This is THE Awesome Packet
for Awesome APES (the original APES at SHS, since 1981)

How to Use This Packet:

- This Week & Weekend:
  - Read through the entire packet, please.
- Monday, May 7th:
  - Focus on General Essay Advice, as well as advice for writing the Poetry Analysis Essay, and the Prose Excerpt Analysis Essay.
- Tuesday, May 8th:
  - Focus on Advice for the Open Response Essay, and read over the review of major works studied this year.
- Wednesday, May 9th:
  - Relax. Read through multiple choice advice in packet, and read over anything else that will boost your confidence.

YOU CAN DO GREAT!!!

Top Ten Tips for AP Test Day Success!*

- The night before the test, get plenty of rest.
- The morning of the test, wake up a little bit earlier than usual (10-15 minutes).
- Even if your habit is to skip breakfast, eat something! Stick to typical, nutritious breakfast staples—juice, cereal, toast, and eggs to fuel your brain without wreaking havoc on your stomach. Avoid anything particularly greasy, sugar-filled, or excessively caffeine-laden.
- Dress in layers, so you can be comfortable and focus in the room at any temperature, especially if the room's temperature varies during the test.
- Leave your cell phone and any other electronic devices in your vehicle or locker.
- Have several sharpened #2 pencils, a good eraser, and a reliable blue or black ink pen, as well as some tissue (if you are a sniffler or sneezer).
- Wear a silent watch—something you can place at your table and use to monitor your time for each section of the exam.
- Relax and breathe. There is no need to panic for any reason on test day. You ARE prepared for this exam!
- Don't let yourself be shaken. If you find your confidence slipping, remember that you are prepared for the test and do not panic.
- Focus and do your best work. The test will be challenging; that's a given. Just keep working. It's only three hours of testing work that could provide you three to six college credit hours—not a bad trade.

* *(These tips apply to ALL your AP Exams!)*

Multiple Choice Advice *(Your performance on this section = 45% of your AP Exam score)*

- As soon as you are allowed to look in the booklet, check ***how many*** passages and questions there are and plan accordingly. Pick the order of passages/questions to read and answer (go from easiest to most difficult). If you do this, pay careful attention to where you grid your answers on the answer sheet. You CAN still have a great score if you skip an entire passage and it may give you the time you need to do a better job on the others. Remember your Goal is at least 35 ***Definitely Right Answers*** + 20 (or fewer) Guessed/Skipped!
- ***Use*** your test booklet—annotate text in passages, circle important words in the questions, ***anything*** that will help you.
- Pay attention to the critical words such as ***ONLY***, ***ALWAYS***, ***NOT***, ***NEVER***, ***EXCEPT***, and ***BEST***.
- My favorite Strategy: ***Predict*** an answer—before looking at the possible responses, try to think of the answer on your own.
- While it is a ***BAD*** idea to guess randomly, educated-guessing—eliminating obviously wrong choices and narrowing the remaining choices down—is recommended.
- Remember that easier questions tend to be at the beginning of a series of questions following a passage, and easy questions are worth just as much as more difficult ones.
- Don't obsess! If a question starts to take up too much of your time, make a BIG circle or symbol by the question so you can find it in the booklet, and move on. If you have time left over, find the question and re-visit it.
- Pay careful attention to your answer sheet so that you don't mis-grid.
- Think before you switch answers. Don't go back and changes answers unless you are positive that your second choice is correct. Studies have shown that in nearly all cases, your first choice is more likely to be correct than subsequent choices, unless you suddenly recall some relevant information.
- If you are running out of time and have several questions still unanswered from the last passage, scan the remaining questions and look for the shortest questions and those that direct you to a specific line, as well as detail/definition questions and self-contained questions (i.e. those that ask you to identify a literary device) that don't require looking into the passage to answer.

