

# Kenilworth Public Schools

## Curriculum Guide

Content Area: AP English 4

Grade: 11-12

BOE Approved: 11/12/18

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# AP English Literature and Composition

## Syllabus

English 4 Advanced Placement examines literature and composition at the college level, following the curricular requirements described in the *AP English Course Description*. [C1] Due to the complexity of the curriculum, students are expected to exhibit a high degree of awareness as well as strong academic discipline and self-motivation. A significant component of the course is the preparation of the students for the College Entrance Examination Board's Advanced Placement Examination in Literature and Composition.

Students who are accepted into the course will continue to find an emphasis on the speaking, writing, listening, viewing, and reading skills that are the staples of the four-year English cycle. However, these students will find an additional focus on close, textual analysis, persuasive writing, critical theory, and thinking skills.

In order to facilitate their own learning, students must contribute to the classroom dialogue each day. Students should feel comfortable challenging the views of others in the classroom, those of the instructor, and having their views challenged as well. In order to be able to explore the relationships between literature and culture, students are expected to keep abreast of topical social issues and to share with the class the results of their self-initiated readings and research.

Students will, at regular intervals, be assigned tasks consistent with those required on the AP exam. Students in this course will pursue the ethics-based examination of literature that is the hallmark of senior-year studies. These students are expected to exhibit a strong verbal facility and the refined analytical skills necessary to appreciate the subtleties and complexities of the literary works under study.

## Course Objectives

1. Students will read a variety of texts, achieving an overview of English culture and history in order to know the origin and growth of the English language; know the political, economic, and cultural influences that shape English literature; acquire information to develop areas of interest for independent study.
2. Students will read a sampling of classic and modern literature from many countries so that they might better recognize the culture and history of a variety of peoples in many periods and correlate the themes depicted in our national literature with those of other countries.
3. Students will recognize and examine the ethical and moral questions which act as the foundation for classic literary works.

C1: The teacher has read the most recent <i>AP English Course Description</i>
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4. Students will become familiar with writers who have had a pervasive influence on modern thought and art.
5. Students will undertake independent study to pursue topics of interest appropriate to the course.
6. Students will hone critical-thinking skills by regularly participating in skill-building activities and metacognitive examination.
7. Students will become more familiar with non-print media and hone visual literacy skills.
8. Students will develop a critical sensitivity to literature so that they will strengthen their understanding and appreciation of literature's ambiguities and subtleties.
9. Students will practice writing proficiently under constraint of time and topic.
10. Students will master the basic definitions of literary terms and the ability to apply them.
11. Students will practice delivering oral presentations with poise and clarity

## **Course Content**

### **Fiction, Poetry, and Drama:**

- *Joy Luck Club*, Amy Tan
- *The Odyssey*, Homer
- "Ulysses," Alfred, Lord Tennyson
- *A Portrait of the Artist As a Young Man*, James Joyce
- "The Dead," James Joyce

- *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare
- “Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” T. S. Eliot
- “Ophelia,” Artur Rimbaud
- *A Doll’s House*, Henrik Ibsen
- “Barbie Doll,” Marge Piercy
- *Oedipus the King*, Sophocles
- *Heart of Darkness*, Joseph Conrad
- *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe
- Selections from *Perrine’s Sound and Sense*, Arp and Johnson, ed.

## Prose:

- Selected Essays from *The Prose Reader*, Flachmann and Flachmann, eds.
- Essays on Critical Theory from James Joyce’s *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* edited by R. B. Kerschner in Ross Murfin’s series, *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism*.
- Essays from Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, Norton Critical Edition, Robert Kimbrough, ed. [C2]

**C2:** The course includes an intensive study of representative works of both British and American writers as well as works written several genres from the sixteenth century to

## Composition

Approximately fifteen writing assignments are completed, with at least ten consisting of in-class AP style essays and one 5-7 page documented analytical paper. These critical papers explicate poetry, short stories, drama, and novels with the focus on close textual analysis of meaning, syntax, tone, narrative structure, literary devices, point of view, and social commentary. Some writing assignments model essays read in *The Prose Reader*. Both the instructor and peers will evaluate papers using the AP rubric for writing. [C4] Students have opportunities to have a dialogue with the instructor and peers during a supplemental AP period concerning their written pieces. Students are given the opportunity to revise and resubmit their writing for evaluation. [C5]

**C4:** Students have frequent opportunities to write and rewrite formal, extended analyses and timed, in-class responses in all of the following modes: writing to understand, writing to explain,

The 5-7 documented research paper deals with a literary topic and must conform to the MLA style book. Online research must be supported with hard copies. All students receive a packet on documentation and plagiarism, and the nature of quality research and evaluating sources is reviewed prior to the assignment. [C3]

**C3:** Students write an interpretation of a piece of literature that is based on a careful observation of textual

Throughout the course students are given instruction on analytical writing on literary texts. Numerous examples of excellent student essays, both from AP sources and within the class itself, are read and discussed by the students in large groups and small groups. Students are assigned essays from *The Prose Reader* and critical

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editions of texts to provide models of various types of writing (literary criticism, narrative, argument) and different strategies (point of view, tone, detail, literary devices) used in effective writing. [C5]

Journal writing is conducted throughout the course, with the instructor assigning prompts and questions for every reading assignment to encourage critical thinking. Journals are collected periodically, checked for quality of thought and ideas, and returned with feedback from the instructor. [C4]

## Grammar and Vocabulary

Both are covered in context of the literature, with the exception of SAT words of the day, which are school-wide.

