AP English Literature and Composition® Course Syllabus

THE COURSE

This course will follow the curricular requirements outlined by the College Board in the AP English Literature and Composition Course Description, which focuses on building skills necessary for college-level reading and writing. The texts include works from a variety of time periods and genres, and the writing assignments include in-class essays as well as formal process essays with several opportunities for revision. This is considered a college-level course, which means that you will be asked to read and analyze challenging, provocative, dense, and sometimes controversial material. You will also be expected to come to class prepared to challenge yourself and others with interesting discussion points.

The course design is based on the premise that the AP English Literature exam measures those skills that students need in order to be successful in college. Students will work together and explore a variety of reading and writing strategies proven effective in preparing for success on the Advanced Placement English Literature exam. The course will focus on improving skill sets related to confidence and facility with language; skill in critical reading, writing, and thinking; and success in academic endeavors. All students are expected to take the exam in May.

This course includes using approaches that develop skills to study and write about poetry, drama, fiction and non-fiction. This course will build a vocabulary of rhetorical techniques, as well as introduce additional terms of literary analysis for poetry and fiction. We will concern ourselves with the construction of style analysis covered in the AP English Literature Examination, and with several other modes of writing. Discussion of the AP examination will include test materials and student exemplars from previous examinations. We will explore the multiple-choice section to develop close reading skills and literary terms and techniques. We will also look specifically at strategies to identify tone, and how to apply critical theory to the texts we study.

HOMEWORK AND PREPARATION

In order to be successful in this class, you will come to class every day prepared to work with the text assigned the day before. Discussing varying aspects of literature, including style and structure, will be a daily practice. In preparation for these discussions, you will often be asked to complete written homework to accompany your reading homework. Plan on doing some reading and writing every night.

FORMAL ASSESSMENTS AND WRITING TASKS

In addition to written homework, you will complete a number of significant assessments in response to, or inspired by, what we read. These varied assignments are intended to help you comprehend, analyze and evaluate the texts we read. You will need to master all three of these purposes of writing in order to become an effective critical reader of
texts. On occasion, you will have the opportunity to rewrite and resubmit writing assignments you have completed after conferencing with the instructor. Conferences will address issues in your writing such as idea development and argumentation, organizational choices, sentence structure and variety, and appropriate word choice.

**IN-CLASS ASSESSMENTS**

Over the course of the year you will complete a number of in-class (timed) essays to help you prepare for the AP exam. Each time, we will discuss and debrief the prompt and quality of responses. You can expect constructive feedback for all in-class essays. At times, we will examine anchor papers (student exemplars) from previous AP exams in order to identify elements of excellent writing. Similarly, we will periodically practice answering multiple choice questions, followed by a discussion of the test items. Some of these practices will be informal, while others will be graded for credit.

**SUMMER READING – PREPARING TO TAKE AP LITERATURE**

**The Summer Assignment**

“I suggest that the only books that influence us are those for which we are ready, and which have gone a little farther down our particular path than we have yet gone ourselves.”

“Spoon feeding in the long run teaches us nothing but the shape of the spoon.”

*E.M. Forster*

The philosophy that is reflected in these quotes serve as both an invitation to those ready to explore great literature, as well as a caution to those who wish to play it safe: I know that you are aware of the fundamentals of good writing and perceptive reading. The challenge for me, then, is to provide you with an experience that will push you even more as a thinker and a writer, building on those skills that you already have begun to refine. The summer reading assignment will help prepare you for success in the course.

