

**2012-2013 AP English Literature and Composition**  
**Ms. D'Amato**

Dear Student,

First, let me congratulate you for accepting the challenge of Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition. You are about to begin a great literary adventure from the classic Greek drama to the 20th century drama of the absurd (from Aristotle to Samuel Beckett). We will study various genres, through which, we will explore themes such as man's search for truth (Oedipus & Antigone) and how this search changes as society, government, religion, and the notion of the individual changes( The Heart of Darkness, Things They Carried, Pride and Prejudice; The Scarlet Letter etc); how individual uses disguise to escape social confinement( Twelfth Night & The Importance of Being Ernest etc), and how ambition or lack of it can alter a person's character (Macbeth & Hamlet) etc. In addition to the opportunity of exploring the literary world, we will also focus on our college application process as well as theater study( at least two theater trips to the Primary Stages).

Although the class won't meet until the fall, the work begins now as you plan to complete the following readings and assignments prior to the start of next school year. I look forward to an exciting but challenging year; but as you have heard in our meeting, because this course uses a discussion/seminar format and not merely teacher-lecture, it is imperative that you be prepared to participate actively in every class discussion and engage thoroughly in every assignment.

You are to read two books from the long suggested list and keep reading logs for each book you will have read.

Reading List

1. **The Art of the Person Essay** by Philip Lopate
1. **Negotiating with the dead** by Margaret Atwood
2. **The Adventures of Tom Sawyer** by Mark Twain
3. **The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn** by Mark Twain
4. **My Anotina** by Willa Cather
5. **The Vintage Book of American Women Writers** by Elaine Showalter
6. **As I Lay Dying** by William Faulkner
7. **Three Famous Short Novels** by William Faulkner
8. **Invisible Man** by Ralph Ellison
9. **A lesson Before Dying** by Ernest J. Gaines
10. **The Stories of John Cheever** by John Cheever
11. **Grendel** by John Gardner
12. **Breakfast at Tiffany's** by Truman Capote

13. **The Optimist's Daughter** by Eudora Welty
14. **A Thousand Acres** by Jane Smiley
15. **The Road** by Cormac McCarthy
16. **Cutting for Stone** by Abraham Verghese
17. **A Gate of the stairs** by Lorrie Moore
18. **How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe** by Charles Yu
19. **A Visit from the Good Squad** by Jennifer Egan
20. **Nemesis** by Philip Roth
21. **The Intuitionist** by Colson Whitehead
22. **Motherless Brooklyn** by Jonathan Lethem
23. **Great Expectations** by Charles Dickens
24. **Jane Eye** by Charlotte Bronte
25. **Dracula** by Bram Stoker
26. **Wuthering Heights** by Emily Bronte
27. **A Tale of Two Cities** by Charles Dickens
28. **The Picture of Dorian Gray** by Oscar Wilde
29. **The Razor's Edge** by W. Somerset Maugham
30. **A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man** by James Joyce
31. **Atonement** by Ian McEwan
32. **The Cat's Table** by Michael Ondaatje
33. **Never Let Me Go** by Kazuo Ishiguro
34. **The Handmaid's Tale** by Margaret Atwood
35. **Death Comes to Pemberley** by P. D. James
36. **The Metamorphosis and Other Stories** by Franz Kafka
37. **Please Look After My Mom** by Kyung-Sook Shin
38. **Things Fall apart** by Chinua Achebe
39. **Crime and Punishment** by Fyodor Dostoevsky
40. **Death in Venice** by Thomas Mann
41. **The Plague** by Albert Camus
42. **Born to Run** by Christopher McDougall
43. **Quarrel & Quandary** by Cynthia Ozick
44. **In Cold Blood** by Truman Capote
45. **Brother, I'm Dying** by Edwidge Danticat
46. **What Is the What** by Dave Eggers
47. **The Woman in the Dunes** by Kobo Abe
48. **Waiting** by Ha Jin
49. A Death in the Family
50. Beloved
51. Their Eyes Were Watching God
52. Jane Eyre
53. Moby-Dick
54. In the Time of the Butterflies

- 55. The American
- 56. The Age of Innocence
- 57. Catch-22
- 58. A Doll's House
- 59. Ethan Frome
- 60. Go Tell It On the Mountain
- 61. 1984
- 62. Persuasion
- 63. The Portrait of Lady
- 64. The Sun Also Rises

## Reading Log Info

**For each book, you will need to do the following two assignments-**

The reading logs need to be typed (Times New Roman; single-spaced for the first section; double-spaced for the second; one-inch margins all the way around).

