

May 17, 2007

Dear Advanced Placement Senior English student (and parent):

AP English IV focuses on British and world literature; it is designed for students who wish to obtain college credit for high school work through the AP Exam in Literature given each May by the College Board. Students are expected to read a wide selection of literary works and hone their analytical and writing skills. As a consequence, the reading material is explored at a level that demands both skill and maturity. Anyone whose writing skills are weak should plan to spend time improving them independently and with me outside of class. Expect to spend a substantial amount of time preparing for class, and realize that all work must be completed in a timely manner.

In preparation for the fall semester, you will complete the AP IV Summer Project. I suggest that you begin the college research portion of the project soon. Allow yourself time to fully explore the options available before choosing the two colleges for the surveys, related application essays, and letter of recommendation. Your endeavors will jump-start the application process and make life easier for all of us next fall. Complete the mythology assignment in preparation for the first work we study in the fall; you will find that most of the literature we address includes allusions to both classical mythology and the *Bible*. In addition, an overview of major schools of philosophy will come in handy, too.

Please take time now to review the attached project information. Contact me before the end of the year if you need clarification. Access a copy of the project and additional AP English IV information on the PHS Library website: <http://libraries.risd.org/phslib/>. Return the bottom portion of this page to your English teacher as soon as possible. I'll see you in August!

Yours truly,

Dr. Carol Whatley
AP English IV
J. J. Pearce High School
carol.whatley@risd.org

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I have read the letter regarding the AP English IV course and have reviewed the AP ENGLISH IV SUMMER PROJECT. I understand the rigorous nature of the course and what I am expected to complete before the first day of classes next fall. I will follow directions carefully so that my work this summer and the first weeks of school will be of the highest caliber.

Student's Name, printed _____

Student's Signature _____

E-mail _____

Parent's Signature _____

E-mail _____

Summer Project Refer to the packet or PHS Library website for information.

Research and composition related to college admissions

Review of grammar and composition skills

Review of classical myths, biblical stories, and philosophies frequently referenced in readings and relevant to a more complete understanding of works to be studied in AP English IV

Fall and Spring Semesters Throughout the year we will be engaged in an on-going study of the history of the English language, key literary periods and movements, literary analysis, research, composition, and modes of presentation. Refer to <http://www.answers.com/> for information about the following books and authors.

In addition to selected poetry and short prose, we will study these major works:

Aristophanes *The Frogs*

Chaucer, Geoffrey *The Canterbury Tales*

Conrad, Joseph *Heart of Darkness*

Dante *The Inferno*

Heaney, Seamus (tr.) *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*

Joyce, James *Dubliners*

Shakespeare *A Midsummer Night's Dream; Hamlet*

Stoppard, Tom *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*

Swift, Jonathon *Gulliver's Travels* [selections]

Voltaire *Candide*

Wilde, Oscar *The Importance of Being Ernest*

Options for Independent Study

Austen, Jane

Pride and Prejudice

Bronte, Charlotte

Jane Eyre

Bronte, Emily

Wuthering Heights

Camus, Albert

The Stranger

Dostoevski, Feodor

Crime and Punishment

Flaubert, Gustave

Madame Bovary

Forster, E. M.

A Passage to India

Garcia Marquez, Gabriel

One Hundred Years of Solitude

Gardner, John

Grendel

Golding, William

Lord of the Flies

Hardy, Thomas

The Return of the Native

Tess of the d'Urbervilles

Huxley, Aldous

Brave New World

James, Henry

The Turn of the Screw

Kogawa, Joy

Obasan

Orwell, George

1984

Shelley, Mary

Frankenstein

Solzhenitsyn, Alexander

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich

Turgenev, Ivan

Fathers and Sons

Vonnegut, Kurt

Slaughterhouse Five

Wharton, Edith

The House of Mirth

Wilde, Oscar

The Picture of Dorian Gray

Woolf, Virginia

To the Lighthouse

Zola, Emile

Germinal

AP English IV Summer Project

The summer project consists of reading, research, writing, and review. You will derive the greatest benefit if you begin soon. The first day of class bring your college surveys and two copies each of your essays and letter. As soon as possible, transfer your essays and letter onto your student drive at PHS to facilitate editing.

