

Dear AP Scholars,

Welcome to AP Literature & Composition! I cannot wait to explore the vast world of literature with you in the coming school year and expand our literary understandings and skills.

To prepare for our journey, you have a few major tasks to complete this summer:

- 1) Draft a **college admissions essay**
- 2) Read, annotate, and analyze **six short stories**.

I know six stories might sound like a lot, but you have all summer & all fall semester to complete these things, so you should have plenty of time! It will definitely set us up for success.

Explicit directions for each assignment are on the following pages. You should complete all of these tasks before the first day of class and have them ready to go in a Google Folder titled AP Literature that you have shared with me.

My contact information is below. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to meeting you next school year!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Roberts (Hysinger)

Email: olivia.hysinger@knoxschools.org

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EVERYONE needs to join Remind! It is the easiest way to keep in contact throughout our time together!

The College Admissions Essay

Many colleges across the United States use the Common App for their admissions process. Even schools that do not use Common App tend to use similar admissions essays prompts. Thus, to prepare for the coming college admissions season, you will select one of this year's Common App essay prompts and draft a full admissions essay in response. Common App's essay word limit is 250-650 words. Most student writing starts off verbose and needs cutting, so the word count for this assignment is 500-650 words. Note that if you are in the process of applying for a school that uses a prompt other than those given by Common App, you can submit it through Prompt 7, which is an essay of your choice.

Prompt Choices:

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

Writing Checklist:

- **Hook** – a specific incident (including narrative details like description, dialogue, setting, etc.) begins the essay and conveys the writer's personality and/or point
- **Focus** – the essay addresses the prompt without meandering off topic
- **Voice** – the writer's voice is personal and appropriate for the audience and purpose; diction, syntax, and choice of detail reflect purposeful attention
- **Organization** – the essay follows a logical progression of ideas, free of extraneous information; the paragraph breaks make sense in the

organizational structure, and sensible transitions move the essay along without being formulaic

- **Sentence Structure** – the essay features varied sentence structures including some complex sentences with phrases and clauses; it is free of fragments and run-ons
- **Conventions** – the essay is mostly free of errors in spelling, capitalization, pronoun usage, verb tense, and punctuation
- **the procedural stuff** – the draft is typed in the correct font (Times New Roman, 12 point, double-spaced); it includes a header and word count; and it was submitted on time

The Short Stories

The first unit of the AP Literature and Composition course is on short fiction. To gauge where your skills are before we start the unit, you will select six short stories to read, annotate, and analyze (this is one for each skill). All short story options will be in a PowerPoint that will be sent to your Knox County Schools email. Below, you will find a chart using the verbiage of the AP Lit & Comp course framework. Our course focuses on 6 major categories: character, setting, structure, narration, figurative language, and literary argumentation and leads us through enduring understandings, skills, and essential knowledge related to each. For the summer assignment, you will pick one text from each list that will cover several of the skills. Complete the “Performance Tasks” section of the chart for this assignment. For annotations, you may open the PDF in Kami (an extension you can access on your Chromebook - just type in Kami.com) or you may make a Google Doc copy and add comments and use the highlighter tool. You are also welcome to print a copy and make annotations by hand. If you do so, submit large, clear, well lit images of the annotations.

Overview of Tasks:

- 1) Read the story.
- 2) Annotate for the specific skill (outlined in the PowerPoint) using one color and the comment feature.
- 3) Compose a 1-3 paragraph analysis based on the questions below for each skill.

Task #1

Character: Characters in literature allow readers to study and explore a range of values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, and cultural norms represented by those characters.

Performance Tasks:

1. Annotation

In the short story you chose, annotate the story by highlighting portions of the text that exemplify the essential knowledge & provide commentary.

Note significant instances of:

- a. Character description
 - b. Dialogue
 - c. Character action or inaction
 - d. Relations among characters
 - e. Characterization which reveals background, personality traits, and/or biases
- ##### 2. Character Study
- Choose one character from the short story you chose and write an analysis of

that character. Write 1-3 paragraphs and include textual evidence. Make sure you address:

- a. Who is the character? What is revealed about the character's identity (background, beliefs, biases, personality, values, etc.)? What is not revealed? What questions is the audience left with?
- b. What perspective does the character have on the main events of the short story? What is this character's opinion about what occurs?
- c. What impact does this character have on the story? How does the character affect others? What effect does the character have on the audience? What effects does this character have on significant events? And finally, how does the inclusion of this character affect the overall meaning of the short story. (To answer this last one, you must present an interpretation of the story. Make a claim about its theme.)

Task #2

Setting: Setting and the details associated with it not only depict a time and place, but also convey values associated with that setting.

Performance Tasks:

1. Annotation:

In the short story you chose, annotate the story by highlighting portions of the text that exemplify setting and provide marginal commentary.