General Essay Advice *(Your performance on this section = 55% of your AP Exam score)*

- Read the prompt two times ***before*** reading the passage. After reading the passage, read the prompt a ***third*** time to assure that you respond to all tasks accurately. If you are confused about how to start, re-state the topic as it is addressed in the question.
- Write EXACTLY what the prompt asks you to write. You have more power to enhance your overall score with your essay writing than you do in the multiple-choice section, so follow the prompt precisely!
- Use the "idea machine" to plan if you're stuck (see slide 20)!
- Choose the "easiest" question first—when you can view your green sheets, quickly scan the three choices and begin responding to the question for which you seem to have the most ready response, and don't worry about the other two.
- Remember the format: (1)Two-sentence introduction (TAG the work, and assert a thesis statement that answers the prompt and includes an assessment of theme (and tone if the prompt asks for it); (2) Two to three thoughtful, insightful, detailed paragraphs that answer the prompt in terms of various literary elements, devices, and techniques; and (3) Brief conclusion—re-state your thesis and then attempt a metaphorical or more general application of the theme in the literary work to people now, or life today, or the world we live in.
- Keep your quoting of text (on the poetry and prose analysis essays) short—words and phrases only, never more than a full line of text.

- Write to analyze, discuss, and explain rather than to re-tell or list—***REMEMBER, YOUR AUDIENCE KNOWS THE TEXT!!!***
- ***Use snappy verbs and tasty nouns—You MUST stand out!***
- END WELL, preferably with a "ZINGER": Make your final observation, where you try to apply the poem/excerpt/ major work's theme to life/people/the world in general as insightful and clear and interesting as possible—it will be the ***last*** bit of your writing a reader sees before bubbling in your score.
- It takes more than a paragraph or two to merit a top-level essay. You should have a brief introduction and conclusion, and between them, two to three detailed and insightful paragraphs that discuss how ***particular literary devices, techniques, or elements*** reveal an author's intended ***meaning (theme) and tone***.
- If you have time to go back and read over what you have written and you want to make changes, try to do so as neatly and clearly as possible. If you decide to omit a section, do not waste time scratching over every letter of text. Just mark through with a single line.
- Legibility counts. It may not be fair, but it is a fact. Remember, your essay reader will be looking at 200-300 essays each day. Nothing makes a reader feel more demoralized than struggling to decipher an essay (especially if it isn't a top-level paper!). Over-Indent the start of each paragraph, and WRITE EXTRA NEATLY IN THE FIRST TWO PARAGRAPHS OF EVERY ESSAY!
- Keep an eye on your time. No student wants to answer only two essays, or even two and a half essays. Force yourself to move on when the proctor announces it is time to move on.
- This is important: don't let yourself be confused by the complexity of a passage. Generally, the more difficult the reading, the more basic the prompt. ***You*** get to choose the devices/elements you want to incorporate into your essay. This means that even if you don't totally understand the entire passage or poem(s), you can still write an intelligent, top-level essay—*as long as you address the prompt* and refer to the parts of the passage that you do understand. That said, watch out for overconfidence in the case of what appears to be an overly accessible passage. In those cases, you will have to work a bit harder to discern the nuances of the text that will allow you to write a mature and insightful essay—IN THE AP LIT WORLD, THERE IS ALWAYS MORE THAN WHAT THE SURFACE MEANING INDICATES—DIG FOR SUB-TEXT!

Poetry Analysis Essay Advice

- Check out the poem's title. In many cases, it can reveal much about the poem.
- Read the poem carefully twice: once to read it through, a second time to read and mark it. As you read, mentally paraphrase to make sure you know what the poem is saying. Run through a quick SPLOTTS or TPCASTT to make sure you are noting everything you need to discuss the poem analytically and insightfully.
- Consider structure, rhythm and rhyme, diction, imagery, details, figurative language, symbols, and syntax (sentence structure). Also note the punctuation the writer does or does not use.
- Is there a shift in the poem? (AP teachers allege ALL poems on the AP exam contain at least one tonal shift).
- Discuss the meaning of the poem in terms of its devices. Regardless of what the prompt suggests (if it names any devices, elements or techniques), here are some fail-safes for poetry analysis: imagery, irony, and any of the forms of figurative language (metaphor, simile, personification, allusion, symbol, paradox).
- What seems to be the author's purpose and message (theme)?
- Jot out a quick outline of what you will be writing—something you may refer to as you write your essay.
- As you write, don't forget to make frequent and specific references to the text—words and phrases.
- Try to leave a few minutes at the end of the forty-minute period to proofread and check over what you have written.

