

# AP English Literature

## About the Course

Students in AP Literature engage in authentic criticism of college-level texts, developing complex readings of major and lesser-known works of literature from around the world. The principal aim of AP Literature is to foster students' love of literature and their understanding of literature's relevance to the human experience—and perhaps to their own experience of the world as well.

The course is organized essentially chronologically, following the evolution of major ideas in literature and in society.

AP Literature has two aspects: a seminar element, in which students engage in scholarly, collaborative exploration of literature through intensive study, close reading and guided discussion, and a writers' workshop, in which they develop their skills in composition and written analysis.

## Meeting the Needs of Our Students

The course is designed to provide the experience of academic discourse at a university level, within a supportive environment. Students write extensively during class time so that they may readily share ideas and strategies, inspire and challenge one another, and receive peer and teacher feedback at every stage of the writing process. AP students come to recognize effective writing as a process, and are encouraged to revisit and re-evaluate their written work as a matter of routine and to rewrite assignments where they feel it is appropriate.

## Focus on Skills and Understandings

The writers' workshop encompasses such informal assignments as Journal entries, reflections and reader-response papers as well as original creative works, but emphasizes the skills and scholarly approaches of the standard undergraduate essay. Through sustained practice and regular feedback students develop their skills in establishing a logical argument, using appropriate vocabulary, diction and voice, establishing effective, sustained tone and logical and stylistic coherence.

The course's seminar aspect fosters students' intellectual confidence alongside their skills in discussion, presentation and—very important to students at this level—constructive collaboration.

## Topics for the Course

AP Literature encompasses major works of world literature in fiction, drama and poetry from the 13<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, and includes study of contemporary experimental forms and genres.

Students in the course consider literature in its social, artistic, political and historical contexts, and read popular and scholarly reviews, informal essays and commentary as well as scholarly criticism. Students explore and practice a variety of critical perspectives on literature as we evaluate the worth of these works, their continuing relevance, and their complex inter-relationships.

Major works for the course vary somewhat from year to year, to accommodate student interest and needs; typical texts include *Hamlet*, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, EM Forster's *A Room With A View*, Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, Ngugi wa Thiong'o *The River Between*, Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* and Wole Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*.

### Assessment

Student progress is evaluated through frequent written assignments both formal and informal, extended essays, class discussion and seminars. Students write a cumulative exam each semester. The course prepares students to write the AP Literature and Composition, if they so desire; two complete AP practice exams will be held in April for students intending to write the AP exam in May.

Each of TASOK's AP-designated courses has had its syllabus audited and approved formally by the College Board. The complete syllabus for TASOK's AP Literature and Composition course is provided to all students enrolled in the course, and is available upon request.

The text for the class is *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 2008 ed.

# AP Calculus AB

## About the Course

AP Calculus introduces students to the fundamental concepts of differential and integral calculus through verbal, numerical, graphical and algebraic representations. Students learn to communicate their understandings and practice translating among these different representations. Calculus-based mathematical models will be applied in a variety of disciplines including business, science, social sciences and engineering.

The course begins with a review of the elements of previous math courses that underpin the concepts and methods of calculus, followed by the extension of these elements to include the concept of limits. Students are then introduced to differential calculus which forms the basis for much of their understanding of integral calculus – which is more complex conceptually.

## Meeting the Needs of Our Students

Students in Calculus exercise and extend the mathematical, logical, verbal and visual problem-solving capabilities developed in previous courses – both mathematics and others – and use these skills to create mathematical models relevant to the real world.

This process aims to satisfy student curiosity about the world around them and to afford them a more profound understanding not only of the mathematical world-view but also of other disciplines as seen through the filter of mathematical models. Students are encouraged to support each other through the learning process in collaborative groupings.

## Focus on Skills and Understandings

Students in AP Calculus develop the technical skills to be able to calculate limits, assess continuity conditions, take derivatives and integrals of a broad variety of algebraic and transcendental functions and to communicate their understanding of these skills verbally, graphically, numerically, algebraically and through the use of calculus-based mathematical models relevant to real-world problems.

Furthermore, students enhance their skills as logical thinkers and good communicators.