If you learn nothing else next year, I hope you learn that you have a lot to learn. Ultimately, you are responsible for your own education, and your teachers and advisors merely assist you. How you choose to prepare this summer will help or hinder your efforts next year and thereafter. You will not be subjected to a “facts” test when you return to school, but expanding your knowledge of basic schools of philosophy; the Bible as literature; and mythology, especially that of classical Greece and Rome, the Celts, and the Norse, is essential to your success. Resources for study and review include:

Print

Bulfinch, Thomas	<i>Mythology (A Modern Abridgement by Edmund Fuller)</i>
Davis, Kenneth C.	<i>Don't Know Much About Mythology</i>
Hamilton, Edith	<i>Mythology</i> <i>Cliffs Notes (gasp!) on Mythology</i>
Shippe and Stetson	<i>The Bible and Its Influence</i> (a reference for Biblical allusions)
Gaarder, Jostein	<i>Sophie's World: A Novel About the History of Philosophy</i>

Websites

Encyclopedia Mythica	http://www.pantheon.org/
The Perseus Digital Library	http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/
Bulfinch's Mythology	http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/bulf/index.htm
Greek Mythology	http://www.messagenet.com/myths/
Links to Philosophy Websites	http://www.comms.dcu.ie/sheehan/philosophy/links.htm

Though not required, it is advisable that you expand your literary background by reading other works before school begins. Though any work of literary merit would be a good choice, you may wish to choose from College Board's "101 Great Books for the College Bound."

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/boost-your-skills/23628.html> Learn about the authors and works at <http://www.answers.com/> . I suggest that you complete a Book Record form for each that you read so that you can easily review before the AP Exam.

Research and Writing

Surveys

Learn important facts about two colleges of interest to you and their communities. This information could influence your decisions about studies, living arrangements, finances, etc. Conduct one or more searches at The Princeton Review's site or elsewhere. Thoroughly fill out surveys for two colleges to which you may apply.
<http://www.princetonreview.com/college/research/advsearch/match.asp>

2 application essays: Written in Word, saved to your hard drive and a portable device, two printed copies brought to class

Respond to prompts from two different colleges. If one or both colleges you wish

to attend do not require essays, choose prompts from the Texas Common Application or from a private institution. Be sure to include the prompt at the top of the essay. These essays should reflect your *best* effort at writing and editing because I will subject neither myself nor your peers to sloppy work done in haste. This is your chance for meaningful peer review and free professional editing in class. Some helpful websites are www.applytexas.org www.commonapp.org

1 letter of recommendation: Written in Word, saved to your hard drive and a portable device, two printed copies brought to class

Using a **fictitious** name, write *as if* you were a teacher, employer, or other person recommending your admission to college. Later, when you ask someone for a reference, the recommendation may be more insightful because of what you have shared in your letter. Use a block business letter format. Refer to http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/pw/p_basicbusletter.html

All AP Summer Project assignments are due the first day of class in order for you to receive full credit.

INTERNET ACCESS IS ESSENTIAL. Computers are at the following locations:

Richardson Public Library	972-744-4350	www.cor.net/library
Dallas Public Library		
Fretz Park Branch	214-670-6421	http://dallaslibrary.org/fretz.htm
Renner-Frankford Branch	214-670-6100	http://dallaslibrary.org/renner.htm

A student not living in Dallas who wishes to use a Dallas Library branch has two options, each requiring the presentation of appropriate ID.

- Request a *TEXSHARE* card at the Richardson Public Library. The card holder may check out up to 5 items free and access the internet at a Dallas branch.
- Request a *free* internet card at a Dallas branch.

