

Advanced Placement Literature and Composition
Susan Derrera

AP Lit is a 12th grade literature class covering material similar to what you would encounter in a college literature class. Generally, students have taken AP Language their junior year as this class builds on the skills and materials that were covered junior year; however, if you have had success in other English classes, are highly motivated, and have a good work ethic, you are welcome to take the class.

While AP Language focuses on non-fiction and the different modes of writing (narration, description, cause/effect, and so forth), AP Lit focuses on the analysis of novels, plays, and poetry. In fact, since most literature before the 20th century was written in verse, fifty percent of the class (and AP test) covers poetry. Luckily, your teacher loves poetry, writes it herself, and is passionate about passing on what she knows to others.

In addition to poetry, readings for the class include epics (Homer's *Iliad* or *Odyssey*; Dante's *Inferno*), plays (Greek—*Oedipus*; Shakespearean—*Hamlet*; contemporary—*Wit*), and a number of different novels spanning time and place, from 18th century England to contemporary America.

Some grounding in the Bible and in Greek/Roman mythology is helpful for the course as so much literature includes classical allusions. In addition to a novel, I assign some reading in these subjects over the summer. During the school year, you should expect to spend about four to five hours a week on homework consisting mainly of reading, various writing assignments, and creative projects. While the course is rigorous and challenging, it is also a lot of fun.