

AP English: Literature and Composition Handbook

Code: E681 Full Year (12) (1 credit) (rank weight 1.06) (1.04 Honors)

Prerequisite: English 11 (AP recommended)

Instructor: Mr. Robert J. Fletcher

Email: robert.fletcher@wcsdny.org **Phone:** 845.897.6700 x30179

Contents

Course Expectations & Goals	2
Key Skills	5
List of Literature	6
Types of Essays	7
Grading Procedures	8
Syllabus & Sample Calendar	10
Appendix 1: DIDLS & Tone Vocabulary	12
Appendix 2: TPCASTT Poetry Analysis	15
Appendix 3: ..."The Meaning of the Work as a Whole."	16
Appendix 4: Sample Essay & Précis	17

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

AP English is a college level English course. Our focus is on close, critical reading of poetry, drama, prose fiction, and expository literature from the sixteenth century to the present, written in English. Critical discussion and writing about these works will center on each writer's technique, theme, style, and tone. The overarching goal of AP English is to help students develop mature habits of critical thinking as independent readers of and writers about literature.

READING, READING, AND MORE READING

The single most important activity you will engage in during the year to maintain success in the AP Literature classroom is reading – a lot. As the “literature” of the course title suggests, you will be reading more in this class than you ever have before. Staying on top of that reading and maintaining a regular reading schedule is going to be important. The reward for doing so will be more invigorating class discussion, a broader body of knowledge, expanded cultural literacy, and, of course, higher grades. Poetry is also a *major* component of your reading, a good portion of which we will be doing in class.

AP & FINAL EXAMS

Students will take the 2014 AP English Literature exam on Thursday, May 8 at 8:00 am. The district provides transportation from the school to the testing site. It is important to know that any student who does not elect to take the AP exam will not receive credit on their transcript for taking AP English Literature; the course name will be changed to an honors class. More information will be provided later in the year. The final exam for the course will follow the AP exam and counts as one-fifth of the student’s final grade for the year.

ESSAYS, PROJECTS, AND SPECIAL UNITS

As this is, of course, and English class, essays will compose a major portion of your grade. All essays will follow standard MLA format (even if the essay only concerns one book) for citations and formatting. Furthermore, all essays will be submitted to Turnitin.com digitally. Projects, especially group and oral, will be assigned regularly for both poetry and prose analysis, and will be a regular class activity. Group oral projects are staples of college classrooms, and students will be well versed in them by the end of the year.

PLAGIARISM

It goes without saying that plagiarism will not be tolerated in the AP classroom, or anywhere else. As seniors, it is important to remember that colleges have withdrawn acceptances for students who are found guilty of academic dishonesty. Students who plagiarize any assignment will earn zero points, a disciplinary referral, and a conference with his/her parents. Further, the ELA Coordinator will be notified, and the student may be dropped from the course.

EXPECTATIONS OF ENTERING STUDENTS

All students, regardless of their previous experience in English, are expected to be on the road to mastering the following skills upon entering AP English Literature:

- Constructing independent thesis statements
- Correctly and consistently applying MLA format
- Engaging in dynamic research techniques
- Performing literary analysis
- Integrating quotations and using proper paraphrasing technique
- Writing purposeful topic sentences
- Integrating literary terms into analysis with subtlety, purpose, and sophistication
- Balancing multiple assignments and reading assignments at the same time
- Managing long-term assignments with foresight
- Writing with tight, purposeful syntax and sophisticated, clear diction

FOR STUDENTS COMING FROM ENGLISH 11 AP LANGUAGE

The important thing to remember is that although you have made great progress in developing your writing skills and voice, the subject of this course is very different from last year's. This year's exam is entirely devoted to fiction, and it largely leaves behind rhetorical strategy and purpose. Instead, we focus on close reading of fiction as it applies to deeper layers of meaning within a text, which may or may not reflect an author's intent. Be forewarned about the following potential changes in class execution and essay structure:

- Essays will lengthen, as will introductions, body paragraphs, and direct quotations.
- You will write fewer essays per marking period, but you will have more independence in writing them, less guidance in coming up with topics for discussion, and higher expectations of sophistication in developing them.
- I expect you to start moving away from writing about literary terms/devices as things authors "use." Instead, think of them as part of the larger vocabulary that New Critics (one school of literary criticism we will explore) use to analyze a text to find deeper meaning as it relates to the inherent structure of a work.
- Discussions are going to be mostly student-driven. That is, my role will often be as moderator and guide in a discussion of a text. At all times you should feel as though you are as much of a part of the discussion as I am.
- Ideas and themes will become more adult, and as a result will require a mature perspective and attitude to engage them.
- Poetry! Lots of poetry!

FOR STUDENTS COMING FROM ENGLISH 11 REGENTS

The shift in workload to AP English may be abrupt for you, but it is certainly manageable with the right mindset and dedication. There will be little time to gear up for this shift, so you should be ready for the new environment on day one. Approach the summer reading assignment with a new perspective: this work is not designed to punish you; instead, it's an opportunity to hone your skills, keep your mind fresh, and get you ready for what will be an intense, but rewarding, nine months of work. Also, consider that you will be expected to be ready for the following:

- to be prepared for class without expectation of an immediate grade for doing so. Instead, your daily preparation (reading, note-taking, etc.) is the bare minimum of your responsibility to the course.
- to engage in active and thoughtful classroom discussions on a near-daily basis.
- to read between 11 and 14 pieces of literature during the course of the year, most of which on your own.
- to write essays without prompts, usually between 3 and 6 pages in length, generally around twice per marking period.
- to seek help during your free time to hone or develop necessary skills.
- to write sophisticated, college-worthy, in-class essays on a time limit.
- to analyze poetry as a work of literature.
- to work in groups and to give multiple presentations.
- to memorize and perform Shakespeare.

KEY SKILLS

There are a number of skills students will gain throughout the year, but in order to gain any of them, all students must commit wholly to the work required of them during the course of the year. College applications will dominate much of your thoughts during the first semester, and rightfully so, but we are still preparing for an exam and for future college-level work. In that vein, all students throughout the year will work on the following important skills:

- Gaining experience in reading sophisticated works of literature
- Learning analytical techniques which apply to the study of any poem or work of literature
- Understanding literary works within historical, philosophical, and religious contexts
- Learning to compare and contrast literary works in terms of content and style
- Refining writing skills by writing sustained, well-organized, and well-documented papers investigating a specific thesis
- Refining writing skills by writing numerous analytical and personal essays
- Refining communication skills by participating in and conducting intellectual discussions in seminar situations
- Refining grammatical and rhetorical skills through direct instruction and reinforcement, peer review, and student revision
- Gaining experience in independent, critical thinking and individual research
- Actively engaging in sophisticated discussions of literature, poetry, and philosophy
- Cooperating on long-term projects and presentations
- Developing a mature writing voice and awareness of audience and purpose
- Understanding and applying close reading techniques of poetry and prose

LIST OF LITERATURE

Throughout the school year, choices will be made from the following list to be read while or in part, time permitting. Students will be informed ahead of time what and when they will be reading, and are expected to plan their time accordingly. While I will not assign any specific note-taking assignments (generally speaking—unless I get the sense that people aren't doing their reading!), I am expecting students to do this on their own to aid in class discussions, to help prepare for tests, and to gather and organize information for a potential essay. Students should also expect pop reading quizzes at any time, for any text.

