

## **JR AP English**

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\*This is the course syllabus/pacing guide that was submitted to and approved by the College Board.

### **Course Overview**

This course includes frequent opportunities for writing in a variety of modes. Students write formal extended analyses, timed in-class responses, and informal journal entries. Informal journal entries allow students to reflect on their reading assignments, analyze literary techniques, and discover what they think. Expository and analytical writings require students to commit to an interpretation and support it with textual details. Our composition program requires students to establish a clear central idea and thesis, strong topic sentences, and appropriate vocabulary, tone, and voice. Students also write creatively for personal expression and to analyze the style of published authors. Students have many opportunities to write, edit, revise, and publish their writings. Periodic writing workshops teach writing concepts and provide feedback on student writing assignments both before and after they are graded. Emphasis is placed on diction, sentence structure and variety, organization, and development using textual detail for support.

The Junior English advanced placement curriculum includes American literature in several genres from the colonial era to contemporary writings. Students will study British and world literature during the senior year. The units of study in this course reflect the AP English course description as well as state and system objectives. The choice of works relates to the school's overall English curriculum sequence. The

following are the units available to study, though we do not necessarily teach every work every year.

These are not necessarily taught in the order in which they are listed.

### **Unit One: Summer Reading (*Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver)**

*Typical student tasks and expectations include:*

- Annotate text; write analytical questions and responses; analyze text for irony, symbolism, diction, allusion, and characterization; and evaluate theme of each chapter and novel as a whole.
- Analyze structure, style, and theme, and tone through in-class journal entries, tests, and formal and informal essays.
- Write formal analytical essays that address the questions “What have we as a nation done to Africa?” Choose one of five characters and show how Kingsolver’s approach reveals an American approach to colonialism. This assignment asks students to analyze themes and social and historical values present in *Poisonwood Bible*.
- Actively engage in class discussions and write multiple journal writings on elements such as figurative language, imagery, symbolism, tone, allusion, syntax, and diction.
- Conduct current research on contemporary African issues and present oral reports.
- Create tracking posters depicting elements of style and themes.
- Read and analyze non-fiction texts such as Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Crime of the Congo* and compare them to poetry such as “The White Man’s Burden” by Kipling as well as to the summer reading novel

### **Unit Two: Puritanism and *The Crucible***

*Literature Selections:*

*The Crucible* by Arthur Miller  
works of Benjamin Franklin and Jonathan Edwards

*Typical student tasks and expectations include:*

- Write journal entries and formal extended analyses that analyze structure and symbolism in works studied.
- Peer review essays and edit/revise writings.
- Demonstrate an understanding of allusion and elements of fiction such as theme and point of view. Writings and class discussions give students opportunity to respond to literature by making personal and historical connections.
- Compare and contrast the viewpoints of historical figures such as Edwards and Franklin to make the connection between the spiritual and practical approaches to life.
- Demonstrate an understanding of Puritanism and its reflection on literature and American consciousness.
- Prepare a written and oral presentation on McCarthyism to understand allegorical significance of Miller's *The Crucible*. Read, discuss, and analyze informational text articles pertaining to McCarthyism.
- Write an in-class or out-of-class essay on *The Crucible* analyzing the moral dilemmas/moral ambiguity of characters such as John Proctor, the Rev. Hale, or Deputy Governor Danforth.

### **Unit Three: Romanticism**

#### *Literature Selections:*

short stories by Nathaniel Hawthorne such “Young Goodman Brown”

*The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

short stories and poetry of Edgar Allan Poe, such as “The Fall of the House of Usher”

short stories of Washington Irving such as “The Devil and Tom Walker”

#### *Typical student tasks and expectations include:*

- Write textual interpretations of *The Scarlet Letter* which analyze symbolism. One essay assignment is: “Choose a symbol and trace how its meaning evolves over the course of the novel.”
- Present oral reports on “Young Goodman Brown” tracing how one symbol evolves during the story.
- Write analysis of rhetorical strategies such as diction, syntax, and tone through a close analysis of “The Prison Door” in *The Scarlet Letter*.
- Peer review essays and edit/revise writings.
- Discuss the social and historical values of the time period of the Romantic era and analyze how these values are reflected in the literature.
- Through class discussion, journal entries and in-class timed writings, and/or cooperative learning assignments, analyze specific techniques such as figurative language, tone, mood,

ambivalence, imagery, allusion, allegory, and the characteristics of Romantic writings in *The Scarlet Letter* and other works.

#### **Unit Four: Transcendentalism**

##### *Literature Selections:*

Selected chapters from *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau  
Selected Essays by Emerson, such as “The American Scholar,” “Nature,” or “Self-Reliance”  
Thoreau’s “Civil Disobedience” and King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail”

##### *Typical student tasks and expectations include:*

- Demonstrate an understanding of the Transcendental movement through tests, journal entries, and class discussion.
- Write a personal essay emulating the style of Thoreau and analyzing how a student has arrived at a personal philosophy.
- Write journal entries making personal connections to Transcendental writers and their works.
- Analyze the persuasive and rhetorical strategies in the nonfiction selections.

