AP English Literature is a college level class designed to hone students’ skills in close reading and critical analysis of literature to deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to develop meaning (and, hopefully, score well on the AP Exam!). Students will consider a work’s structure, style, and themes, as well as its use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone. Writing assignments include expository, analytical, and argumentative essays that require students to analyze and interpret literary works.

You will begin your journey with two novels for summer reading and writing. BOTH books should be read BEFORE the first day of school, and written assignments should be ready to be turned in on the first day of class. There also will be multiple-choice tests as well as in-class writing on both books.

**Book #1—The Catcher in the Rye by J. D. Salinger**

I will be checking your book for annotations. You don’t need to have something marked on every page; however, you should have AT LEAST TWO things annotated in each chapter of your book. Annotation means more than simply underlining a passage—I expect to see some notes written in the margins of your book. (If you are using a library book- you may use sticky notes). As you read and annotate, consider the following literary devices and ideas:

- Development of characters throughout the story-introduction of new characters; development—and especially changes in characters
- Setting and its significance to the story line—underline the time and the place of the story, and when the settings change note that.
- Mark “tone” words / phrases—what seems to be the author’s attitude toward the characters, events, even the reader—note this in the margin
- Motifs—a motif is something that keeps coming back over and over again. If you see a symbol or an idea that comes up many times, underline it and in the margin note what you think it might mean or signify.
- Irony—as you will learn in class, irony is one of—if not the most—significant literary device we will explore. Mark any kind of irony you see—verbal, dramatic, or situation and note why it is ironic.
- Theme of the book and how that theme is revealed
Review the AP Open-Ended essay prompts below. Read Wuthering Heights, annotating significant passages (underline AND notes in the margins; sticky notes if it’s a borrowed book). After you have marked your book with these prompts in mind, select a single chapter (at least 10 pages) with particularly thorough and effective annotations. Put a bookmark with your first and last name as well as the chapter number at the beginning of the chapter. Annotations for this chapter will receive a grade.

AP Open-Ended Essay

When you have finished Wuthering Heights, select ONE of the AP Exam essay questions below and respond in an essay of approximately 500 words (MLA format: Times New Roman, 12 point font, double spaced, heading in upper left of first page only. Please include a word count in the heading). Include at least three specific textual references (quotes) to support your ideas. These should be cited in MLA format (Brontë 191). Since the questions specifically refer to the work as a whole, quotations should be from various places in the text and not from a single chapter or section of the book.

2015.

In literary works, cruelty often functions as a crucial motivation or a major social or political factor. Select a novel, play, or epic poem in which acts of cruelty are important to the theme. Then write a well-developed essay analyzing how cruelty functions in the work as a whole and what the cruelty reveals about the perpetrator and/or victim.

2010.

Palestinian American literary theorist and cultural critic Edward Said has written that “Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted.” Yet Said has also said that exile can become “a potent, even enriching” experience. Using Wuthering Heights, reflect on a character who experiences such a rift and becomes cut off from “home,” whether that home is the character’s birthplace, family, homeland, or other special place. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the character’s experience with exile is both alienating and enriching, and how this experience illumines the meaning of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

2007.

In many works of literature, past events can affect, positively or negatively, the present activities, attitudes, or values of a character. Choose a character in Wuthering Heights who must contend with some aspect of the past, either personal or societal. Then write an essay in which you show how the character’s relationship to the past contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole.
Many plays and novels use contrasting places (for example, two countries, two cities or towns, two houses, or the land and the sea) to represent opposed forces or ideas that are central to the meaning of the work. Choose two such contrasting places in Wuthering Heights. Write an essay explaining how the places differ, what each place represents, and how their contrast contributes to the meaning of the work.

Some works of literature use the element of time in a distinct way. The chronological sequence of events may be altered, or time may be suspended or accelerated. Show how Brontë’s manipulation of time in Wuthering Heights contributes to the effectiveness of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

Additionally, you should purchase / obtain a copy of the book How to Read Literature Like a Professor by Thomas C. Foster. We will refer back to this book throughout the year, so it’s best if you have your own copy. We will begin reading and applying the information from the text within the first week of class.

Finally, you should sign up for remind.com so I can text you reminders to stay on schedule with your reading. Information for next year’s AP Lit class can be found below.

Note: These assignments should be completed WITHOUT using SparkNotes, Google, books, OTHER PEOPLE, etc.!!! If you copy ideas without giving credit, you will receive a zero on the assignment. You MAY consult a dictionary.