- *1984*, George Orwell
- *Antigone*, Sophocles
- *The Blind Assassin*, Margaret Atwood
- *Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley
- *Death of a Salesman*, Arthur Miller
- *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley
- *From Socrates to Sartre: The Philosophic Quest*, T.Z. Lavine
- *Gulliver's Travels*, Jonathan Swift
- *Hamlet*, Shakespeare
- *Heart of Darkness*, Joseph Conrad
- *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*, Thomas Foster
- *Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison
- *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Bronte
- *King Lear*, Shakespeare
- *Lord of the Flies*, William Golding
- *Moby Dick*, Herman Melville
- *Notes from Underground*, Fyodor Dostoevsky
- *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen
- *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, Tom Stoppard
- *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Kurt Vonnegut
- *The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien
- *Waiting for Godot*, Samuel Beckett
- *Sound and Sense*
- *The Stranger*, Albert Camus

TYPES OF ESSAYS

There are three primary essay types that you will write during the year: the AP-style essay, the Book Test essay, and the Expository essay with research. Each type requires the application of a different set of skills, which students must always consider when organizing and planning each essay. Because the last type is generally written outside of class, students are provided a longer timeframe in which to write it. These essays are also held to a higher standard of scrutiny for things like meaning, development, organization, and writing conventions.

AP-STYLE ESSAY

For the AP exam in May, you will be asked to write three essays in two hours: one on a poem or pair of poems, one on a prose excerpt, and one on a novel we read in class. On average, then, you will spend about 40 minutes per essay. Because these essays are written under a time limit, you will write almost all of them in class. The organizational strategy of these essays is also slightly different than those you will be able to take home, and it is important to separate the differences in audience and purpose.

BOOK TEST ESSAY

In college literature classes, you will rarely be “tested” on a book in a traditional sense. Instead, you’ll be asked to write an essay or response to the work. These essays will often be written based on a very general prompt, but the expectation is that you will demonstrate your knowledge of the book. You will not be asked to use direct quotations or provide a plot summary. Instead, you will use specific examples to develop new and interesting ideas. They are less formal than the AP-Style essays in the sense that I’ll ask you to get to your point faster. As Queen Gertrude tells the long-winded Polonius in *Hamlet*, “More matter with less art.” In AP Style essays you will need to consider art *and* matter. In Book Test essays, you will focus primarily on the matter.

You will develop a concise, insightful thesis statement that you will develop in an essay of 3-4 pages in length.

ANALYSIS RESEARCH ESSAY

This essay will expand on the basic principles of the traditional expository essay—in which you will develop a concise, insightful thesis statement—while adding a new component of research. This essay is *not* a “research paper” in the usual sense. Instead of presenting an informational thesis, students will develop an original thesis and use both excerpts from the novel and excerpts from published literary analyses to support your argument. This assignment will prepare you for higher-level college writing, and expose you to new perspectives on your novel. The important thing to remember about this essay is that the research will not dominate *your* ideas. Instead, you will use the research to provide support or counter-points to your argument to add maturity and credibility to your essay, which will be 4-6 pages (although sometimes longer). You will usually be given a choice of books on which to write, and you will be given carte blanche in choosing an essay topic. The key to this essay will be developing an interesting thesis that passes the “So what?” test, and using specific examples to develop its meaning.

GRADING PROCEDURES

While writing an essay is about following a procedure, it is also about creating a work of linguistic art. While every essay is different, there are also a number of rules that *must* be obeyed in order to present a professional, sophisticated argument. At this level, for long-term essays, students must adhere to the following guidelines. As much as the following feel like directions for the sake of directions (which you need to remember to follow, anyway!), they actually will make your essays a lot stronger when followed rigidly.

THE BIG FOUR

These are the big, important pieces to consider in writing an essay at this level. Students must carefully plan and construct each essay using these guidelines. Doing so will result in a well-executed essay, and one that will present a more efficient argument. Failing to follow any one of these rules may cause me to return the essay for revision with a **10-point penalty**.

1. **Introduction and Thesis**
2. **Topic Sentence Strategy**
3. **Quotation Integration**
4. **MLA Format**

TOPIC SENTENCE PRÉCIS

To make sure your topic sentences are sound and to maintain organization throughout the essay, you will write what I call a topic sentence précis for each take-home essay you write. This simple procedure involves writing a paragraph with your essay's thesis statement as the précis's first sentence. Each successive sentence will be each topic sentence from your essay, verbatim. In effect, the précis will then be a summary of your entire essay using your exact words from the essay. It's a simple and *very* effective diagnostic tool. You can catch plot summary issues, among other things, very quickly.

