



An Introduction to Literature and Academic Writing

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Readiness: (College-bound students grades 8 through 10). Following this course students will have the needed foundation to succeed in a Pre-AP English class. The course is aligned with skills and content covered in both AP English Language and AP English Literature. This course will also help prepare students for the critical reading passages on the SAT college entrance exam and SAT Subject Tests.

Prerequisites: None

Web-ex Lectures/Discussions: Live Web-ex classes will be held at least three times per month. Other course lessons will be recorded and available for students to playback at their convenience. **Live sessions will occur on Thursdays 6-7 PM EST.**

Description: This English class will give students the opportunity to improve and practice skills that will enable them to succeed in future Pre-AP and AP classes. This class will expose students to the activities required by the AP program. As students are introduced to these activities, they will also become familiar with the expectations of the exam.

Semester One: Students will use the framework of the 'Hero's Journey' and archetypes to learn and evaluate narrative prose and fiction through structure and characterization. Analysis will include elements of literature such as plot, structure and style, point of view, symbols, allegory and fantasy. Students will learn literary terms and apply that terminology through class discussions and on individual written and performance assessments. Students will learn various literary devices to include alliteration, allusions, archetypes, foreshadowing, figurative language, imagery and kennings.

Semester Two: Students will use the framework of dystopia novels as a venue to learn and evaluate author's voice, tone and argument, themes, settings, direct and indirect characterization, satire and allegory.

- Open to students in 8th-10th grade
- College-preparatory class leading to Pre-AP class and future AP English coursework
- Students should be ready to begin working toward college level reading and responsibility
- Weekly assignments and class notes posted Mondays.
- 32 weeks.
- To apply, request a student application from the instructor

Readings for the first semester:

Beowulf translated by Burton Raffel
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
The Hobbit by J. R. R. Tolkien
Journey to the Center of the Earth by Jules Verne

Reading for the second semester:

The Giver by Lois Lowry
Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
Animal Farm by George Orwell
Out of the Silent Planet C.S. Lewis

Writings: Writing is a key component that will extend throughout both semesters of this course. Students will learn different aspects of writing and its structure to include: thesis statements, transitions, beginnings, conclusions and the five paragraph essay. The students will learn concepts and the related skills of organization, outlining, forming a frame of reference and sense of purpose, tone, maintaining objectivity, being logical and formatting essays. Assignments will focus on incorporating the critical analysis of literature by implementing the writing elements necessary for a convincing essay. The course requires students to write descriptive, comparison and analytical essays about literature. All essays should be typed and follow MLA guidelines. MLA formatting will be taught in this course.

Collaborative Groups: If the specific makeup of the class allows: collaboration on several assignments and in an extended group project will be assigned to help foster a learning community and the critical thinking necessary to support the next level of study in the AP literature. Students will have focused discussions about particular aspects of the readings; as well as, collaborative text summaries.

Communications: Course instruction occurs through the website, e-mails, and my contribution to the forums. I will also assign the viewing of podcasts and short video clips to explain course concepts as needed. I am available to students through g-chat and Skype.

Technical needs: Google Account. Broadband, high speed Internet and an e-mail account that accepts large files. Weekly assignments are downloaded as PDF files from the website.

Time Commitment: The qualified student will spend 5-7 hours per week on this class. This includes time for reading the assigned texts, answering review questions, and discussing class work and reading assignments with others in the forums.

Class Meeting Time: Students do not "meet" at a scheduled time, but all homework is due via e-mail by Friday evenings, midnight (your time zone). I update the website with weekly assignments every Monday morning.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the use of someone's' words or interpretations without giving credit to the author of those words or ideas. Proper documentation style will be covered thoroughly in class; therefore, students will know how to avoid this grave offense.

Major Project: Students will complete a major project/essay each grading period. Students will be required to produce a multimedia presentation based on a novel of their choosing delineating the protagonist's fulfillment of the stages of the 'Hero's Journey'. The presentation will involve text, graphics and sound track to support their project using available technology. There will be no specific software requirements; students may use ANY software available to them. Recommended is Power Point or Prezi.

Required Texts: It is in the best interest that students purchase the recommended texts so that they may annotate their copies.

Late Work: Will be penalized on a sliding scale based according to the days past due and will not be accepted after ten days. After ten days past due, the student will receive a '0' for the assignment.