Our class motto: *Fluency -- Insight -- Evidence*

**COURSE SCHEDULE OVERVIEW (be prepared to be flexible)**

**Year-Long Glossary Project: Literary Devices**

Every discipline employs a special vocabulary; literary criticism is no exception. Literary criticism is based in part on the assumption that writing is a *purposeful activity* and that excellent literature is not merely a happy accident. During the year I will be encouraging you to familiarize yourself with some of the terminology that is used in literary criticism. To that end, you will be creating a glossary of literary devices that you encounter in your reading. Over the course of the semester you’ll be asked to complete a number of literary device entries. Generally speaking, you’ll be able to select the device that you wish to
use; on rare occasions I’ll tell you which device you need to discuss. You will eventually accumulate a total of 100 points if you want full credit. Your examples may come from books we read in class, novels you read for your outside reading, novels of literary merit that you have read on your own, or other texts that you discover that have an example of a device in action. **You may not submit more than two (2) entries per week, unless you are submitting revised literary device discussions along with new submissions.** You are responsible for keeping all of your lit devices once they have been graded so that you can turn them in all at once near the end of the semester.

**Format**

**Term:** Definition of the literary device selected

**Example:** Quotation, followed by source, including title, page/line number

**Function:** Author’s purpose in employing this language resource at this point in the work. How does this particular device enhance what the writer is conveying? You may comment on theme, character, setting, or whatever else is important in explaining how this device functions in this particular instance.

**Example**

**Symbol:** In the simplest sense, a symbol is anything that stands for or represents something else beyond it—often an idea conventionally associated with it. The term symbolism refers to the use of symbols, or to a set of related symbols.

**Example:** “Like him she was lefthanded or she played chess with her left hand . . . He leaned forward and moved his bishop and mated her in four moves” (McCarthy 133).

**Function:** This chess game between John Grady and Alejandra’s godmother symbolizes the competition that they are in for Alejandra herself. This game of chess, which takes place between these two characters as John is trying to ascertain what his chances are of his relationship with Alejandra receiving approval from the family, represents the greater chess game between these two competing characters. Although John Grady wins the first couple of games and seems to be well on his way to achieving his goal, in the end it is the godmother who triumphs. This directly mirrors John Grady’s and the godmother’s lives: although John Grady wins Alejandra’s affections initially, in the end he loses her. When he takes “her queen” he is literally winning the chess match by taking the queen, but he is also on a symbolic level attempting to take the godmother’s true “queen.” Alejandra, who the godmother is determined to keep from
suffering the same misfortunes she endured. The lack of dialogue between the characters during the match further reinforces the quiet competition they are engaging in; one that is not violent but is indeed fierce. The intellectual nature of the chess match also enhances the choice that Alejandra ultimately makes near the end of the novel: leaving John and opting instead for the security (and wealth) of her family. This choice reflects the cool and calculating logic of a chess match rather than the passion of the heart.

Please note that the author first provides context for the discussion (context), discusses the term itself (concept), and then carefully discusses how the literary device specifically functions both in the passage and within the context of the novel as a whole (connection). The author is also careful to use the term in the active voice within the function discussion.

Unit 1 - Close Reading (Four Weeks)

**Texts:** Literature & Composition text, Life of Pi, Kite Runner, poetry

During this unit, we will focus on developing close reading skills to aid you in your analysis of prose and poetry. These skills will be evaluated through your writing and your performance on practice multiple choice exercises.

**Part I: Life of Pi**
We will begin with your summer reading novel, Life of Pi, which we will use to introduce close reading strategies for fiction. The key element we will focus on is how Martel uses setting to develop themes and characters in his novel.

**Learning Objectives**

- Analyze the social, cultural and historical significance of the various settings to deepen comprehension of *Life of Pi*
- Analyze how changes in setting reinforce the developments in characters, plot, and themes
- Analyze how settings function as a metaphor in *Life of Pi*
- Analyze how plot developments produce psychological dilemmas for the main character
- Analyze how the relationships between Pi Patel and other characters portray both the complexity of the characters as well as Pi’s psychological development
- Analyze how connections among motifs, setting, and character traits suggest multiple themes
- Analyze how point of view influences the interpretation of events, characters, and themes

**In-Class Essay**
The first week of school, you will write a timed essay, which will provide diagnostic information about your writing skills and demonstrate your completion of the summer reading assignment. You will have the opportunity to revise the essay after receiving feedback and completing class discussions of the text.

