recurring theme in literature is "the classic war between a passion and responsibility." For instance, a personal wrong, a love, a desire for revenge, a determination to address a wrong, or some other emotion or drive may conflict with moral duty. (CR-3, CR-4, CR-5)

Essays carefully evaluated and returned; some essays are rewritten following instructor comments.

AP English exam objective practice from old released tests and Acorn books

Orwell's *Animal Farm* (CR-2)

Student group work with handout--comparison with *1984* -- totalitarian government, parallels to history: the Russian Revolution, Lenin, Stalin—analysis of structure, style, themes, social and historical values (CR-3)

Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant" (CR-2)

Students write brief analysis of Orwell's actions (analysis, evaluation)—did he do the right thing in shooting the elephant—what were his motives—tone—students look at Orwell's writing style in comparison to his *1984* and *Animal Farm*.

(CR-3, CR-4)

Essays commented upon, returned, class discussion of others' strengths, weaknesses (CR-5)

Elie Weisel's "Night" (some years, if students so choose and if we have time) (CR-2)

Essay –topic varies according to interests of class and individuals—this assignment is more about our

common humanity and the necessity of knowing our past in order to live—we discuss “man’s inhumanity to man,” which of course will come up again in our study of Wordsworth. (CR-3, CR-4)

Cavalier Poets (CR-2)

Herrick—“To the Virgins to Make Much of Time” *carpe diem*, video clip from *Dead Poets’ Society* (*Touchstone Home Video, n.d.*)

Lovelace—“To Lucasta on Going to War”

Suckling—“Why so Pale and Wan”

Class discussion of poems (CR-3)

Metaphysical poetry (CR-2)

John Donne—“Meditation 17,” “Holy Sonnet 10,” “A Valediction Forbidding Mourning” class discussion of works and simple group work on all three—apostrophe, paradox, conceit, sonnet form

George Herbert—“The Pulley” (CR-2) class discussion of poem

Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (CR-2)

Literary epic, epic simile, classical epic conventions, *in medias res*, muses, allusions, Milton’s life, seven deadly sins, *Areopagitica* (CR-3)

Sonnets: “On his Blindness” and “How soon Hath Time” sonnet form (CR-3)

3rd Trimester (12 weeks)

Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights* (CR-2)

Seminar-style presentations on themes of WH, shortcomings, structure, narrator, character, social and historical values, symbolism, themes, significance of setting Byronic hero, imagery, Stockholm syndrome, setting (CR-3)

Exam includes AP setting/meaning essay 2006 Many writers use a country setting to establish values within a work of literature. For example, the country may be a place of virtue and peace or one of primitivism and ignorance. Choose a novel or play in which you analyze how the country setting functions in the work as a whole.

The student may address essay assignment either to *Ethan Frome*, *Invisible Man* or to *Wuthering Heights*. With this essay assignment, students evaluate the roll of the setting in the novel and the way(s) in which the setting enhances the meaning of the work. (CR-4)

Students are encouraged to focus on their own focus and syntax (including coordination and subordination) in this essay. Students focus on writing introductions that don’t merely parrot the question, but commit to a view, i.e., clearly state a thesis. Conclusions should present a comment or reflection on the foregoing ideas, not simply repeat them. We discuss again appropriate vocabulary choices, in particular trying to use “big” words that do not fit. We discuss the importance of logic and depth in their ideas. At this point students should be beyond writing simplistic essays and should recognize a quality essay. (CR-4, CR-5)

In order to reinforce these points, when I return essays, students receive copies of the 2 or 3 best class essays as well as samples from the 2006 AP grading of this essay in which I participated as an AP reader. We talk at length about the AP grading process in order better to prepare then for success on the AP exam. Our discussion includes, as noted many times before during the year, effective use of rhetoric in their own writing, including tone, voice, diction, and sentence structure. Students discuss all these concepts at length and told

me just today that this discussion is helpful and builds their confidence. (CR-5)
AP objective practice

Pepys' *Diary* (CR-2)

Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year* excerpts (CR-2)

Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* excerpts—satire (CR-2)