#### **Unit Five: Realism**

##### *Literature Selections:*

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain

##### *Typical student tasks and expectations include:*

- Demonstrate an understanding of satire, elements of humor, dialect, and irony through extended formal analyses and journal entries.
- Trace satire throughout the novel- identify particular examples of satire and discuss how Twain uses language and style to satirize certain subjects.
- Discuss the elements of realism in the novel.
- Read closely to evaluate rhetorical devices such as the effect of diction, syntax, and shifts in mood and tone.
- Discuss and write journals about Huck Finn’s moral development.
- Write an in-class or out of class essay on humor or satire.
- Create an annotated works cited page – find articles related to censorship of the novel.

## **Unit Six: Modern Drama**

Time: 2 to 4 weeks

*Literature Selections:*

*Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams

*Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller

*Typical student tasks and expectations include:*

- Write an essay comparing and contrasting how the two works modify Aristotle's definition of tragedy.
- Actively participate in class discussion and complete journal writings which focus on characterization. For example, "Is Willy Loman a sympathetic character?"
- Analyze how each of the following enhances meaning in the play: set designs, stage instructions, and the manipulation of time.

## **Unit Seven: *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston**

Time: 2 weeks

*Typical student tasks and expectations include:*

- Study how the life and culture of Zora Neale Hurston are reflected in her works.
- Analyze this novel as a representative work of the Harlem Renaissance.
- Trace imagery throughout the novel. Each student traces an image and writes an essay analyzing the evolution of an image in the novel.
- Write journals focusing on dialect and folklore and Janie's character development.
- Compare novel to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as a coming of age novel.
- Complete journal writing comparing and contrasting the perspective of male and female characters.

## **Unit Eight: The Modern Novel**

Time: 2-4 weeks per novel

*Literature Selections:*

*The Unvanquished or As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner

*The Sun Also Rises or A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway

*The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald

*The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck

*Typical student tasks and expectations include:*

- Identify and interpret literary elements and language through close reading and journal entries.
- Show how these novels comment on the American Dream and disillusionment with the American Dream.
- Analyze form, structure and style in the novels.
- Discuss different levels of interpretation of the novels (ex: *Grapes of Wrath* on four levels).
- Discuss the effect of point of view in each novel.
- Discern the social and historical period in which the novels were written and how the period is reflected in the work.

## **Unit Nine: Argument**

Time: One Week throughout the year

Students write practice timed argumentative writings. Students are encouraged to maintain a consistent voice, argument, and provide concrete, specific support. Students are taught to self-edit for strong verbs and specific nouns. Instruction emphasizes writing a strong opening generalization and writing with an awareness of audience.

## **Unit Ten: Poetry**

Time: 2 to 4 weeks

*Literature Selections:*

Poetry from the colonial era to modern times

*Typical student tasks and expectations include:*

- Study poetic devices (literary terms and their effect).

- Practice writing in the style of a poet, for example writing a poem in the style of Whitman’s “A Child Went Forth.”
- Study a variety of forms of poetry.
- Write essays analyzing poems.
- Write journal responses to poetry.
- Participate in class discussion and write journals which reflect analysis of language (figurative language, imagery, sound), themes, and style.

### **Unit Eleven: Major Author Project**

Time: Independent project spanning the length of the school year

Students select an individual major American writer. They read four books by that author. After reading each book, they present their analysis of textual details in the form of notes that apply literary skills learned in class (on style, character, theme, and plot). In addition, students write an in-class essay analyzing each work. Near the conclusion of the reading of the fourth book, each student has an individual teacher conference to formulate a thesis for his research paper. The thesis should evaluate the author’s body of work and its artistic merit. Students are discouraged from seeking secondary research/criticism and encouraged to use textual support for their own insights.

A required outline encourages logical organization. Students write a partial rough draft of the paper for teacher critiques and complete rough drafts for peer critiques. Revision of this project encourages a synthesis of the year-long writing instruction. At each stage of this project, students are given the opportunity to revise their work. The second phase of the project includes secondary research and a twenty-minute oral presentation which requires students to explain the author’s development of ideas, provide textual details to make and explain judgments, and evaluate their assigned author’s literary legacy.

In the assessment of the project, teachers emphasize students’ degree of success in presenting a logical organization of ideas; creating a clear and convincing argument with extensive textual support; correctly using the conventions of grammar, spelling, and punctuation; incorporating transitions; and demonstrating fluency and sophistication in diction, sentence structure, and voice.

*Typical student tasks and expectations include:*

- For each novel, write observations about the style, character, theme, and characterization.
- Prepare a formal extended analysis of the author’s work.
- Write an outline.
- Peer edit another student’s paper.
- Edit and rewrite the formal paper.
- Write analytical in-class essays and journal entries in response to each work.
- Prepare and deliver an oral presentation about the author’s style, themes and standing in the American literary tradition.

Primary sources:

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