## Topics for the Course

During the review phase students re-cap and extend their understandings from previous algebra, trigonometry and geometry courses. Limits and continuity are then be introduced as the unifying principle through differential and integral calculus. The study of differential calculus sees students

investigate the fundamental theorems and meanings of differential calculus as well as looking at the techniques for taking derivatives, graphing functions and solving optimization problems – among other applications. The study of integral calculus likewise sees students investigate the fundamental theorem of calculus, the meaning and techniques of integration, and applications of integration to solve problems in geometry, physics, engineering and in other real-world situations.

The course ends with the study of differential equations.

### Assessment

Student progress in AP Calculus is monitored through daily problem-solving assignments done in collaboration or independently, as well as through quizzes and unit tests. A cumulative exam is given each semester.

The course will prepare the students well to write the AP Calculus AB Exam in May 2011 if they so desire.

Each of TASOK's AP-designated courses has had its syllabus audited and approved formally by the College Board. The complete syllabus for TASOK's AP Calculus AB course is provided to all students enrolled in the course, and is available upon request.

The text for the class is Finney, Demana, Waits and Kennedy, *Calculus: Graphical, Numerical and Algebraic*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.

# AP Chemistry

## About the Course

AP Chemistry hones students' understandings of the materialist view of the world of matter and energy founded upon the modern atomic model. Students will become familiar with the theoretical underpinnings of chemistry afforded by physics and investigate applications of their chemical understandings in biology, astronomy, medicine and industry.

The course begins with a discussion of the purview and methodologies of chemistry. Each unit begins with a re-cap of the relevant ideas studied in previous physical science courses and then adds more sophisticated concepts and methods of analysis.

The course proceeds from general and simple applications of the atomic model toward more specific and complex ones. Experimental work provides the students with hands on evidence for the theories being discussed in class.

## Meeting the Needs of Our Students

Students who study AP Chemistry are curious about the material world as seen through the lens of scientific inquiry. This course aims to satisfy this curiosity by allowing students to apply their mathematical, logical, verbal and visual problem-solving capabilities to understand, explain and predict real world phenomena.

Students are encouraged to support each other through the learning process in collaborative groupings both during class and group discussions, problem-solving and especially during laboratory work.

The course prepares students to write the AP Chemistry Exam in May, if they so desire.

## Focus on Skills and Understandings

Students in AP Chemistry will be able to apply their understandings of the behavior of matter to predict and explain chemical phenomena as evidenced by solving word and real life problems, designing, carrying out and analyzing experiments and by analyzing the proposals of others for strengths and weaknesses.

## Topics for the Course

The course studies the theoretical, methodological and epistemological underpinnings of modern chemistry, beginning with the nature of the scientific method and the measurement process itself. The modern model of atomic structure is studied and forms the basis by which other models of matter and its interactions are understood. The latter include: matter in its liquid, solid and gaseous phases, the behavior

and chemistry of solutions, periodicity in the table of elements, bonding, chemical kinetics and equilibrium, thermochemistry, acids and bases, electrochemistry and finally, nuclear and organic chemistry.

### Assessment

Student progress is monitored through daily problem-solving assignments done in collaboration or independently, as well as through quizzes, unit tests and weekly laboratory investigations. A cumulative exam is given each semester. Two complete AP practice exams of three hours duration will be given in April to students electing to write the AP Exam in May.

Each of TASOK's AP-designated courses has had its syllabus audited and approved formally by the College Board. The complete syllabus for TASOK's AP Chemistry course is provided to all students enrolled in the course, and is available upon request.

The text for the class is Zumdahl and Zumdahl, *Chemistry*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed.

# AP Physics

## About the Course

AP Physics introduces students to the materialist view of the world of matter and energy as conceived by classical physics. The course looks at the successes of this view in explaining and predicting natural phenomena and how these concepts can be applied in other sciences, medicine, engineering and industry.

The course begins with a discussion of the purview and methodologies of physics and proceeds to the theories of classical Newtonian mechanics. The latter part of the course focuses on electricity and magnetism followed by a look at the theoretical advances of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Experimental work provides the students with hands on evidence for the theories being discussed in class.

## Meeting the Needs of Our Students

Students who choose to study AP Physics are curious about the physical world as seen through the lens of scientific inquiry. This course aims to satisfy this curiosity by allowing students to apply their mathematical, logical, verbal and visual problem-solving capabilities to understand, explain and predict real world phenomena. Students are encouraged to support each other through the learning process in collaborative groupings both during class and group discussions, problem-solving and especially during laboratory work.

