# Willis English 11—AP Literature

*Term:* ***Fall 2018—Spring 2019*** *Teacher****: Carol Willis***

*Classroom****: 202***

*Email****: cwillis@northlandprep.org***

## Course Description

The AP English Literature and Composition course focuses intensively on the study and practice of reading, writing, and discussion of the works of major writers. This course is designed to comply with the curricular requirements described in the AP English Course Description and prepare students to take the AP Literature exam. ***This year the exam is scheduled for the morning of Wednesday, May 8, 2019.***

*“Once upon a time in the dead of winter in the Dakota Territory, Theodore Roosevelt took off in a makeshift boat down the Little Missouri River in pursuit of a couple of thieves who had stolen his prized rowboat. After several days on the river, he caught up and got the draw on them with his trusty Winchester, at which point they surrendered. Then Roosevelt set off in a borrowed wagon to haul the thieves cross-country to justice. They headed across the snow-covered wastes of the Badlands to the railhead at Dickinson, and Roosevelt walked the whole way, the entire 40 miles. It was an astonishing feat, what might be called a defining moment in Roosevelt’s eventful life. But what makes it especially memorable is that during that time, he managed to read all of* Anna Karenina*. I o+en think of that when I hear people say they haven’t ,me to read.” ― David McCullough*

*“Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no one present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment or gratification of your opponent, depending on the quality of your ally’s assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress.”—* Kenneth Burke, from *The*

*Philosophy of Literary Form*

## Course Texts and Outline

The course includes representative works from British, American, and World writers, written in several genres from our earliest writings to contemporary times. Poetry and short fiction accompany each unit.

Texts of similar AP merit may be substituted at teacher discretion.

***Summer Assignments—Prepare for the Parlor*** Focus: Reading and Writing Workshop

Texts: *How to Read Literature Like a Professor, They Say, I Say, Writing Tools, The Sketchnote Handbook*

***Unit 1— Unbent Mind: Ancient Literature***

Focus: Successful Student Conduct, Reading with Intention & Responding with Innovation

Text*: Antigone*

***Unit 2—Excellent Wretch: Renaissance Literature*** Focus: Befriending Poetry

Text: *Othello*

***Unit 3— Kill No Albatross: Romantic Literature*** Focus: Symbol, Allusion, Ambition

Texts*: Frankenstein*

***Unit 4— Careless People: Modern Literature*** Focus: Presentation, Discussion

Texts*: The Great Gatsby*

***Unit 5—Only Children Weep: Postmodern Literature*** Focus: Test Prep, Montage

Texts*: To Kill a Mockingbird*

***Unit 6— You Your Best Thing*** Focus: Personal Process

Texts*: Beloved*

## Course Writing Goals

Students will write in the various modes about the many aspects of literature, but will always concentrate on how a writer uses rhetorical strategies to achieve meaning. Students will write literary interpretations based on careful observation of textual details, with consideration of 1) structure, style, and themes; 2) the social and historical values reflected in the work; and 3) literary elements and strategies, such as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone. Such analysis will lead us to understand the writer’s work and then to evaluate it.

## Course Reading Goals

The texts selected for this class require careful, deliberative reading that yields multiple meanings, multiple possibilities for debate and discussion. We will always be in the process of reading an important long work, such as an epic poem, play or novel, but we will also read a variety of short stories and poetry written from the sixteenth century to the present. Analyzing and interpreting this material involves students in learning how to make careful observations of textual detail, establishing connections among their observations, and drawing from those connections a series of inferences leading to an interpretive conclusion about a piece of writing’s meaning and value. The goal of all writing assignments—formal and informal—is to increase your ability to explain clearly, cogently, even elegantly, what you understand about literary works and why you interpret them as you do.

## General Course Goals

The primary purpose of this class is to prepare you for college and career by helping you to develop critical reading and writing skills, as well as to help you raise awareness of your own composing processes: the way you explore ideas, reconsider strategies, and revise your work. Throughout the course, emphasis is placed on helping you develop stylistic maturity, characterized by the following:

* A wide-ranging vocabulary with denotative accuracy and connotative resourcefulness;
* A variety of sentence structures, including appropriate use of subordinate and coordinate constructions;
* Logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques to increase coherence, such as repetition, transitions, and emphasis;
* A balance of generalization and specific illustrative detail;
* An effective use of rhetoric, including controlling tone, establishing and maintaining a consistent voice, and achieving appropriate emphasis through diction and sentence structure.

