



Gunderson High School

Gunderson High School is a technological, collaborative, college-preparatory community that achieves academic excellence, respects individuality and celebrates diversity.

Advanced Design Technology Magnet in the Arts and Sciences

May 26, 2009

Dear AP Student,

Welcome to Advanced Placement English! I am looking forward to next year when you will be enrolled in AP English Literature and Composition. This is an unique class designed for students who desire a college level English experience in their senior year and who would like to receive college credit for the experience. Our AP course will be both intellectually rigorous and stimulating. In this course, expect to read over 3900 pages in novels and plays and complete over 40 essays including out of class work and long and short timed writings.

I will be spending my summer preparing materials for our class. We will be reading quite a variety of novels, plays, poetry, nonfiction and criticism. The course will be organized around themes commonly found in exemplary literature. The literature selected for the course will be challenging and intriguing.

I am frequently asked what I expect of Advance Placement students. Let me share with you my expectations, which are identical with those of the College Board which are responsible for the Advance Placement testing program. My ideal Advance PLacement student will show the following characteristics:

- the ability to read accurately
- the ability to engage in intelligent discussion, involving active listening and constructive speaking
- the desire to learn more than the obvious or superficial
- the sense of personal and social responsibility sufficient to keep up with the individual workload and to contribute meaningfully to group efforts
- the willingness to accept criticism from both his/her teacher and peers
- the patience to accept a variety of answers or unresolved questions as starting points for further thinking and exploring of ideas in works of literature.
- either a good basic command of language or the willingness to work hard to catch up with students who possess such a skill

Simply put, Advanced Placement students should enjoy reading excellent literature, exploring the ideas presented in this literature, and writing about these ideas. If you do not like to read and discuss with interest what you have read, AP Lit and Comp may not be a good class choice for you. Advanced Placement English Lit and Comp is a course that requires summer work. Before we get to specifics, let me explain why AP Lit and Comp students will do summer work. In registering for this course, you make a commitment to a more rigorous curriculum than that taken by most high school seniors. Intellectual engagement is a lifetime activity and does not start or stop according to a school year calendar. To meet the requirements of our course, we need to begin with literature from the very first day of class.

Your summer work will help me to get acquainted with you before class begins and will help to keep you focused on the study of literature though the summer break. With some AP classes, all summer work is due on the first day of class. Human nature being what it is, students often attempt to complete all of the assignments in the final moments of the summer break with varying degrees of success. Students who will be the most successful in the course and on the exam next May complete the summer work with diligence and interest. To encourage this approach to the summer work, I have several due dates by which specific assignments must be submitted. Students who do not meet the deadlines for submitting summer assignments will start the year off with an "F".

These assignments should be mailed to me at **1392 Annapolis Way, San Jose, CA 95118**, emailed to me at **melissaquinn15@hotmail.com**, or dropped off at **Gunderson** and put in my mailbox (I will be here all summer). If you intend to email assignments, do not copy and paste it into the email, please send it as an attachment (**.doc or .cwk or pdf**).

There are several sheets attached describing your summer work and I am providing you with a copy of the tentative reading list for the school year in case you want to get a head start on the work for the school year.

If you need to reach me during the summer, you can phone me at **(408)209-4886**. I'm also available via email at **melissaquinn15@hotmail.com**.

I am eager to begin our work together. I believe that you will find Advanced Placement challenging and satisfying.

Sincerely,

Melissa Quinn