You will submit a précis before your essay is due as a regular assignment for a grade.

GRAMMATICAL PET PEEVES AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

While even the best of us are prone to typographical errors, there is no excuse for recurrent *usage* errors, most of which you have already been taught to avoid. To that end, consider carefully the following list of mistakes you *must* avoid in your essays. *When I see systemic problems with these issues in an essay, I will hand the essay immediately back to its author, expect the problems to be fixed, and expect the essay to be revised by the next day with a **10-point penalty**.* Notice that these problems are not typographical; rather, they are specifically correctable usage and/or structural problems that a diligent writer should learn to avoid because they obfuscate meaning.

- Every day vs. Everyday
- Ambiguous "this"
- Commas and periods outside quotation marks

- Split infinitives
- Hyphens vs. Dashes
- Improper use of semicolons
- Beginning body paragraphs with direct quotations
- Failure to use any direct quotations/specific examples to make a point in a body paragraph
- Lose vs. loose
- Noun-pronoun disagreement
- Subject-verb disagreement
- Excessive/inappropriate use of passive voice
- Altogether vs. all together
- Incorrect use of apostrophe
- Use of past tense when discussing events in a piece of literature
- Ending body paragraphs with specific example/quotation instead of your own words/analysis (clincher sentence)
- Cannot vs. can not
- Additional errors that may be highlighted in class through the course of the year, and can be added in the space below.

SYLLABUS AND SAMPLE CALENDAR

Although the choice books and poems we read and examine may change slightly each year, the skills you will gain will not. Below is an approximate, general skill-based syllabus for the year, quarter-by-quarter. The books that match up to each particular skill may be different each year.

MARKING PERIOD 1

- Writing concise, but meaningful introductions that introduce a thesis as well as a direction for body paragraph development
- Developing concise, meaningful thesis statements that avoid plot-directed arguments, obvious or shallow conclusions, and/or awkward constructions
- Peer review expectations/process, including proper etiquette that encourages constructive criticism and a positive learning environment
- Topic sentence purpose, structure, and process: writing topic sentences that clearly elaborate on a facet of the thesis and that do not merely introduce plot points.
- Writing creative, informative, personal, and concise college essays that *show* who you are and don't *tell* who you are
- Introduction to AP multiple choice format, with a goal of 50% success rate
- Introduction to prose AP essay, in which close reading techniques are emphasized using literary terms such as syntax, figurative language, imagery, diction, etc.
- Introduction to and familiarization with poetry and analysis of poetry as literature
- Proper use of MLA format for use throughout the year
- Socratic seminar format, in which students will develop their own critical and/or essential questions during their reading that will contribute to a guided, traditional seminar
- Introduction to early philosophic principles (Socrates, Plato, etc.)
- Introduction to literary theory (historicism, new historicism, New Criticism)
- Introduction to analysis research essay
- Group project: allusion and its function in literature

MARKING PERIOD 2

- Continue practice of thesis development
- Develop understanding of principles of poetry, including basic poetic forms and structures (e.g., sonnet, stanza, meter, open form, etc.)
- AP multiple-choice practice, with a goal of 60% success rate
- Introduction to poetry AP essay, in which students will apply their new understanding of poetic forms and structures in conjunction with literary terms from prose essay to find meaning in either one or two poems (in comparison-contrast format).

- Continued development and practice of prose AP essay
- Continue exploration of philosophy (Aquinas, Descartes, Hume)
- Continue exploration of literary theory (Structuralism, Deconstruction)
- Expository essay, expanded to include discussion of literature in historical, philosophical, and religious contexts; renewed emphasis on development of voice
- Analysis research essay, same expansion and emphasis as in expository essay
- Group project: literary movements (Romanticism, Naturalism, etc.)