**Setting Analyses**

A focus on setting guides our close reading (or rereading) of sections of *life of Pi*. You will select descriptive passages (approximately one page long each) and explore Martel’s use of setting details (imagery, symbolism) and characterization to create a tone and build meaning.

**Process Writing Assignment**

You will write a one-page analysis of each of the five passages you select. We will complete the first of these as a model in class (Chapter 85 pg. 293-295); you will write the second one on your own. Taking into consideration the feedback you receive on this first independent effort, you will then write three others. You will also have the opportunity to revise your first independent analysis.

**Part II: The Kite Runner**

Structure is defined as the intentional design or internal arrangement of parts to create a unified whole. In other words, it is the planned framework of a literary work. In narrative fiction, the structure is determined by the order of events as they are told, from first, to middle, to last. Note that chronology is often toyed with intentionally. We will carefully examine the structure of *The Kite Runner*, as well as the connection between Amir and Hassan and Hosseini’s examination of innocence and experience.

**Learning Objectives**

- Analyze how connections among motifs, setting, character traits, character development and plot suggest multiple themes
- Analyze the effect of specific literary devices, including polysyndeton, foreshadowing, and symbolism, have on specific passages and how they operate within the context of the novel as a whole
- Analyze the different roles and functions that characters play in *The Kite Runner* and how the relationships among character actions, dialogue, thoughts, and feeling portray nuances of complex characters and advance the narrative
- Analyze the social, cultural, and historical significance of the setting, and analyze how the setting functions as a metaphor to reinforce themes
- Analyze how the main character is in an anti-hero in *The Kite Runner*
- Analyze explicit and implicit references to elements of the cultural and social elements including redemption and renewed innocence
• Write in-class essays that respond to a specific prompt that addresses elements within *The Kite Runner*

**In-Class Essay**

The in-class essay will ask you to respond to how Hosseini uses violence in his novel. You will be asked to do a focused revision of a specific portion of this essay.

**Structure Analysis -- Parallel Events in *The Kite Runner***

Amir’s journey includes a return to the point from which he originally departed. When he returns, there are a number of moments that directly parallel or mirror events from earlier in the novel. You will be asked to identify these parallel events, and then write an essay in which you analyze how the structure – including these parallel events – influences the story as a whole.

**Formal Essay**

Based on your examination of the structure, you will write a formal essay in which you analyze how the structure operates in the context of the novel as a whole. You will submit a first draft, and then a revised version based on reader feedback.

**Part III: Poetry**

The poems you read during this unit span several centuries, but all can be addressed by annotating and applying the principles detailed in TPS-FASTT. You will be expected to read and annotate assigned poems each night, and to come to class prepared to discuss your analysis. You will read more poems than we study formally in class; this is because part of our goal is to make sure you read a broad range of representative pieces on your own as well as in the context of the class discussions. You will submit a dialectical journal based on your reading of all the poems. You will then use one of your entries as a jumping off point for a formal essay.

**Texts:**

“First Grade” by Ron Koertge
“The Schoolchildren” by Louis Gluck
“The Passionate Shepherd to His Love” by Christopher Marlow
“The Bait” by John Donne
“anyone lived in a pretty how town” by E.E. Cummings
“The Flea” by John Donne
“To His Coy Mistress” by Andrew Marvell
“Love Poem” by John Frederick Nims
Sonnet CXVI by William Shakespeare
“Acquainted with the Night” by Robert Frost
“We grow accustomed to the dark” by Emily Dickinson
Learning Objectives

- Analyze elements, form, and sound to derive meaning from poetry
- Analyze figurative language, imagery, symbols, and allusions to deepen comprehension
- Analyze how form and organizational patterns influence meaning
- Analyze how themes, main ideas, and supporting ideas both within and between texts
- Analyze implicit and explicit references to elements of the social, cultural, and historical context
- Analyze how form and organizational patterns influence meaning
- Analyze how themes, main ideas, and supporting ideas both within and between texts
- Analyze implicit and explicit references to elements of the social, cultural, and historical context
- Analyze how variations in standard written English can enhance meaning in a poem

Writing Tasks

For several of the assigned poems, you will complete prewriting activities addressing a specific prompt. This will include writing a thesis statement and creating an outline for body paragraphs which includes textual support. These prewriting practices will be evaluated through class discussion as well as peer and instructor feedback.