Toward this end, we will emphasize the expository, analytical, and argumentative writing that forms the basis of academic and professional communication, as well as the personal and reflective writing that fosters the development of writing facility in any context. In doing this, this class will also prepare you for the AP exam in May.

## The AP Exam

The three-hour AP English Literature and Composition exam gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of their skills and abilities. It employs multiple-choice questions that test the students’ critical reading of selected passages. The exam also requires writing as a direct measure of the student’s ability to read and interpret literature and to use other forms of discourse effectively. Although the skills tested in the exam remain essentially the same from year to year, each year’s exam is composed of new questions.

Ordinarily, the exam consists of 60 minutes for multiple-choice questions followed by 120 minutes for essay questions. Performance on the essay section of the exam counts for 55 percent of the total grade; performance on the multiple-choice section, 45 percent. Beginning with the May 2011 AP Exam administration, total scores on the multiple-choice section will be based on the number of questions answered correctly. Points will no longer be deducted for incorrect answers and, as always, no points will be awarded for unanswered questions.

## Course Structure

Class time will be spent:

* Reading (often as a “read aloud”).
* Discussing writing, reading, and/or assignments. During discussions, you will be called upon to raise questions, pose problems, interpret what you have read, challenge each other, and develop insights about the reading/writing.
* Reviewing writing strategies, applications, and/or elements. There is a significant emphasis on how writers consciously use rhetorical strategies and literary devices to create powerful and effective texts.
* Practicing various approaches to writing: o Writing to explore: informal, personal narrative writing; descriptive story telling o Writing to understand: informal, exploratory writing designed to help students discover what they think; typically focused on the reading in progress
  + Writing to explain: expository, analytical essays focused on textual details to develop an extended explanation or interpretation of the meanings of a literary text
  + Writing to evaluate: analytical, argumentative essays focused on textual details to make and explain judgments about a work’s artistry and quality, and its social and cultural values.
* Participating in writing workshops, writing conferences, peer review, or sentence work sessions.
* Honing test-taking skills: timed writing and passage analysis (multiple-choice).

## Required Supplies

Students will need the following supplies for the course:

* One 3-ring binder with fifteen dividers
* 3-ring binder pencil pouch
* Pencils and blue or black ink pens
* Loose-leaf notebook paper (**8 ½ X 11 college-rule only**)

## Recommended Supplies

Students may find following supplies helpful for the course:

• Copies of the assigned novels

## Grades

In general the more important an assignment, the more points will be possible. Grade inquiries will need to be made outside of regular class time. Please utilize FamilyLink to stay abreast of the course grade. **The final exam for this course accounts for fifteen percent of the grade for the course.**

**Important Reminder about Grades**

* An **A** is reserved for truly **SUPERIOR** work that is far above and beyond the requirements of an assignment (sparkling, surprising, singular…) (AP score 8 or 9)
* A **B** is an **EXCELLENT** grade that goes above and beyond the requirements of an assignment (impressive, laudable, proficient…) (AP score 6, 7)
* A **C** is an **AVERAGE** grade that meets all requirements of an assignment (complete, sound, creditable…) (AP score 5)
* A **D** is a **BELOW AVERAGE** grade that is lacking in some requirements of an assignment. (inconsistent, incomplete, jumbled…) (AP score 3, 4)
* An **F** is a **FAILING** grade that does not fulfill the requirements of an assignment. (AP score 1, 2)

**Absence/Make-up Work Policy**

If you are involved in school-sponsored events requiring you to miss class, you must turn in work or complete your assignments before going on the trip or make arrangements with me for submission.

Your assignment must be complete and submitted in class on the day it is due to be eligible for full credit. All late assignments will be docked 10% every day past the deadline. Essays will not be accepted for credit if they are more than five days late, but must still be submitted.

**You must print your work before arriving to class.**

## Academic Integrity

You are expected to maintain and promote an environment of academic integrity. Acts of academic dishonesty are very serious offenses and will be dealt with accordingly. Copying another student’s work, allowing your own work to be copied, and all types of plagiarism will result in disciplinary action. Please see the Student Handbook for additional information regarding the school policy of academic honesty.