The course prepares students to write the AP Physics exam in May 2011 if they so desire.

## Focus on Skills and Understandings

Students in AP Physics will be able to apply their understandings to predict and explain physical phenomena as evidenced by solving word and real life problems, designing, carrying out and analyzing experiments and by analyzing the proposals of others for strengths and weaknesses.

## Topics for the Course

The course studies the theoretical, methodological and epistemological underpinnings of modern physics, beginning with the nature of the scientific method and the measurement process itself. Students are then introduced to the mathematics of vectors. Units related to Newtonian mechanics begin with the study of kinematics and dynamics, and the ideas of Newton's Laws are then re-formulated in the form of impulse-momentum and work-energy. The study of circular motion and universal gravitation allow students to fully grasp final success of the Copernican Revolution.

In addition to the above topics in classical mechanics students also investigate wave phenomena (including, sound and light), simple harmonic motion and laws governing fluids. In the study of electricity and magnetism, students look at electric and magnetic forces and fields, direct current electric circuits and, finally, Faraday's Law. The units on modern physics introduce the students to the concepts of and observational evidence for special relativity and quantum mechanics.

### Assessment

Student progress is monitored through daily problem-solving assignments done in collaboration or independently, as well as through quizzes, unit tests and weekly laboratory investigations. A cumulative exam is given each semester. Two complete AP practice exams of three hours duration will be given in April to students electing to write the AP Exam in May.

Each of TASOK's AP-designated courses has had its syllabus audited and approved formally by the College Board. The complete syllabus for TASOK's AP Physics course is provided to all students enrolled in the course, and is available upon request.

The text for the class is Cutnell and Johnson, *Physics*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed.

# AP US History

## About the Course

The United States of America is the most recent incarnation of the world's leading power in a long line reaching back to and through the likes of Pharaoh's Egypt, Rome, The Middle Kingdom, and the Aztec and British Empires. It behooves citizens and others of the world to study what molded the current power, and consider what makes it tick. Students in US History examine the US against the backdrop of history and consider how it fits into history and the current global environment, and whether it has—or can—live up to its promise.

The course unfolds the story of the US in broad chronological terms from its pre-Columbian roots in North America and Europe through the sweep of continental and global events to the nation's emergence as a super power in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Students investigate this story through the framework of several interwoven themes such as identity, diversity, environment, economics, politics, and globalization.

## Meeting the Needs of Our Students

Students in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade are beginning to grasp the bigger picture of the world and how individuals and countries fit into the scheme of things, and exploring what it means to be a citizen of a country and of the world. US history provides a case study of one important country in today's world, in which to consider those roles. For American students the course provides an opportunity to understand their roots and responsibilities as citizens of a powerful country—to that country and to the world. For students of other countries, the course provides an opportunity to understand better a country that will undoubtedly have an impact on them as individuals and as citizens of their countries.

Students in AP US History participate in TASOK's History Day Fair, held every other year.

## Focus on Skills and Understandings

Students in the course develop the capacity to read critically to understand, interpret and evaluate numerous primary and secondary from sources from multiple perspectives. They will work on the skills of a historian such as recognizing and assessing the importance of events, the cause and effects of those events, and using themes and trends to describe and explain change/continuity over time.

## Topics for the Course

The main topical focus of the course will be on the formation and principle foundations of the Union, slavery, westward expansion and indigenous people, civil war, industrialization, calamities and achievements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and America's role in the world.

## Assessment

Students in AP US History are assessed in variety of authentic tasks which evaluate their mastery of the skills of the course.

The course, and the AP exam for which it is preparing students, require a considerable fund of factual knowledge of people places and events. To monitor progress on this process the quality of Cornell notes of the text and note cards on significant items are assessed regularly. Students also write periodic multiple choice tests mirroring the AP exam.

Students are also assessed through a range of authentic performance tasks requiring them to apply the skills and understandings of the course as historians; they perform analyses and write document-based essays, and develop and share their growing understandings though frequent class discussion.

Students develop a research and writing or presentation project each semester.

Each of TASOK's AP-designated courses has had its syllabus audited and approved formally by the College Board. The complete syllabus for TASOK's AP US History course is provided to all students enrolled in the course, and is available upon request.