1. **A Dialectical Journal**- a two-column entry in which you record specifics from the text on the left (strong lines that lead you to some sort of deeper meaning: a symbol, purpose, theme, character analysis, etc.) and your own ideas/questions/connections on the right; this part should be at least four pages of each reading log. (A minimum of 15 quotes spanning throughout the work and different topics must be explored; each quote must be cited correctly.)

Chose your quotes carefully—pick something that you can really dig into for three-four sentences. If you ask questions, make them pointed and purposeful, not simply: “What does this mean?” Finally, please don’t waste space with topical “analysis” that really just regurgitates the quote or explains when in the piece it happens.

For this type of journal, it’s better if do it while you're reading. On the other hand, you are to take notes in your book as you read, so it may be easier to attack your journal when you’re done with the piece. Either way, I like this part of the journal because you get to choose what you'd like to focus on, so it's very student-centered; at the same time, you are forced to focus on text first and then build from there, which helps build your close reading skills.

2. **A Super Close Reading:** Once you’ve finished the piece, please choose 1-2 pages on which you’d like to focus; these pages should be a good representation of the style of the piece as a whole (see the questions below for clarification on what I mean by that). Then, scan or photocopy these pages so that they show up in your journal. Read them slowly and carefully (and, ideally, multiple times) in order to provide detailed and well-thought-out answers to the following questions:

a. What is the tone of the passage? (The tone is the author’s attitude toward the subject. Instead of broad, general terms, we want to try to use words that focus on a more precise meaning than “angry” or “happy”—use specific terms that pinpoint the exact feeling you’re looking for.)

b. Reflect on the elements that contribute to the tone of the passage: how does the writer achieve that tone? Here are some authorial choices to consider:

- What is the point of view used? First person? Third person? Omniscient or limited? What does the specific type of point of view do for the piece? How is that embodied in the excerpt you picked?
- How is the character or situation in the excerpt treated? Is the narration objective? Subjective? Judgmental? Descriptive? In what tense? How does the narrative point of view lead or guide the reader? Does the narration show the reader more about the thing being described or the narrator him-or-herself?
- What type of language, or diction, does the author employ? Slang? An elevated vocabulary? Are certain types of words repeated or highlighted? How do these words contribute to the overall tone of the excerpt?
- How are the sentences structured? In other words, what is the syntax of the piece? Long, drawn out sentences? Short phrases? Questions? Exclamations? How does the placement and arrangement of the words—the syntax—of the piece help contribute to the reader’s experience?
- What type of literary conflict is illustrated in the excerpt? (Man vs. man, self, nature, society, etc.) In what way does the conflict add to the meaning of the excerpt and the work?
- Finally, do you see any rhetorical devices being used by the author? (For example: similes, metaphors, personification, etc.) It doesn’t matter if we know all of the fancy names right now...just pick out the types of stylistic tricks you see the author using.

This section of your journal should be about one-two pages long. You may make notes on your copied pages; as long as I have a key as to what is what, there’s no need to type out all of the specific words, phrases or sentences on which you’d like to focus. Just color-code them (or do something of the like) and type up the analysis (the answers to the above questions) in your journal.

Again, these must be typed: they will be graded on completeness, organization and depth of thought, and how well you follow the directions. Each journal should have the author, title, and the two different sections clearly marked.

Have a great summer!

Ms. D’Amato (bdamato@schools.nyc.gov)