At the end of this unit, you will write an in-class timed essay comparing and contrasting two poems. This essay will allow you to demonstrate the development of your poetry analysis and writing skills.

Unit 2 - Critical Lenses and *Hamlet* (Nine Weeks)

In this unit you will examine the concept of critical theory focusing on an array of critical schools using a selection of short stories as the unit of analysis. The positions critics establish to argue particular points will inform much of the work. You will also link the rhetorical analysis to argument to expose how writers manipulate language in order to construct meaning.

Objectives

- To analyze how critical theory represents and constructs how readers interpret the same text in multiple ways
- To examine how language conveys intended and unintended meaning for readers
- To resolve ambiguity and detect nuance in order to infer meaning across multiple lines of text
- To challenge critical texts (read “against the text”)
- To use reading strategies such as questioning the text, activating prior knowledge, paraphrasing, questioning the characters, using appropriate background information in order to apply a critical lens to a complex text.
- To apply knowledge of a critical school to infer multiple possible readings of a
single text
- To make claims that are clearly stated and appropriately supported by evidence.
- To analyze how organizational patterns organize and relate multiple levels of ideas in informational texts
- To apply and evaluate ideas within and across a variety of informational texts
- To apply ideas to a new setting in an oral presentation
- To work effectively within a group setting, managing both the goals of the group and the individual responsibility
- To apply and evaluate alternative perspectives (i.e., critical schools) of a single text
- To evaluate the validity and usefulness of informational resources
- To formulate a claim based on research, and to continue to evaluate that claim through additional exploration

Introduction to Critical Lenses

Over the first week you will be introduced to the feminist, psychoanalytic, Marxist, cultural, and archetypal lenses. You will read and analyze information on these lenses in *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*. After you read information on a particular lens, the instructor will then model an interpretation using a children’s story.

You will apply critical theory in two different ways:

- First, you will work with a small group and present a short story through a critical lens. In preparation for this presentation, you will engage in research of a critical lens, focusing their efforts on academic resources.
- The second major assessment will ask you, after a close reading of “A Rose for Emily,” to select and adopt a single critical lens. For the final product you will present a critical reading of “A Rose for Emily” through the particular critical school that you select. This type of analysis, which asks you to apply a theory to a text, is the type of analysis you will most often complete in college.

Texts

*Literature & Composition*
- Green Eggs and Ham Dr. Seuss
- The Giving Tree Shel Silverstein
- Where the Wild Things Are Maurice Sendak

Group Project

You will work in small groups and create a presentation in which you provide a critical interpretation of an assigned short story and critical lens. This will require that you research the lens to gain a greater understanding in order to effectively implement it in your own writing.
Texts

“Story of an Hour” Kate Chopin
"The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas" Ursula Le Guin,
“The Sisters” James Joyce
“The Snows of Kilimanjaro” Ernest Hemingway

Process Paper

You will write a multi-page paper in which you apply a critical perspective to evaluate the social and cultural values in “A Rose for Emily.” You will receive feedback through the drafting process and a final evaluation of your work.

The Tragedy of Hamlet

We will focus our study of Hamlet on questions including, but not limited to, the following list:

- How does this text address the concepts of fate and free will? Do things happen out of choice or destiny?
- How does this text address the dichotomy of truly being something instead of merely seeming to be? How is the difference determined?
- How does this text address the concepts of sin and justice? How does the perceived hierarchy of The Great Chain of Being influence this tragedy?