## Respectful Classroom Conduct

Due to the comprehensive nature of this course, sensitive subjects and controversial issues may be raised in class. Respect for diversity of opinion and the serious nature of this material is required. All opinion is welcome, but personal attacks and sexist or racist language will not be tolerated.

## Acceptable Use of Personal Technology

You may use your cell phone or other device to listen to music during student work time as long as it does not interfere with the learning of those around you. Personal technology that interrupts the course or your fellow students will not be tolerated.

## MLA

All assignments must be submitted with the correct MLA format. Assignments that do not have the correct heading or header will not be accepted for credit. There are templates and samples on the course Web site. If you need clarification on this formatting, please see me immediately.

## Classroom Resources

If you are in need of a pencil or a piece of paper, please ask. However, you are responsible for supplies and materials. Please come to class with your novel, your binder, and necessary writing utensils.

## Returned Materials and Handouts

I pass papers back via the student files. If you are absent, please check the files for returned work and missed handouts. Students should access these materials outside of class time. We work bell to bell. Please don’t interrupt instruction to retrieve your work from the folders.

## Mission Focus

This is English class. Our time belongs to our mission: to read, write, think, and communicate. Work for your other classes should be conducted outside of our class time. You should never plan to do the work for your afternoon classes in the morning on the day they are due. Plan accordingly. Academic honesty rules also apply. Expect serious consequences if you are copying someone else’s work for another class.

## Vocabulary

The texts for this course are difficult, with Lexile levels that exceed college-level reading in many cases. In order to prepare you to tackle these works we will have an intensive vocabulary study in this course. Expect to spend time each day working through the vocabulary. You will be tested on the week’s words each Friday.

## AP Model Exams

Throughout the year we will examine past AP exams and look at actual student responses. You will take in-class essay tests using past prompts. In addition, you will practice making and taking the multiple-choice section of the exam. My hope is that by May you will be extremely familiar with the AP rubric, the multiple-choice portion of the exam, and will know the characteristics of a high scoring essay.

## Revisions

You will have the opportunity to revise selected essays (at least three per quarter) over the course of each semester. These revisions must be submitted within 2 weeks of the return date (stamped on your essay). A primary focus in this class is improving your analytical skills, particularly in writing—revising is an essential practice toward reaching that goal. You will receive timely feedback on each assessed writing assignment toward assisting you identify both areas of power (strengths) and areas in need of improvement.

## Suggestions for Success

The following strategies will be useful throughout the course:

***Do the reading.***

The purpose of our work together is the consideration of literary texts. If you do not do the assigned reading for this course, you can expect your grade to drop precipitously.

***Do the writing.***

Writing is thinking. Your essays will demand significant amounts of time and work. If you put minimal effort into the writing assignments for this course, you will find it far more difficult to connect with the material.

***Share your ideas.***

Shyness is an impediment to conversations about our world. Please know that I will do my best to create an environment that allows for everyone to participate and I expect that you will open up and share.

***Go above and beyond.***

You should compose questions and pursue answers as you read, write, think, and communicate. See me to talk about your theories, your impressions, and your passions. Talk to your peers, read more about the authors, watch film adaptations. All of these techniques correlate with an improvement in your grade.

***Use the class Web resources.***

Study guides, assignment clarification, and supplementary assignments are posted regularly. The course calendar is available online; I recommend you subscribe to the calendar to receive notices about due dates.

***Start organized, stay organized.***

Keep all of your assignments and materials for this course. **DO NOT THROW ANY COURSE MATERIALS AWAY**.

Preparation for the AP test and the final exam requires access to your course work. You will not be able to solve Puzzle without these resources…

***Study small.***

A little bit of studying now is more effective than a lot crammed in later. A daily or nightly review of your vocabulary and notes will be invaluable throughout this course.

***Get help soon***

If you find yourself struggling at any time during the semester, please do not hesitate to come talk with me. The longer you wait to tell me your worries and woes, the longer you must bear your burdens alone. I am here to help you succeed.

***Make attendance a priority.***

If you are sick, truly sick, stay home. But, know that each day of class is a unique and ephemeral moment, never to be recreated or easily summarized for you. Schedule accordingly.

# Signatures

Please sign on line below to show that you have read syllabus and understand the expectations for this course. Please feel free to contact me if you have any concerns.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Contact Information

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_