Prose Analysis Essay Advice

- If there is a title, check it out, as it can be revealing.
- Determine the point of view and who the narrator is, as well as the setting and plot.
- Consider diction, imagery, details, irony, symbols, and tone.
- Consider character and plot development.
- Is there a shift in narrator, tone, or mood?
- Remember to use the Idea Machine if needed!
- What seems to be the author's purpose and message (theme)?
- Jot out a quick outline of what you will be writing—something you may refer to as you write your essay.
- As you write, don't forget to make frequent and specific references to the text—words and phrases.
- Try to leave a few minutes at the end of the forty-minute period to proofread and check over what you have written.

Open-Response Essay Advice

- On the open-response essay, follow directions explicitly. A novel or full play of literary merit is acceptable—never select a short story, poem, or movie. And, assume your reader knows the work you are discussing, so avoid falling into plot summary with this task as well.
- When you read the prompt for the first time, ***cover up the list of works/authors with your hands and/or arm***. Read the prompt and think of the works you know well that you can use to formulate a response. Only ***after*** you have thought of works to use should you look at the list. This can alleviate much panic.
- Be sure and select a work that really fits the question. Do not rush to make the question fit the work you want to write about.
- Plan before you write. Create a quick jotted outline or notes.
- Be quite certain that you are writing analysis rather than mere plot summary.
- Try to leave a few minutes at the end of the forty-minute period to proofread and check over what you have written.

Timing the Essays

- 1-3 minutes to "work the prompt"—read, re-read, figure out exactly what it is asking you to do.
- 5 minutes reading and making notations. Try to isolate two quotations that strike you. This may provide your opening and closing.
- 5 minutes preparing to write—a short outline, selecting text to use as support, wording the theme and tone.
- 25 minutes writing the essay, based upon your preparation.
- 2-3 minutes for proofreading.

Using the Idea Machine/Theme-er-ator

- If the instructions of the prompt and the words of the poem(s)/excerpt continue to mystify you, do not drain your time staring at a blank page. Use the Idea Machine!
- The Idea Machine is a three-question process:
  - 1. What does the poem/passage ***mean***?
    - A. What is the literal meaning?
    - B. What feeling(s) do/does the work evoke?
  - 2. How does the author get that ***meaning*** across?
    - A. What are the important images in the work and what do they suggest?
    - B. What specific words or short phrases produce the strongest feelings?
    - C. What elements are in opposition?
  - 3. How do the answers to questions 1 & 2 direct your knowledge to successfully answer the exam question?
- The THEME-er-ator is a three-step process for determinging THEME. Ask these questions to get there:
  - 1. What is the work about on the surface? (Example: "Ozymandias" is about an ancient ruin.)
  - 2. What is the work REALLY about (subtextual meaning)? ("Ozymandias" seems to really be about a proud king who wanted to memorialize himself with a statue, but all his kingdom and even the statue are gone or ruined.)
  - 3. What does the author seem to be saying about your answer to #2, applied to both then and now? (Example: "Ozymandias" demonstrates how all things, especially mortal man's proudest achievements, are no match for time.)

IT'S AS EASY AS ONE, TWO, THEME!