Close Reading Activities

We will engage in a variety of close reading activities as we move through the play, including paraphrasing and summarizing particular scenes and speeches, chunking the text for a variety of purposes, and annotating particular passages with varying goals in mind, including stage direction, diction and connotation, etc. Below is a list of the major scenes/portions of the play we will address:

Act 1: Tales of the Ghost, Claudius’ Initial Speech, Family Dynamics, The Ghost Speaks
Act 2: Ophelia’s Closet, Spying and Hamlet’s Madness, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Arrive, Rogue and Peasant Slave
Act 3: To Be or Not To Be, Nunnery Scene, Advice to the Players, The Dumbshow and Performance, Dramatic Irony in Claudius’ “Prayer,” Gertrude’s Closet
Act 4: Scene summary groups (small group presentations)
Act 5: The Gravediggers, The Rest is Silence

Multiple Choice Practice

Over the course of reading this play, we will have the opportunity to engage some practice multiple choice questions that reference specific passages of Hamlet. These will serve as both informal (for discussion) and graded (as quizzes) assessments at the discretion of the instructor.
In-Class Essays

You will write two in-class essays for this unit. The first will occur sometime after Act 3 has been studied; the second will occur after we have finished reading the play entirely.

In-class essay #1: Close Reading (passage analysis)
In-class essay #2: Q3 Practice (free response: you must use Hamlet as your chosen text)

Guided self-reflections will be completed in response to both in-class essays. In each case, the self-reflection will involve answering a series of questions generated by the teacher about the essay you have written, as well as annotating the original essay. You will have the opportunity to rewrite and resubmit one of these essays.

Process Paper

You will have had the opportunity to practice applying a critical lens to a portion of Hamlet, and to view a number of presentations that introduced you to a range of critical schools. You will now explore a particular scene, set of scenes, character or set of characters in Hamlet using one of the critical perspectives you have explored. This essay should include a critical reading of a particular scene, set of scenes, character or set of characters in Hamlet through a particular critical lens. The essay should analyze how the text is viewed through a particular critical perspective. In other words, what elements, themes, or characters are prioritized? Which ones are devalued or ignored? What critical questions are asked? What aspect of the culture from which this text arose is highlighted?

You must use direct citations from scholarly readings on your critical perspective in support of your analysis. This does not mean that your outside sources need to directly mention Hamlet; it does mean that you will need to support your analysis with direct references to an outside expert.

Remember to cite all references using proper MLA format and to include a works cited page. If you chose to use a critical perspective other than the one you presented, you will need to do additional research in support of your analysis. If you select the same critical school, you are welcome to use the same resources you referenced for your presentation.

This essay will have a number of complex elements. It will need to have adequate text references from the play as well as references to at least one outside expert source. It will also need to focus on an aspect of the text that lends itself well to the critical perspective that you select. For example, concentrating on certain characters and interactions in a feminist reading of Act 3, Scene 1 would be beneficial due to the complicated exchange between Hamlet and Ophelia. Conversely, trying to apply a feminist reading to an exchange between Polonius and Hamlet might not yield adequate results. Your essay will need to be 4-5 pages in length, MLA format. You have an MLA guide in your course materials; reference it when writing this essay.
Essay Requirements

- 4-5 pages, typed and carefully edited
- MLA format, including a Works Cited page
- Adequate number of embedded text references from the play
- Must have at least two embedded text references and/or paraphrased reference from outside critical school source(s) (other than the play)
- Must analyze the text using a single critical lens
- Must be submitted to Turnitin.com on assigned date

Some possible questions to consider as you write your essay:

- Does your critical reading offer newly raised questions?
- Does your critical reading explore major themes?
- Does your critical reading illuminate the text in a new way?
- Does your critical reading reveal the author’s biases?
- Does your critical reading allow for a better understanding of the play’s language and rhetoric?
- Does your critical reading allow for a better understanding of the playwright’s era?
- Does your critical reading effectively synthesize the critical perspective and the text?