USEFUL SITES

match your goals and interests <http://www.collegeboard.com/csearch/html/ch00.html>
electronic links to colleges, admission advice, a searchable data base, general information about college life <http://www.mycollegeguide.org/index.phtml>
searchable data base of colleges, scholarship opportunities, and academic resources; good graphics <http://www.collegenet.com/>
virtual tours of some colleges; experts answer questions about admissions process <http://www.collegexpress.com/index.do>

U.S. News' college rankings www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/eduhome.htm

college, educational and career information <http://www.petersons.com/>

private schools www.fihe.org/

information about athletics www.ncaaclearinghouse.net

financial aid prerequisite form www.fafsa.ed.gov

Texas financial aid www.collegefortexans.com

Federal Family Education Loans www.tgslc.org

U.S. Dept.of Education Federal Student Aid Program www.studentaid.ed.gov

careers and labor statistics www.jobweb.com/ www.bls.gov/oco/

TIPS ON WRITING THE ADMISSIONS ESSAY

Admissions committees use the essay to learn about the student in a more reliable, specific, and personal way. The essay can breathe life into the résumé's listing of activities, interests, experiences, or family situation. A well-written essay can mitigate the impact of grades and scores that are not reflective of an applicant's ability. A carefully chosen topic that focuses on one thing about the writer can reflect a lot about his entire personality. Colleges want a good match between the student and the college because the student is more likely to succeed.

Often admissions officers are looking for the following:

- ✓ purposes, goals, priorities, values
- ✓ love of learning
- ✓ the quality and freshness of the applicant's mind
- ✓ maturity of thinking
- ✓ the ability to synthesize and connect
- ✓ the ability to get something out of an experience
- ✓ **the ability to write well: organization, analysis, interpretation, mastery of the conventions of standard written English**

You may wish to consider the points delineated by Fred Hargadon of Princeton University in his article **“Advice from a college admissions dean....”**

- Write for yourself, a favorite relative, or roommate rather than some imaginary admissions officer whom you've come to convince yourself holds your life in his or her hands.
- Consider simply telling a story. Storytelling comes more naturally to most of us, and also more accurately expresses our nature, than does essay writing.
- Read some good essays before writing your own.
- Be sure that your essay reflects you, and not some idealized version of yourself that you have come to imagine is precisely the kind of person an admissions officer will be most favorably disposed toward.
- Do not ask of your essay that it carry too heavy a load. Don't drop names, remind the reader that your parents are alumni of the college, or rationalize a low grade or a low test score or a lost election for yearbook editor.
- Resist the temptation to write the *all-purpose* essay, to which you then make small adjustments in order to use it for all of your college applications no matter how different the essay prompts they set before you. The colleges desire that their applications be treated individually by the applicants, just as applicants wish to be treated as individuals.
- Sift any advice you receive (including my own) and settle only on that which intuitively makes sense to you.

An admissions essay is a persuasive essay. The writing should be vivid and clear, and details must be specific and relevant. The essay should be tightly constructed: *less is more*. Check helpful resources such as websites [<http://www.essayedge.com/>]; <http://www.collegeboard.com/apply>], writing books [*The Only Grammar Book You'll Ever Need: A One-Stop Source for Every Writing Assignment* ISBN 1-58062-855-9], and information in this packet.

PREWRITING

Brainstorm ideas and write them down over a period of days or weeks. Review the brainstorming sheet, grouping connectable ideas, and move toward a focus (a single topic) and a preliminary thesis statement. Determine how to prove the thesis; eliminate unrelated ideas.

Your essay may come to mind in a particular order - often chronologically, which is perhaps the most useful. However, there are alternatives: reverse chronology; cause/effect; effect/cause; generalizations followed by examples or reasons; spatial relations; comparison/contrast. The *deductive* essay indicates the results or important idea first, and then guides the reader through the issues that led up to the results. The *inductive* essay reveals its intention only at the end, which can be suspenseful, creative, and effective. Determine an approach, create a simple outline, and order points appropriately.