Just one more time, a word about introductions and conclusions:

- Introductions and conclusions both should consist of at least two sentences.
- In the introduction you must correctly TAG the work, then mention the thematic topic. The thesis statement says what the meaning is, based on the thematic topic, along with an indication of the work's tone.
- Example: Dostoevsky's novel <u>Crime and Punishment</u> portrays a protagonist who resists redemption to the point that it nearly eludes him. In a sympathetic manner, the novel asserts that redemption becomes possible with the acknowledgement of a soul's depravity, and the support of unconditional love.
- In the conclusion, the theme should be re-worded and re-stated in the first sentence. Then, the final sentence should be a clincher (a sentence that really impresses the essay's reader)—make a comment on the modern-day relevance of the work through application of its theme to today's world or people of our time. THIS IS THE LAST THING AN AP READER LOOKS AT BEFORE PICKING UP A #2 PENCIL AND GRIDDING IN YOUR SCORE ON THE NINE-POINT SCALE—MAKE THIS SENTENCE AS AMAZING AND INSIGHTFUL AS POSSIBLE!
- Example: Raskolnikov began his journey to redemption only when he recognized and confronted his inner evil and recognized the damage it caused to others and himself. Perhaps if more people today would strive for more accurate self-awareness, the world would become a more loving and peaceful place.

A Review of Major Works Studied This Year

<u>As I Lay Dying: a novel, by William Faulkner</u>

- Modernist work (Modernists were depressed, disillusioned, frequently concerned with death, decay, and degeneration of civilized society. They also liked to experiment with ways to break the conventional methods of storytelling. Thus, it is no surprise that Faulkner let FIFTEEN different characters narrate this story, and at times relied on stream of consciousness technique, as well as making one character semi-omniscient (Darl). Some scholars say this novel, which Faulkner called a "*Tour de Force*," borrows from the traditions of the epic, but Faulkner twists events in such a way that his version becomes a travesty.
- Setting: **Faulkner's fictitious Yoknapatawpha County, Mississippi, the 1920s—**
  The details of Yoknapatawpha remain constant throughout these works: it is in Mississippi, just south of the Tallahatchie River and north of the Yoknapatawpha River. Jefferson is the bustling, central town of the county (county seat). Many believe that Faulkner based this fictional area on Lafayette County, where Faulkner grew up. The Bundrens are from the southern part of the mythical county, close to an area known as Frenchman's Bend.
- Main Characters: The Bundren family members: Anse, Addie, Cash, Darl, Jewel, Dewey Dell, and Vardaman; also neighbors Vernon and Cora Tull, the Reverend Whitfield (Jewel's biological father), Dr. Peabody, Lafe, MacGowan, Samson & his wife, Gillespie.
- Summary: Mama's dying. She despises her husband and any connection to him (yep, that includes most of her children), so she makes the hubby promise to bury her with her family in Jefferson (15 miles from the Bundren farm). Dad needs new teeth, so he's up for a trip to the big town in Yoknapatawpha County. Who knows, maybe he can even score another wife? Oh, and the daughter is pregnant but not dealing with it well. The youngest son has no concept of what is happening and no one seems interested in helping him figure it out. The two older sons both seem to struggle with arrested development from having self-absorbed, uncaring parents. And the middle child just hates his non-father and wants everyone to go away. The journey is an epic disaster, from the smelly coffin to weather issues, a fire, an asylum, a rape, and so much more .
- Thematic issues: Life and Death, Love and its uncertain return, Suffering, Women's roles and status (especially as mothers and wives), Family relationships and obligations, Perceptions as indicators of Truth/Reality, Religion, Honor, Poverty.

<u>A Doll House</u>: a play, by Henrik Ibsen

- Setting: Somewhere in Scandanavia (Norway), late 1800's;
- Characters: Nora Helmer, Torvald Helmer, their children, Dr. Rank, Kristine Linde, and Krogstad;
- Thematic Issues: Mainly the big issues of this play deal with trust, love, and respect, and the need for equity of all three values from two people in a marriage; also, there are thematic issues involving the dangers of secrecy and dishonesty, social appearances, and issues concerning the role and status of women in society;
- Summary: It's nearly Christmas, and Nora Helmer is happy. She has nearly paid off a loan that she forged documents to get and has never told her husband about (she borrowed this money because he was ill and needed to be able to recuperate in a more mild climate), and he's about to earn a lot more money due to a big promotion at work. A surprise visit from an old friend and a threat from the person who orchestrated the old loan lead Nora to a crisis of conscience. As she prepares to dance her Tarantella at a costume party, the truth comes out. Rather than her husband being mad and kicking her out, or getting mad then forgiving her, his only panic seems to be keeping up appearances. Once he