## Evaluation and Assessment

Achievement is measured using:

- Writing assignments: in-class, out-of-class, and journal
- Oral presentations
- Class participation
- Mid-term Examination
- Final Examination
- AP Exam

## Summer Assignment

Students are to read *Amy Tan's Joy Luck Club* [C2] and view the film based on the book, comparing the themes, styles, structure, and content. Students are also required to read *Homer's Odyssey* [C2] and write an analysis of Tennyson's "Ulysses," [C2] which is to be turned in the first day of class.

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## Semester I

### Unit One

Class begins with a discussion of Amy Tan’s *Joy Luck Club*—theme, style, structure, and content. Students write journal entries comparing the novel and the film, as well as a critique of the screenplay and the direction of the film. Focus is placed on narrative structure and the effect it has on the text.

The discussion of narrative structure continues with Homer’s *Odyssey*. Students are introduced to the term *in medias res*, explore the structure of the epic poem, and determine the effect this structure has on the story. Character development is explored in a comparative analysis of Homer’s Odysseus and Tennyson’s Ulysses. Focus is placed on the Greek conception of the hero and the Victorian view of this conception. This introductory unit ends with an in-class essay on Homer’s *Odyssey*, using an AP style writing prompt. [C3] Prior to the in-class essay the instructor provides an explanation of the 9-point AP rubric for essay writing. [C5]

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When the essays are returned to the students, they participate in small group writing workshops to critique their work. They follow the 9-point rubric, which was explained at the beginning of the course, and are aided by examples of excellent student essays on similar topics. [C5]

**C5:** The AP teacher provides instruction and feedback on students’ writing assignments, both before and after students

The essay assigned over the summer on Tennyson’s “Ulysses” and turned in the first day of class is used as the basis for lessons on incorporating textual evidence into the body of an analytical essay. Using examples from the essays, the instructor explains effective use of text within an argument. [C5]

## Unit Two

Discussion of the Greek literary vision continues with the reading of Sophocles’ *Oedipus the King*. Instruction relies heavily on dramatic reading within the classroom and analysis of the Aristotelian concept of the tragic hero. The unit begins with a lesson on riddles, concluding with the riddle of the Sphinx that figures prominently in the opening of the play. Students trace the development of suspense as well as the development of character throughout this unit. To prepare for the next writing assignment the instructor provides a sample prompt and directs the students to perform prewriting activities: writing a thesis statement and brainstorming detail for the answer to the prompt. Initially this is done alone, but after ten minutes students work with a partner to compare their ideas and discuss how to proceed with the essay. [C5]

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This unit concludes with an in-class essay on the play, using an AP style writing prompt. [C4]

Essays are returned to the students during writing conferences in the supplemental class. The instructor provides each student with individual critiques of their writing and students have the opportunity to revise and resubmit for evaluation. [C5]

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## Unit Three

The unit begins with journal writing, which allows students to explore the importance of the senses in human development. The students then read the opening chapter of James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, [C2] focusing on imagery as it appeals to each of the five senses. Students are introduced to the narrative technique, stream of consciousness, and discussion of the text centers on the effect this technique has on the narrative.

As part of this unit, the students participate in a group project using the articles on critical theory in the Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press edition of the text. Each group is assigned a critical theory: New Historicism, Psychoanalytical, Deconstruction, Reader/Response, and Feminism. The group members read articles on the definition of the theories and the application of their assigned theory to the Joyce text. They then discuss the method of teaching the theory to the class and, finally, teach the theory to the class. Discussion of the text from this point on focuses on these theories. Application of these theories to texts continues throughout the course. To assess the students' understanding of the critical theories, students complete an objective test and write an analysis of a passage from the text using a particular critical approach. [C3]

To conclude this unit, students read Joyce's short story "The Dead," stressing the meaning of symbols in the story and debating the interpretation of them. Students write in-class essays on both *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and "The Dead," using AP style writing prompts. The essays are always returned promptly with extensive feedback from the instructor, and the students have individual conferences with the instructor during the AP Supplemental Period. [C5]

