

AP Literature and Composition FAQs

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"I tell my students, it's not difficult to identify with somebody like yourself, somebody next door who looks like you. What's more difficult is to identify with someone you don't see, who's very far away, who's a different color, who eats a different kind of food. When you begin to do that then literature is really performing its wonders." --Chinua Achebe

*"That is part of the beauty of all literature. You discover that your longings are universal longings, that you're not lonely and isolated from anyone. You belong."
--F. Scott Fitzgerald*

How much homework can I expect?

Homework for this class will predominantly be reading. Typically students will have anywhere from 35-45 pages of reading as a reading assignment. The reading load can depend on the text we are reading. The dramas tend to have shorter reading assignments while novels tend to have longer reading assignments. Students are responsible for reading responses that pair with their reading assignments, as well.

What do we read and am I obligated to purchase the texts?

We read a variety of novels, plays, and poetry. I strongly advise that you purchase SOME of the texts, and some will be supplied to you in class. If purchasing a text is an issue for you whatsoever, I am happy to supply you with what you need. We do not use a test prep book. Students will create a portfolio each semester that will house all of the work they have focused on for each text, and function as their review tool for the exam.

Is there a summer assignment?

Yes, there is a summer assignment. It is important that students continue to read and think about literature throughout the summer in order to maintain momentum for the school year. You will be asked to read one piece of literature and respond in some way to that literature, and choose an additional work from the *New York Times* Best Seller List to read.

Is the class challenging?

This class is designed as a college level class for seniors preparing to leave high school behind them. We move at a fast and invigorating pace, and discuss relevant, provocative issues that arise in the literature we study. As the quotes above outline, we dive deeply into ideas that explore what it means to be human, and ask how these writers are able to convey these ideas to us. Students are asked to think critically both verbally and in writing. The skills we practice apply not only to literature, but to the analysis of any complex text or issue.

Should I take this class if I don't like English or do not plan to major in English in college?

Literature teaches us about people who are different than us, while simultaneously uniting us as humans. These are ideas that all citizens of this world need to explore. Additionally, this class is designed not only to prepare you for the AP exam in May, but for college in general. We will practice skills in this class that will prepare you for a wide variety of college classes. Critical thinking is a universally necessary skill.