Note details about the story's:

- a. Time (When and how long and at what pace does the story take place?)
- b. Place (Where does the story take place? Are there setting changes? Mark those shifts.)
- c. Situational Context (What is occurring in the background of the story? Think historical movements, wars, social movements, elections, famines, etc. BIG details)

2. Setting Analysis:

Choose one of the bullet points above (time, place, or situational context) & write 1-3 paragraphs in which you explore how the story would be different if those details changed.

Task #3

Plot Order Events (Structure): The arrangement of the parts and sections of a text, the relationship of the parts to each other, and the sequence in which the text reveals information are all structural choices made by a writer that contribute to the reader's interpretation of a text

Performance Tasks:

1. Annotation:

In the short story you chose, annotate the story by highlighting portions of the text that exemplify plot order & events and provide marginal commentary.

Note details about:

- a. The sequence of events including events that have a cause-and-effect relationship
 - b. The dramatic situation of a narrative with special attention to the rising and falling fortunes of a main character or set of characters
 - c. Any patterns in dramatic situations
 - d. The sequencing of the plot - is it out of order? Are there any flashbacks? Foreshadowing? Stream of consciousness?
 - e. The pace - syntax, tempo/speed in which events occur, or shifts in tense & chronology.
- 2. Plot Order Analysis:**

Focus on your answer to one of the bullet points above. What does the way the plot is structured add to the story as a whole? Did it make it easier or more difficult to understand? What do you think was the author's purpose in choosing that particular structure? Please answer in 1-3 paragraphs.

Task #4

Sequence of Events (Structure): The arrangement of the parts and sections of a text, the relationship of the parts to each other, and the sequence in which the text reveals information are all structural choices made by a writer that contribute to the reader's interpretation of a text

Performance Tasks:

1. Annotation

In the short story you chose, annotate the story by highlighting portions of the text that exemplify sequence of events and provide marginal commentary.

Note details about:

- a. Plot and the exposition that accompanies it - what matters most to plot development? Think about characters, relationships, their roles in the narrative, setting, and character relationship to setting.
 - b. Any narrative structures that interrupt the chronology of the plot - flashback, foreshadowing, stream of consciousness, etc. Are there any places where you felt anticipation, suspense, or building tension?
 - c. Narrative pacing that causes an emotional reaction in you as a reader
- 2. Sequence of Events Analysis:**

In 1-3 paragraphs, pick ONE event in the short story that was the most emotional for you. Why was it emotional? How did it affect the plot? Why do you think the author decided to include it that way?

Task #5

Narrator: A narrator's or speaker's perspective controls the details and emphases that affect how readers experience and interpret a text.

Performance Tasks:

1. Annotation

In the short story you chose, annotate the story by highlighting portions of the text that exemplify the narration and provide marginal commentary.

Note details about:

- a. The narrator and/or speaker of the text - what is their relationship to the reader? What is their specific perspective on the text? Are they a character? Or someone outside the story? (Remember: they are NOT necessarily the author!)
- b. The function of point-of-view in a narrative - What information can the narrator provide in the text based on their role? What influences their perspective? What IS the point-of-view (first person, third person, etc.)?
- c. Identify details, diction, or syntax that reveal the narrator/speaker's perspective - what are their backgrounds/perspectives? Are there any specific adjectives & descriptive words that show us their perspectives? What are their attitudes? Is there any information that is NOT included? Does the narrator/speaker change over the course of the text? Are there any inconsistencies?
- d. Identify the reliability of the narrator - Can you infer any biases based on details that are included or left out? What is the reliability of the narrator? Are there multiple narrators that contradict one another?

2. Narrator Analysis:

In 1-3 paragraphs, explain the narration of the short story you chose. Is the narrator reliable? Unreliable? What do they add to the story? Explain the role the narrator/speaker plays overall.

Task #6

Figurative Language: Comparisons, representations, and associations shift meaning from the literal to the figurative and invite readers to interpret a text.

Performance Tasks:

1. Annotation

In the short story you chose, annotate the story by highlighting portions of the text that exemplify the figurative language and provide marginal commentary.

Note details about:

- a. Words that have multiple meanings or connotations

- b. Specific words & phrases that serve a function such as ambiguous words & phrases, repetition, alliteration, descriptive language such as imagery, and hyperbole.
 - c. Symbolism - certain objects that represent a meaning throughout the whole story; recurring symbols that you have seen before, symbols that imply certain attitudes & perspectives
 - d. Any comparisons such as similes & metaphors, especially extended metaphors (comparison of a main subject and another subject that persists throughout the entire story)
 - e. Allusions to any literary works, works of art, or other people, places, or events outside the text
2. **Figurative Language Analysis:**
In 1-3 paragraphs, identify which figurative device you think was the strongest throughout the short story. What did it add to the story? How did it help you understand everything happening?