MARKING PERIOD 3

- Early mastery of thesis development
- Continue development of principles of poetry as it applies to poetic analysis, especially as another form of literature; emphasis will be on figurative language, allusion, and symbolism
- AP multiple-choice practice, with a goal of 65% success rate
- Introduction to open-choice AP essay, in which the phrase “overall meaning of the text” will be examined in order to avoid plot summary and to develop a clear argument based on a book of his/her choice
- Continued development and practice of poetry AP essay
- Continued development and practice of prose AP essay
- Continue exploration of philosophy (Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Sartre)
- Continue exploration of literary theory (Feminism, Marxism, Postmodernism, Existentialism)
- Expository essay
- Analysis research essay
- Group project: Major poets

MARKING PERIOD 4

- Mastery of thesis development
- Mastery of basic poetic principles as it applies to poetic analysis
- Mastery of AP-style essays
- AP EXAM!
- Apply exploration of philosophy and literary theory to final reflection project
- Final exam project and final exam paper
- *Hamlet* performance: memorization strategies, basic performance techniques

APPENDIX 1: DIDLS & TONE VOCABULARY

The key to unlocking tone in a piece of literature is through the following elements: diction, imagery, details, language, and syntax. These elements are also known as **DIDLS**.

D	(Diction)	<p>Choose unusual and/or effective words from the passage. Evaluate the connotations of the words and write synonyms for each.</p> <p>Then, decide what the word choice suggests about the character's or narrator's demeanor.</p>
I	(Images)	<p>Cite examples of imagery from the passage. Identify the sense appealed to, and interpret the meaning.</p>
D	(Details)	<p>List facts or the sequence of events from the passage.</p>
L	(Language)	<p>Determine the type of language used (formal, informal, clinical, jargon, literal, vulgar, artificial, sensuous, concrete, precise, pedantic, etc.). Cite examples.</p>
S	(Syntax)	<p>How does sentence structure reveal the character's attitude?</p>

POSITIVE TONE/ATTITUDE WORDS

Amiable	Consoling	Friendly	Playful
Amused	Content	Happy	Pleasant
Appreciative	Dreamy	Hopeful	Proud
Authoritative	Ecstatic	Impassioned	Relaxed
Benevolent	Elated	Jovial	Reverent
Brave	Elevated	Joyful	Romantic

Calm	Encouraging	Jubilant	Soothing
Cheerful	Energetic	Lighthearted	Surprised
Cheery	Enthusiastic	Loving	Sweet
Compassionate	Excited	Optimistic	Sympathetic
Complimentary	Exuberant	Passionate	Vibrant
Confident	Fanciful	Peaceful	Whimsical

NEGATIVE TONE/ATTITUDE WORDS

Accusing	Choleric	Furious	Quarrelsome
Aggravated	Coarse	Harsh	Shameful
Agitated	Cold	Haughty	Smooth
Angry	Condemnatory	Hateful	Snooty
Apathetic	Condescending	Hurtful	Superficial
Arrogant	Contradictory	Indignant	Surly
Artificial	Critical	Inflammatory	Testy
Audacious	Desperate	Insulting	Threatening
Belligerent	Disappointed	Irritated	Tired
Bitter	Disgruntled	Manipulative	Uninterested
Boring	Disgusted	Obnoxious	Wrathful
Brash	Disinterested	Outraged	
Childish	Facetious	Passive	

HUMOR-IRONY-SARCASM TONE/ATTITUDE WORDS

Amused	Droll	Mock-heroic	Sardonic
Bantering	Facetious	Mocking	Satiric
Bitter	Flippant	Mock-serious	Scornful
Caustic	Giddy	Patronizing	Sharp
Comical	Humorous	Pompous	Silly
Condescending	Insolent	Quizzical	Taunting
Contemptuous	Ironic	Ribald	Teasing
Critical	Irreverent	Ridiculing	Whimsical
Cynical	Joking	Sad	Wry
Disdainful	Malicious	Sarcastic	