## Unit Four

The unit on Shakespeare's *Hamlet* [C2] begins with a journal exercise designed to engage the students in the plot of the play. Questions from *The Folger Library Shakespeare Set Free: Teaching Hamlet*, edited by Peggy O'Brien allow the students to fully immerse themselves in Hamlet's family situation. These questions aid students in understanding the main character's point of view throughout the play. Throughout the reading of the play students write journal entries in response to each scene, some free-response and some focused responses. [C3] The instructor reads and provides written feedback for the journal entries and responds to the quality of the thought in the response. [C5]

In conjunction with the teaching of the drama, the students read and analyze T. S. Eliot's "Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and Artur Rimbaud's "Ophelia." Poetry terms, including rhyme, rhythm, meter, imagery, metaphor, simile, apostrophe, allusion, metonymy, and personification are covered extensively in the

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supplemental AP period and the use of these terms is identified in these poems. The analysis of the poetry focuses on the purpose and effect of these poetic devices, as well as syntax on meaning.

Classroom instruction revolves around dramatic reading, close reading of the text, thematic discussion, poetry analysis and group investigations. Besides journal writing, students write an in-class essay on the play, an updated script based on Act 1, scene 3, as well as a documented research paper of 5-7 pages. [C4] The research paper is conducted as a process: thesis selection, textual analysis, critical support, rough draft, and final draft. Class lessons on thesis writing and incorporating primary and secondary source material are provided, as well as lessons on MLA format for parenthetical citations and works cited pages. Feedback is provided to the students during each phase of the writing during conferences in a supplemental class. [C5]

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## Unit Five

Although poetry is addressed throughout the AP English course, there is also a separate unit on poetry in the second semester. This unit provides students with the technical language of poetic terms in order to analyze their use, purpose, and effect in specific poems. Special emphasis is placed on imagery, metaphor, simile, syntax, tone, meter, rhyme, irony, metonymy, and poetic form and structure (ballad, sonnet, sestina, villanelle, free verse, blank verse).

The text is *Perrine's Sound and Sense*, edited by Thomas R. Arp and Greg Johnson. Short poems using the poetic devices are analyzed in small groups and the large class. The instructor also features poems by poets who participate in the biennial Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival, such as Sandra Cisneros, Lucille Clifton, Galway Kinnell, and Sharon Olds. The instructor uses materials from the festival, the largest poetry festival in North America, to enhance the discussion of poetry with the work of the most current poets writing today.

The main activity is a group presentation of an analysis of a lengthy poem, such as Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess," Robert Frost's "Out, Out—," Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach," and Andrew Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress." [C2] Students are to identify the speaker of the poem, any poetic devices used, the form of the poem, and the meaning of the poem and its title. If there is a rhyme scheme, it should be described. The poem should also be scanned and the meter identified, if there is regular metric form. The students should also determine the poetic form. Students discuss these elements in small groups, and then divide the information into categories of their choice. Presentations of the analysis are graded on the thoroughness of the analysis and the effectiveness of communication.

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Students are also given sample AP poetry writing prompts at various times throughout the course to gauge their level of skill in analyzing poetry and poetic forms. These are returned to the students with feedback in order to aid in the

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revision of their writing, and students have the opportunity to resubmit for further evaluation and feedback. [C5]

## Unit Six

The topics of alienation and societal disintegration are covered in this unit. Beginning with Henrik Ibsen’s *A Doll House*, the instructor again relies on dramatic reading, close reading of the text, thematic discussion, poetry analysis, and group investigations to analyze text and theme. Student activities include a debate on the justification of Nora’s action, pitting one half of the class against the other on this issue. Students write opening and closing statements, and are forced to think on their feet during rebuttals. [C4]

Poetry and essay are included to supplement the play. Marge Piercy’s poem “Barbie Doll” (from Perrine’s *Sound and Sense*) and Judy Brady’s essay “Why I Want a Wife” (from *The Prose Reader* edited by Flachmann and Flachmann) are read and analyzed in order to provide further discussion of the thematic elements in *A Doll House*. [C2]

Students are given an assignment to write an essay entitled “Why I Want a Husband.” Using the strategies and literary devices Brady uses, the students are to imagine they are a husband and detail the stereotypes males face in our society. [C4] These essays are shared with the class in small and large groups. Students receive critiques from their peers and the instructor and have an opportunity to revise and submit their work.

This portion of the unit ends with another in-class essay on the play. Students work in small and large groups to write critiques of the writing and are given the opportunity to revise and resubmit for evaluation. [C5] [C4]

The remainder of the unit involves the reading of Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* and Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. [C2] The theme of Achebe’s novel is enhanced by the analysis of the Yeats poem “The Second Coming,” while Conrad’s novel is illuminated by the reading of Achebe’s critical essay on the issue of racism in Conrad’s text, “An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*” (from the Norton Critical Edition of *Heart of Darkness*, edited by Robert Kimbrough). This last essay is analyzed also for its point of view; it is an excellent example of a powerful first person essay. [C5]

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