YOU WILL WRITE THREE TOTAL DRAFTS OF THIS ESSAY, AND EACH ONE NEEDS TO BE SUBMITTED BY THE DUE DATE.

Additional Texts for Classroom Activities/Discussion

“Seven Deadly Sins” by Yusef Komunyakaa
Excerpt from The Faerie Queen by Edmund Spenser (Book 1, Canto 4, Stanzas 17-36)

Unit 3 -- Heart of Darkness-Things Fall Apart- Apocalypse Now (Nine Weeks)

In this unit you will examine the affects of narrative perspective, and authorial style; specifically, the framed narrative structure and impressionistic style in Conrad’s work, and the third person omniscient narrator and literary realism in Achebe. You will also view the film Apocalypse Now directed by Francis Ford Coppola. This will be used as a comparative piece with Heart of Darkness.

Objectives

- To analyze the context of the sentences and larger sections of text to clarify the meaning of ambiguous passages
- To analyze how psychological dilemmas within characters serve to refine both the characters and the narrative
• To analyze how the frame-story structure influences the narrative and relevant themes
• To analyze how multiple settings, motifs, and characters suggest multiple levels of themes
• To analyze the different roles and functions characters – both primary and secondary -- play in a narrative, and how the relationships among and between the characters advance the plot and help determine the reliability of each character
• To analyze how narrative perspectives are influenced by social, cultural, and historical contexts
• To analyze how settings function as metaphor to reinforce themes
• To examine how texts respond to one another and in so doing advance a debate around multiple topics from a variety of perspectives
• To analyze how language represents and constructs how readers perceive events
• To analyze how Conrad crafts Marlow’s persona and Achebe crafts Okonkwo’s persona to achieve an intended effect on an audience
• Identifies and refines increasingly complex purposes for reading
• Analyzes an author’s implicit and explicit purpose for writing
• To analyze and critique how production elements and techniques (e.g., camera shots, montage, sound, lighting, editing) are used to create specific effects (in particular, the tone of a scene)
• Analyze how contextual variables (e.g., viewing the movie having studied *Heart of Darkness*) affect the interpretation of the media message
• Analyze and critique the credibility of a media communication by evaluating accuracy and relevancy to the original text
• Critique and analyze a director’s use of cultural and historical references to achieve specific purposes

**Close Reading Activities**

Students will closely read and respond to several passages from *Heart of Darkness*, and examine the author’s use of narrative perspective, impressionism, and syntax. You will independently complete an active reading guide as you read the novel. We will read and respond to the following scenes:

• The Chief Accountant  You will closely examine the narrator’s reaction to this character and create an introductory paragraph with a thesis. This will be commented on by your peers and your teacher.
• The Brickmaker. You will closely examine this scene for direct and indirect characterization and then in a small group you will create a poster to present to the class addressing on of four questions.
• The attack of the steamboat. You will examine the affect of impressionism on Conrad’s style.

**In Class Essay**

You will be given one of the three passages above and complete an in class timed essay that is modeled after question two on the AP exam.
Active Reading

As you read *Heart of Darkness* you will be keeping an active reading dialectical journal. The entries in this journal will help focus your attention on significant aspects of this complex novel. Your responses may also act as a starting point for your formal essays.

Project – Compare and Contrast

We will watch *Apocalypse Now* in class. As you watch this film, pay close attention to how Francis Ford Coppola makes similar statements about US involvement in Southeast Asia during the 1960s as Joseph Conrad does in *Heart of Darkness* concerning Europe’s intervention in Africa during the 1880s and 1890s. Both artists also create works of art that comment on the human condition and the psychology of man. You will be given a list of technical film terms on a separate handout; keep them in mind as you watch the film.