DRAFTING

Even the shortest essay needs an **introduction**. It may be a road map for the reader which provides a sort of outline of the essay's content (deductive), or it may capture the reader's attention and begin to draw him into the topic slowly (inductive). A narrative may not require an introduction if the applicant trusts that the reader will pay attention to the story through to the meaningful conclusion.

To snag the reader's attention in the introduction:

- tell a brief anecdote that relates to or includes the thesis
- use interesting dialogue
- relate startling information
- write an all commentary introduction

In each case, the hook must relate to or lead to the point you want to make. Avoid a non sequitur.

Except for narratives, the **body** of the essay proves the validity of the thesis. Create a convincing essay by selecting details thoughtfully and sequencing them appropriately. Usually these paragraphs begin with a topic sentence that connects the paragraph to the thesis and contains facts, examples, and extensive specific support. Strengthen the essay's coherence by using transitional words, phrases, sentences, or repetition of words or of sentence patterns to help the reader move from one idea to another and to see connections.

Narratives require a conclusion that is more than simply the end of the story: clarify your motive for telling the story. The summary **conclusion** provides a restatement of the thesis, reference to key points, and a reaffirmation of the validity of the author's argument. To write a more creative conclusion which serves as a springboard for a new idea, refocus the reader, briefly summarize, and then judge, speculate, generalize, or recommend. This additional idea must have grown logically from what has been proven in the essay. Choose the type of conclusion that suits your topic.

EDITING

Proofread your essay carefully, reading it aloud. Solicit feedback from others. Does it reveal your personality? Does it note your special talents and interests that would probably not be reported elsewhere on the application form? Have you demonstrated what you will bring to the school community? Does the essay suggest your potential for success? Is the writing style simple and sincere or pretentious?

Admissions Requirements: Scores, rank, prerequisites, etc.

% of applicants accepted _____ **% of freshmen who graduate in 4 years** _____ %

Admissions Form: Where? When? How? What else is required? Recommendations?

Admissions Deadlines Early _____ Regular _____

Admissions Office Address

Campus Visits: Special Dates? Tours? Appointment with an admissions officer? Game plan?

“To Do” List for Senior Year

Admissions Requirements: Scores, rank, prerequisites, etc.

% of applicants accepted _____ **% of freshmen who graduate in 4 years** _____ %

Admissions Form: Where? When? How? What else is required? Recommendations?

Admissions Deadlines Early _____ Regular _____

Admissions Office Address

Campus Visits: Special Dates? Tours? Appointment with an admissions officer? Game plan?

“To Do” List for Senior Year

Book Record: AP Test Preparation Form*

In addition to whatever assignment you are given, complete a book record sheet for **every required major work** we read and each of the works you read independently. Keep these records in your writing portfolio for easy reference. This information will be especially valuable as you prepare for the AP Exam in May.

DIRECTIONS: Use one-inch margins, Times New Roman, 12 point font to complete the following on one page. Type your name in the upper right corner of the page. Your responses, with the exception of the first two, should be complete sentences. Number each section according to the model provided below:

- I. Identify the title of the work, author, and his/her nationality. Provide one interesting fact about the author.
- II. Identify the year of publication (the year first published, **not** the year your edition was printed).
- III. Identify the setting, both the place and the time. Comment on the setting's effect, if any, on the plot or characterization.
- IV. Give a brief synopsis of the plot. (Create four or five sentences on your own rather than copying them from another source. You will be better prepared to write a critical essay.)
- V. List the major characters, giving a brief physical description of each and describing their personalities and motivations.
- VI. List three or four of the major symbols and interpret each in a sentence.
- VII. Write an important quotation from the book, describing briefly *how* it is significant.
- VIII. Create a one-sentence theme statement for the novel. (You may choose to include more than one theme statement if you feel the work is complex enough to merit them.)
- IX. Classify the work according to the type of literature it is and, if possible, the literary 'school' to which it belongs (Classical, Romantic, etc.). List and explain at least three distinguishing characteristics of the style of work. (While you must engage your brain and determine how your book meets the criteria in order to subsequently write an effective essay, you may need to consult a reference to correctly identify common literary styles or movements.)