The course texts are Kennedy, Cohen, and Bailey *The American Pageant*, 12<sup>th</sup> ed., 2002; and Epstein, *Preparing for the AP US History Exam*, 2006.

# AP Macroeconomics

## About the Course

The primary goal of this class is for students to learn to think—and more particularly, to think like economists. AP Macroeconomics is designed to provide students with a thorough understanding of the principles of economics that apply to the economic system as a whole.

Macroeconomics emphasizes the study of national income, economic performance measures, economic growth, and international economics. Thinking like an economist allows students to question and evaluate marginal costs and benefits, and to explore the many ways in which one action causes secondary actions. In this way the course aims to give students an introductory college level experience, prepare them for the Advanced Placement exam in macroeconomics, and help them discover how much they already know about the reality of economic life.

The economy is made up of all the activity that people are involved in, so our study draws upon and takes into account many academic disciplines, to explain and describe the factors and phenomena that economics models.

The course begins by laying a foundation of basic economic principles from scarcity, opportunity, advantage, specialization, supply and demand to market equilibrium, business cycles, unemployment and inflation. We then go on to look at the big questions involving measuring economic performance, national income and price determination, the financial system, stabilization policies, growth and productivity and finally, international trade.

## Meeting the Needs of Our Students

AP Macroeconomics challenges students with a new and rigorous way of thinking about and explaining the real world around them—which they are about to enter. The course offers a rigorous but supported learning environment for high school students wanting a taste of college-level material, allowing them to test the waters of academia before they plunge in.

## Focus on Skills and Understandings

Students in AP Economics gain understandings of the very real but abstract concepts that rule economic life. They develop the skills necessary to analyze and articulate the application of those concepts, and represent their analysis visually through extensive graphing of a variety of dynamic economic circumstances.

## Assessment

Group and individual practice, practice, practice in applying their knowledge and understanding of the principles and concepts economics is the mainstay of the formative assessment of the course. More formal periodic assessments that mirror the AP exam are given frequently, to monitor progress and readiness to proceed, as well as familiarize students with the unique AP format.

Students in Macroeconomics prepare one research project per semester.

Each of TASOK's AP-designated courses has had its syllabus audited and approved formally by the College Board. The complete syllabus for TASOK's AP Macroeconomics course is provided to all students enrolled in the course, and is available upon request.

Texts for the course include Bade and Parkin, *Foundations of Economics, AP edition*, 2007, and *Advanced Placement Macroeconomics: Student Activities*, Council for Economic Education, 2009.

# AP French Language

## About the Course

AP French Language is TASOK's terminal French course. The focus of the course is to provide students with a balance between an increasingly sophisticated awareness of grammatical structures and an active use of the language in the classroom, in the Kinshasa community, and elsewhere in the francophone world.

Students in the course increase their cultural knowledge and experience of the francophone world through reading, film, music, art and the exchange of ideas through conversation.

AP French Language is founded in close study of the writing of major writers from around the francophone world. Students in the course read important works of prose, poetry, drama and essays, learning sophisticated and complex elements of grammar, vocabulary, syntax and style, in context.

The course prepares students to write the AP Language exam in May.

## Meeting the Needs of Our Students

As young people living in a francophone country, TASOK students are often ready for college-level study of French at a relatively early age. Students recognize the value of being able to understand and communicate sophisticated ideas effectively in this, their host/home country.

The course exposes students to some of the great francophone writers and thinkers, while encouraging spontaneity and creativity in their own use of oral and written French. In AP French students have frequent opportunity to engage in spontaneous conversation, discussing important ideas, current events, and the issues affecting their daily lives.

## Focus on Skills and Understandings

Students produce both short and extended written compositions. Listening comprehension is an important element of the course, as is proficiency in speaking. Students improve their aural comprehension through *dictée* and through listening exercises, practice the art of translation (especially of idiomatic language), and compose original creative works.

## Topics for the Course

The course addresses a wide range of ideas ranging from discussions of colonialism, education, marriage, racism, family, parents and children, religion and culture, and many more. Each discussion provides the occasion for a focus study illustrating particular elements of grammar, syntax and style.

## Assessment

Assessment for the course includes *dictées*, comprehension tests, grammar exercises, translations and short and long written compositions.