The Writing Task: Write a comparison/contrast essay on *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now*. Limit your topic to a single scene in both works. Your goal in this essay is to show how Conrad manipulates the tools of his craft - writing – to create a statement and compare and/or contrast how Coppola creates a similar statement by manipulating the tools of his craft – film.

- An important aspect of this assignment is first the scene you choose. Be careful to choose a scene from both works that creates a similar effect on you the reader and you the viewer. This effect can concern character development, emotional response, tone, or theme.

- Be cautious in choosing a scene that is either too brief or too long for adequate development. Planning will be crucial for this assignment. As you watch the movie take careful notes on a number of scenes that might serve as appropriate for this analysis. In the evening look for the parallel scene in *Heart of Darkness*. You must brainstorm and pre-write for this assignment as you watch the movie. One major problem with this assignment will be your inability to remember specifics from the movie the following week about that particular scene. As you watch, keep in the back of your mind this assignment and how each scene parallels *Heart of Darkness*.

- When you discuss language aspects of *Heart of Darkness*, you will refer to the many components of writing that an author uses to create tone, make a statement, develop a character, or imply his theme. You can choose from such elements as syntax, word choice or diction, figurative language, selection of detail, and/or imagery. Naturally, you may think of other components of language that Conrad uses and you should feel free to use them if you so desire.
• When viewing *Apocalypse Now*, you should consider such elements as light, space, and sound. Some of you know more about film techniques than others – use your expertise. Because you will not have the film to review and analyze when you begin writing your essay, your discussion about the novel should be more completely developed. There should still be insight into the film and some intelligent discussion of the film’s techniques.

**Essay Requirements:** The paper should be 2 ½-3 pages in length, typed, and should follow MLA format. The citation for the film will be provided. The essay should also be carefully edited and should exhibit all of the qualities of strong writing that you have been practicing the last few years.

**Note:** Please be warned about plagiarizing ideas and papers from the web. There are so many sources on the web that make these comparisons for you – try to not even look at them—then you will not be tempted to parrot ideas, phrases, or even whole papers.

**Alternate Heart of Darkness Assignment:**

Choose one:

1. Conrad wrote that he began every story with definite, “true” images. Description of the jungle in *Heart of Darkness* is realistic and exact, based upon his observations of the terrain during his own trip through Africa. At the same time, however, the geography is a metaphor for abstract psychological and moral issues. Discuss ways in which the setting is a symbol for the larger themes of the novel.

2. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many Europeans saw themselves as civilizing forces in primitive areas. One of the goals of Belgium in the Congo was to establish orderly government and religious institutions which would end rivalry and bloodshed among the tribes, combat poverty and ignorance, and bring the inhabitants the benefits of progress in many areas: health, manufacture, transportation, etc. Discuss *Heart of Darkness* as a commentary on the aims and methods and effects of imperialism in Africa.

3. Joyce Carol Oates mentions in her introduction to the Signet Classic Edition that *Heart of Darkness* has acquired an extraordinary reputation. “Nine decades after its publication it remains one of the most read, and debated of English works of fiction. . . .” Discuss specific issues and give specific examples in the novel that would be the basis for such debate.

**Process Paper – Novel Comparison**

You will closely read Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* and analyze the narrative perspective and Achebe’s style. You will then compose a multi-page comparative analysis in which you evaluate how Achebe’s work is a response to Conrad’s view of Africa, and how each authors’ use of style illustrates their value of their representative cultures.
Unit 4 – Independent Novel Unit (Choose One—Three Weeks)

Ken Kesey’s, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* or John Steinbeck’s, *The Grapes of Wrath*
Analytical Focus: point of view, diction, tone, symbolism, figurative language
Thematic Focus: oppression and manipulation
Assignment: Study Guide

Unit 5 - Exam Review (Four Weeks)

During this period, you will focus on several elements of exam preparation: the analysis of poetry and prose, multiple choice stems and distracters, essay prompt analysis, and text review to prepare for Q3.