SORROW-FEAR-WORRY TONE/ATTITUDE WORDS

Aggravated	Embarrassed	Morose	Resigned
Agitated	Fearful	Mournful	Sad
Anxious	Foreboding	Nervous	Serious
Apologetic	Gloomy	Numb	Sober
Apprehensive	Grave	Ominous	Solemn
Concerned	Hollow	Paranoid	Somber
Confused	Hopeless	Pessimistic	Staid
Dejected	Horrific	Pitiful	Upset
Depressed	Horror	Poignant	
Despairing	Melancholy	Regretful	
Disturbed	Miserable	Remorseful	

NEUTRAL TONE/ATTITUDE WORDS

Admonitory	Dramatic	Intimate	Questioning
Allusive	Earnest	Judgmental	Reflective
Apathetic	Expectant	Learned	Reminiscent
Authoritative	Factual	Loud	Resigned
Baffled	Fervent	Lyrical	Restrained
Callous	Formal	Matter-of-fact	Seductive
Candid	Forthright	Meditative	Sentimental
Ceremonial	Frivolous	Nostalgic	Serious
Clinical	Haughty	Objective	Shocking
Consoling	Histrionic	Obsequious	Sincere
Contemplative	Humble	Patriotic	Unemotional
Conventional	Incredulous	Persuasive	Urgent
Detached	Informative	Pleading	Vexed
Didactic	Inquisitive	Pretentious	Wistful
Disbelieving	Instructive	Provocative	Zealous

LANGUAGE WORDS—USED TO DESCRIBE THE FORCE OR QUALITY OF THE ENTIRE PIECE

Like word choice, the language of a passage has control over tone. Consider language to be the entire body of words used in a text, not simply isolated bits of diction, imagery, or detail. For example, an invitation to a graduation might use formal language, whereas a biology text would use scientific and clinical language.

Different from tone, these words describe the force or quality of the diction, images, and details as a *whole*. These words qualify *how* the work is written.

Artificial	Exact	Literal	Pretentious
Bombastic	Figurative	Moralistic	Provincial
Colloquial	Formal	Obscure	Scholarly
Concrete	Grotesque	Obtuse	Sensuous
Connotative	Homespun	Ordinary	Simple
Cultured	Idiomatic	Pedantic	Slang
Detached	Informal	Picturesque	Symbolic
Emotional	Insipid	Plain	Trite
Esoteric	Jargon	Poetic	Vulgar
Euphemistic	Learned	Precise	

APPENDIX 2: USING TPCASTT FOR ANALYSIS OF POETRY

T**Title**

What do the words of the title suggest to you? What denotations are presented in the title? What connotations or associations do the words possess?

P**Paraphrase**

“Translate” the poem into your own words. What is the poem about?

C**Connotation**

What meaning does the poem have beyond the literal meaning? Consult in the chart below.

Form	Diction	Imagery
Point of View	Details	Allusions
Symbolism	Figurative Language	Other Devices (antithesis, apostrophe, sound devices, irony, oxymoron, paradox, pun, sarcasm, understatement)

A**Attitude**

What is the speaker’s attitude? How does the speaker feel about himself, about others, and about the subject? What is the author’s attitude? How does the author feel about the speaker, about other characters, about the subject, and about the reader?

S**Shifts**

Where do the shifts in tone, setting, voice, etc. occur? Look for time and place, keywords, punctuation, stanza divisions, changes in length or rhyme, and sentence structure. What is the purpose of each shift? How do they contribute to effect and meaning?

T**Title**

Reanalyze the title on an interpretive level. What part does the title play in the overall interpretation of the poem?

T**Theme**

List the subjects and the abstract ideas in the poem. Then, determine the overall theme. The theme must be written in a complete sentence.

APPENDIX 3: ...”THE MEANING OF THE WORK AS A WHOLE.” OPEN QUESTION THEME STATEMENTS

Complete the following sentence using the instructions below:

[Title] is a novel/short story/poem/essay about _____ . It shows that _____ .