Group work and seminar-style presentations on Swift's "A Modest Proposal"—topics students explore include verbal and dramatic irony and irony of situation (comparing irony here to other examples from literature they have already read), diction, tone, style, cultural and historical values, satire, and persona. (CR-3)

AP poetry essay—timed-- "Great Scarf of Birds"—students write this essay and examine structure, style, theme, figurative language, imagery, symbolism. (CR-3, CR-4))

Students peer evaluate this essay and then I assess both the essay and the quality of the peer evaluation. Consequently, students not only have the experience of writing the essay, but also evaluating an essay and assuming the role of the grader. I feel that this makes them better writers in that it not only makes them read critically, but it also allows them to see the ideas and writing styles of others. (CR-5)

Robert Burns

"To a Mouse," "To a Louse," "Sweet Afton," "John Anderson, My Jo" dialect (CR-2)

Blake—"A Poison Tree," "The Lamb," "The Tiger," "The Chimney Sweeper" (CR-2)

Discussion of diction in "The Chimney Sweeper" (CR-3)

Timed AP exam question comparing "The Chimney Sweeper" from *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*. This assignment incorporates figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone. (CR-3)

The poems below, published in 1789 and 1794, were written by William Blake in response to the condition of chimney sweeps. Usually small children, sweeps were forced inside chimneys to clean their interiors. Read the two poems carefully. Then in a well-developed essay, compare and contrast the two poems, taking into consideration the poetic techniques Blake uses in each. (CR-4)

Mary Shelley's introduction to *Frankenstein* (CR-2)

Video clip of *Frankenstein* (Tri-Star Pictures, Inc., n.d.)

During the following three weeks every other day we write additional timed AP prose and poetry prompts that vary from year to year. For example, this year I will add "Evening Hawk" from the 2006 exam.

We peer evaluate some of these; I comment on most of these; we have in-depth class discussions on all of these, again looking at examples of the best writing and discussing class weaknesses; and then we write again. I have conferences with students as needed. (CR-2, CR-3, CR-4, CR-5)

Timed AP 2004 poetry essay—Frost's "Acquainted with the Night" /Dickenson's "We grow accustomed to the dark" comparison The poems below are concerned with darkness and night. Read each poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, compare and contrast the poems, analyzing the significance of dark or night in each. In your essay, consider elements such as point of view, imagery, and structure. (CR-4)

Timed AP prose essay practice—selection varies from year to year

Timed AP prose essay practice—Adlai Stevenson “Cat” proposal

Read carefully the following statement of veto. In a well-organized essay, analyze the strategies or devices (organization, diction, tone, use of detail) that make Governor Stevenson’s argument effective for his audience. Substantiate your observations with specific examples from the text. (CR-4)

Timed AP prose essay practice—George Bernard Shaw’s “Cremation” letter

The following excerpt is taken from a letter by George Bernard Shaw on the death of his mother. Read the passage carefully. Then write an essay in which you describe the attitude of the writer toward his mother and her cremation. Using specific references to the text, show how Shaw’s diction and use of detail serve to convey this attitude. (CR-4)

Wordsworth—Romanticism--(CR-2)

“Tintern Abbey,” Lucy Poems Selected poems lend themselves to class discussion of character, style, structure, historical and social values, themes, symbols, imagery, and tone. (CR-3)

Coleridge—“Rime of the Ancient Mariner” (CR-2)

Group work and class presentations on poetry devices, Biblical imagery, supernatural elements, (xxxx)
Discussion of romanticism, suspension of disbelief, Coleridge’s relationship with Coleridge and other Lake District poets, *Lyrical Ballads*, figurative language

Oedipus (CR-2)

Group work and seminar-style presentations on the chorus, Sophocles’ use of suspense, the Greek unities, hubris, cultural and historical values, symbolism (xxxx) (CR-3)

Oedipus essay

Wilde—“The Importance of Being Earnest” (CR-2)

Recognition scene, social protest literature, blocking figure, cultural and historical values

After the AP exam:

Shaw—“Pygmalion” social protest literature, character, social and historical values, themes (CR-3)

Shakespeare’s *Much Ado about Nothing* as a later comedy (CR-2)