Texts

“If We Must Die” (Claude McKay)
“Holy Sonnet #9” (John Donne)
“Sonnet #5” (Seamus Heaney)
“Easter Wings” (George Herbert)
“Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night” (Dylan Thomas)
“The House on the Hill” (Edwin Arlington Robinson)
“Sestina” (Elizabeth Bishop)
“Dusting” (Julia Alvarez)
“Flash Cards” (Rita Dove)
“Those Winter Sundays” (Robert Hayden)
“miss rosie” (Lucille Clifton)

Close Reading Activities

You will review poetry, focusing especially on how structure and imagery each contribute to a poem’s meaning. You will also read and annotate passages of both poetry and prose, with which you will practice analyzing related essay prompts and answering AP multiple choice questions.

Q3 Review and Preparation

You will review the major texts you have read over the past two years in order to prepare for Q3. Your review will focus on the specific details you may have forgotten (I assume you remember character names and the basic plot). You will also practice analyzing Q3 prompts. In groups and as individuals, you will select appropriate texts to use for the various prompts and practice writing rich thesis statements to guide essays. You will also outline essays for some of these prompts, identifying the specific details you would use to support your thesis.

In-Class Essays
At the beginning of this unit, you will read several sample AP exam essays and score them using the AP rubric. This will improve your understanding of the qualities of strong essays. With this in mind, you will review all of your timed essays from this course, focusing especially on the results from the practice exam essays scored by the AP reader, and complete a guided self-reflection on areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. These reflections, as well as information gleaned from a writing conference with me, will guide your own writing practice.

You will write at least two in-class essays for this unit. Both will be in response to real AP essay prompts. The first essay will address a poetry prompt from a previous exam; the second will respond to a Q3 prompt. Both of these essays will give you the opportunity to discover how far you have come in developing your analytical and writing skills, as well as helping you to identify one or two areas to be aware of when you take the exam. **You will receive feedback on these and have the opportunity to revise each essay once.**

**Unit 6 -- Theatre of the Absurd (Three Weeks)**

**Objectives**

- To analyze how the concerns of the Theatre of the Absurd informed by or reflective of the worldview of existentialism
- To analyze how the Theatre of the Absurd differs from previous dramatic forms
- To distinguish the primary qualities of the Theater of the Absurd, and how these reflect its central concerns
- To analyze what elements of *Hamlet* make Shakespeare’s characters appropriate central characters for an Absurdist piece
- To recognize the qualities of the theatrical genre known as Theater of the Absurd.
- To use the information to make inferences and anticipate elements of *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead*
- To recognize how stage directions reflect a particular interpretation
- To perform scenes in a manner that identifies the proper context
- To compare personal interpretation with a professional interpretation
- To explore the connection between written text and performance
- To gain insight into the creative choices made as Stoppard adapted his play into a film
- To gain an understanding of the role of pacing and blocking in the play, especially regarding its comedic elements

**Texts**

*Arrested Development* (TV show excerpts): “Top Banana” and “Afternoon Delight”
*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*

**Close Reading**
After an introduction to the characteristics and concerns of the Theatre of the Absurd, you will watch select scenes from the television series *Arrested Development*, exploring how these scenes reflect these characteristics and concerns. You will then read *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, using scene performances to help you explore the purpose of its various features.

**Project**

In small groups, you will create your own Absurdist scene. This is an opportunity to exercise your creativity, but you must demonstrate your understanding of the characteristics and concerns of the Absurdist movement. You will present your scene to the class, either live or on video.

**Class Policies**

*I WILL ADHERE TO ALL SCHOOL GUIDELINES REGARDING CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR AND ATTENDANCE.*

**Grading Scale:** 91%-100% = A, 81%-90% = B, 70%-80% = C, 60%-69% = D, Less than 60% = F

**Late Work**

- No daily assignments will be accepted for credit
- Major assignments will be penalized 10% for each day they are late
- Any plagiarism will result in a “0” for the grade and the student’s university will be notified