1. Place a single word or a short phrase (an abstract idea or concept) in the first blank. Then explain the truth about human condition as it relates to the work.
2. Your completion of the sentence should show insight into the issues in the novel. You should ask yourself: “What is the book really about?”
3. Do *not* complete the sentence with plot summary. Do not just tell what happens in the story.
4. Replace “is” with a more active verb and rephrase for universality.

Ex 1: *Huck Finn* is a book about the horrors of slavery and the denigration of human beings.

Ex 2: *Huck Finn* is a book about one person’s ethical stand against the immoral practices of society.

Ex 3: *Huck Finn* is a book about the hypocrisy of religion.

Final Product 1: *Huck Finn* reveals the horrors of slavery and the denigration of human beings.

Final Product 2: Mark Twain’s *Huck Finn* presents the obstacles to and consequences of making an ethical stand against the immoral practices of society.

Final Product 3: In his novel *Huck Finn*, Mark Twain posits that organized religion is fundamentally hypocritical.

You may choose to write a lengthy statement or a short one (only one!), but *insightfulness* is key!

ABSTRACT IDEAS AND CONCEPTS TO CONSIDER:

Alienation	Falsity/pretense	Music/dance
Ambition	Family/parenthood	Mysterious/stranger
Appearance v. reality	Free will/will power	Persistence/perseverance
Custom/tradition	Games/contests/sports	Patriotism
Betrayal	Greed	Poverty
Bureaucracy	Guilt	Prejudice
Chance/Fate/Luck	Heaven/paradise/utopia	Prophecy
Children	Home	Reason
Courage/cowardice	Initiation	Repentance
Cruelty/violence	Illusion	Resistance/rebellion
Defeat/failure	Innocence	Revenge/retribution
Despair/discontent/disillusionment	Instinct	Ritual/ceremony
Domination/suppression	Journey	Scapegoat/victim
Dreams/fantasies	Law/justice	Social status
Duty	Loneliness	Supernatural/time/eternity
Education/school	Loyalty	War
Escape	Materialism	Women/feminism
Exile	Memory	
Faith/loss of faith	Mobs	

APPENDIX 4: SAMPLE TOPIC SENTENCE PRÉCIS & SAMPLE ANALYSIS RESEARCH ESSAY

The following is a sample of an analysis research essay and its précis. While it is by no means “perfect,” it represents a level of sophistication, clarity, and insight that I will be expecting throughout the year to earn a high mark. Notice the essay’s attention to detail, organizational structure, and depth of meaning.

The essay is also written in *exact* MLA format, including page numbers, heading, and margins. Use it for reference—your essays should look **exactly the same**. Pay particular attention to the variety of quotations and integration styles; at least half of my students always get the block quotes wrong, especially, so check that yours look the same as they do in this essay.

PRÉCIS

(Note that the first sentence is the essay’s thesis verbatim, and every other sentence is each paragraph’s topic sentence in order, including transitions that exist in the essay itself.)

One’s identity is a product of the manner in which one deals with the consequence of hardship and one’s direct connection to love between people in any form. Jane Eyre’s experience as a foster child amongst the Reed family teaches her fortitude of character and establishes an early blueprint for her life’s journey: to find a family one must first understand oneself. After this new Jane enters Lowood, she also learns that charity, compassion, and moral integrity are crucial components of a meritorious identity. Once she emerges from Lowood a young adult, Jane is ready to test the boundary of her young store of wisdom as she meets Rochester, who challenges her convictions and force her to make difficult decisions, further cementing her identity. Jane’s decision to leave Rochester and the life she seemingly wanted leaves her at a literal and figurative crossroads, alone, yet ultimately entirely of herself and of God. Ultimately, it is her ability to decide upon the righteous path that leads her to find love, family, and companionship on her own terms as a grown, independent woman.

SAMPLE ESSAY

(Please note that the page numbers reflect the essay’s page numbers, not the handbook’s.)