Throughout the year, students write AP-style practice tests, and beginning in April we have a special focus on strategies for success on the exam itself. Students are encouraged, but not required, to write the College Board's AP French Language exam in May. Students also write semester exams in December and June.

Each of TASOK's AP-designated courses has had its syllabus audited and approved formally by the College Board. The complete syllabus for TASOK's AP Physics course is provided to all students enrolled in the course, and is available upon request.

The primary text for the course is *En Bonne Forme*, Dietiker and van Hooff, 7th ed., 2001.

# AP Psychology

## About the Course

Students' main focus in AP Psychology is to understand the brain, mental processes, and human behavior, through a variety of perspectives both formal and personal. By the end of the course students are able to explain common normal and abnormal behaviors using the vocabulary and analytical frameworks of the science of psychology.

Students prepare for, and are encouraged to write, the AP Psychology exam in May of each year.

The course introduces students to the scientific and historical foundations of psychology, following which students explore important topics in the field.

## Meeting the Needs of Our Students

As students at this level are fascinated by their own minds and behavior, a course in psychology is particularly relevant to high school students. The course is characterized by lively and interactive class discussions, and provides frequent opportunities for students to come to understand and to take into account one another's perspectives, experience and analyses.

## Topics for the Course

The course begins with an introduction to the fundamentals of Psychology. We explore the evolution of the science, and discuss the seven principal approaches to understanding human behavior and mental processes in their historical contexts. Students will also learn the basics of research methods within the discipline.

Following our work in the foundations of psychology, we explore specific topics within the discipline, including social psychology, the biological bases of behavior, sensation and perception, consciousness, intelligence, learning and memory, thinking, language and cognitive development, motivation and emotion, personality, and abnormal psychology and therapy.

## Focus on Skills and Understandings

Students in AP Psychology look critically at research and research methods, differentiate between correlation and causation, look analytically at human behavior and provide analyses based on psychological explanations.

Students also explore the practical implications of our understandings in psychology: we learn strategies for improving memory and motivation, and discuss the role of society and culture in shaping our own behavior. By the end of the course, students should be able to look critically at and evaluate diagnoses of abnormal behavior.

### Assessment

Assessment for the course is largely performance based. Students perform the analytical and practical tasks of psychologists through case studies, simulations and research projects. Students also write quizzes and tests. As the year progresses we will engage in more frequent AP-style practice questions; in April students will write a full-length formal practice exam.

Each of TASOK's AP-designated courses has had its syllabus audited and approved formally by the College Board. The complete syllabus for TASOK's AP Psychology course is provided to all students enrolled in the course, and is available upon request.

The text for the class is Myers, Psychology 9<sup>th</sup> edition.

# AP Studio Art

## About the Course

The goal of this course is for students passionate about creating art to refine and develop further their artistic skills and sensibilities. This course provides a challenging and stimulating college- level artistic studio environment.

A major focus of AP Art is to help each student articulate her or his artistic voice. The AP portfolio, which forms the major production focus for the year, is an exploration of this voice.

The course is organized into two semesters. The first semester, Breadth, focuses upon exploration of different media and varied subject matter; the second semester, Concentration, focuses on a student's chosen theme.

## Meeting the Needs of Our Students

This course addresses students' fundamental need to define and understand themselves through creative and artistic development. Students experience the authentic work of an artist, assuming significant responsibility for conceiving, producing and evaluating their own work. This independence and of empowerment encourages students to experiment artistically and define their individual artistic voices

## Focus on Skills and Understandings

Students develop the complex set of skills associated with the production of art work.

However, students at this level are also acquiring personal and professional skills and understandings required by the practicing artist: they learn to resolve issues in conception and motivation, to examine themselves and their work fearlessly, and to be open to the challenging and personal experience of art.

## Topics for the Course

The first semester explores elements of art, such as line, color, tone, movement, shape and texture. Topics in the second semester reflect the needs and priorities of the students themselves, and vary from year to year.

## Assessment

AP Art is a performance-based course, and assessment is likewise performance-based. Students are assessed by their effort in completing assigned projects, and the level of their improvement throughout the year.

Students' portfolios are assessed by the College Board.

Each of TASOK's AP-designated courses has had its syllabus audited and approved formally by the College Board. The complete syllabus for TASOK's AP Studio Art course is provided to all students enrolled in the course, and is available upon request.