

KAP English
Mr. Rickert

KAP English is designed for those students who have both an **aptitude** and a **passion** for quality works of literature. Of the two, I believe the second is most important. Those who have a deep love of reading will grow quicker as readers, and be more engaged in the task of reading, than those who are excellent readers, yet choose not to pursue reading as a worthwhile activity.

OBJECTIVES

KAP English has two major purposes: first, to develop accurate, perceptive reading skills through a close study of major texts representing various genres from different literary periods and different cultural perspectives; second, to develop fluent, precise writing through essays, both in class and out of class, addressing the texts studied. I have grouped the texts based on various themes (see below) but no doubt other topics will be addresses as well. Although class will involve some lecturing, participation is essential to an effective class. Always keep in mind that there is no right answer in studying literature; rather, informed alternative theories are welcomed and encouraged as a healthy academic exercise.

Another challenge will be absorbing and remembering everything that we read and discuss in the class. As part of the class responsibilities (and to help prepare you for college) you will be asked to take notes on class discussions and lectures. This is not merely busywork. You will want to go into the test with a good working knowledge of two or three works; reading over your notes will be much easier than re-reading them. Also, the notes you take in the notebook will be excellent preparation for the exam.

It is also important to understand that I am very intolerant of laziness. That fact that you signed up for this course means that you feel that you are capable of the work, but sadly there are lots of temptations out there, especially on the Internet, designed to make your life easier. I do not overload you with work with the understanding that you will actually read the material and the expectation that you will work as hard as I will to prepare for class.. You cannot get a feel for Shakespeare just by reading a translation. You will be wasting your time by seeking the easy way out.

Class Rules

Always be prepared with necessary materials for class. You will not be allowed to go to your locker to get them.

Assignment are due when they are due and at the beginning of the period, no late work of any kind will be accepted, including major papers.

Plagiarism is defined as "the act of stealing ideas, and/or the expressive skills of another, representing them as your own" (The Ohio State University). A failing grade will be assigned to plagiarized work.

Cliff Notes and other related study guides are not allowed in the class.

Also, *Shakespeare Made Easy* is not allowed in the class either. You may use it at home if you have problems understanding the text, but are NOT to be used as the sole purpose for reading.

Finally, in most cases I will not require that assignments be typed (after all, you can't use a computer to take the KAP Test), but many of you will elect to use a computer to complete homework. All final papers must be typed. Here is my policy for computer work:

I will not accept computer or printer problems as a reason for handing in work late. In addition, students may not hand in work via email or disk and may not print off papers during class. It is the student's responsibility to use technology to complete work in a timely fashion and anticipate problems before they occur. If typing is a requirement for the assignment, the student will lose a letter grade for every school day that the paper is late. If typing is not a requirement, students are expected to write it by hand.

The class will be divided into the following units of study, roughly one unit per nine weeks.

The Tragic Hero

All the Pretty Horses - Cormac

McCarthy

Othello - William Shakespeare*

Family Matters

The Glass Menagerie - Tennessee

Williams*

King Lear - William Shakespeare

British Invasion

Jane Eyre - Charlotte Brontë

Oliver Twist - Charles Dickens

Who Am I?

Catcher In the Rye - J.D. Salinger

Invisible Man - Ralph Ellison

Social Issues

The Handmaid's Tale - Margaret

Atwood

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest - Ken

Kesey

Items marked with an * are in Perrine's, the textbook for the class. I can order copies in for you at a local bookstore, but in most cases you can find them at inexpensive prices online. You may also get copies from the library, but you may want to have your own copy to annotate.

Your grade for the class will be determined by the following:

- 30% writing assignments
- 30% tests and quizzes
- 40% homework

Good luck,

Mr. Rickert

A Range Paper

- Sophisticated sentence structure/sentence type varied
- Sophisticated paragraphing
- Impressive vocabulary
- Good organization with clearly defined thesis
- Topic explored in depth
- All original ideas
- Sophisticated voice
- Appropriate and knowledgeable use of quotes or other supporting details
- In depth analysis
- Only one or two grammatical errors

B Range Paper

- Good, but not complicated sentence structure
- Appropriate supporting detail
- Competent paragraphing
- Good word choice
- Reasonable organization and clear thesis
- Some repetition of ideas stated in class
- Good analysis
- No serious grammatical errors

C Range Paper

- Some supporting detail
- Some plot summary
- Repetition of ideas stated in class
- Some problems with organization
- Simple or repetitive sentence structure and/or vocabulary
- Weak thesis
- Some analysis
- No very serious grammatical errors

D Range Paper

- Awkward sentence structure
- Unsupported generalizations
- No originality
- Plot summary
- Lacks organization
- No thesis
- No analysis
- Poor word choice, slang, clichés
- Some very serious grammatical errors

F Range Paper

- Does not address assigned topic
- Writing is substandard in expression
- Incomplete

Ranking Grammar Mistakes

Very Serious

- sentence fragments
- run-on sentences
- capitalization problems
- lack of subject verb agreement
- tense switching
- punctuation problems (minus commas)
- spelling errors

Serious

- awkward sentence structure
- lack of parallel structure
- problems with modifiers
- improper pronoun reference
- poor word choice
- improper comma usage