feels sure nobody will find out about the loan, he is fine, but Nora realizes he will never view her as an equal and will likely use this event as a reason for why he should be allowed to control her. She can't live like that any more and leaves, disgraced socially, but free.

Frankenstein, Or the Modern Prometheus: a novel, by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

- Setting: Although the frame story is exclusively set aboard Captain Walton's ship in the frozen waters of the Arctic, the events of the story happen all over Europe, from Geneva to the Alps to France, England, and Scotland, as well as the university at Ingolstadt. As far as the frame of the story goes, we have some nice contrast between Victor telling his story on icy waters of the ocean and the creature telling his next to a fire in a cave.
- Characters: Viktor Frankenstein, his Creature, Robert Walton, Henry Clerval, Elizabeth Lavenza, Justine Moritz, other members of the Frankenstein family.
- Summary: Set in a time (early Industrial Revolution) when many viewed modern science as a subject to be feared, revered, and held in bewildered awe, Viktor searches for heretofore unknown knowledge: how to create life. Somehow, he succeeds, and a patchwork kind of guy is the result. Viktor immediately knows he has done wrong, but runs away instead of taking responsibility. The creature is virtually orphaned, and seeks nothing more than social acceptance and interaction—however, his hideous appearance precludes him from success in that arena. People die—interestingly, pretty much all people close to Viktor. Creature wants a partner. Viktor starts her, but demolishes his work because he fears the result (this time, before completion), so Creature kills Viktor's wife as fair trade. Then there's a chase, we wind up way north in the Arctic, Viktor dies, the Creature decides that without his "father" he has nothing to live for so he goes off to die, and the novel ends with the guy from the frame story (Walton) finishing a journal-style letter to his sister about all this.
- Thematic issues: Forbidden knowledge, Life and the meaning of existence, Responsibility, Appearances, Exploration, Communication, Forgiveness, Sacrifice, Honesty, Family—especially the Parent-Child Relationship, Revenge, Isolation, and Science (especially in opposition to Nature/Romanticism).

Hamlet: a play, by Shakespeare

- Setting: Elsinore Castle, Denmark, around 1000.
- This play is a tragedy, one of Shakespeare's four "High Tragedies."
- Main Characters: Hamlet (prince), Gertrude (queen), Claudius (new king), the Ghost (old king), Polonius (king's advisor), Ophelia (prince's girlfriend/Polonius' daughter), Fortinbras and Laertes (foils to Hamlet), Horatio (Hamlet's best friend and confidant), Rosencrantz & Guildenstern (old friends of Hamlet who spy on him for the new king), a company of actors;
- Thematic issues: You name it, it's probably in here. Good v. evil in man, acceptance or rejection of life, human choice and the "providence which shapes our ends," revenge, love and marriage, order and disorder, appearance and reality;
- Summary: A young prince is sad (Dad died) and mad (Mom married my uncle too soon after losing Dad). His Dad's ghost says "My brother killed me. Kill him for me." Prince says "Okay. Wait. Maybe. What if…" He also breaks up with his main squeeze and acts crazy when out in public while trying to decide if the ghost told him the truth or not. This is good because there is a lot of spying & eavesdropping on younger generation. Prince's uncle/step-dad figures out that the prince is on to him (there was a play), and decides he needs a road trip (maybe it will end with his head permanently removed). The prince gets shipped out (to England) with old friends (spies), then a pirate ship, a skull in the graveyard, a final scene that is full of death, death, and more death.

Heart of Darkness: a novel(la) by Joseph Conrad

- Setting: London, Brussels, and mostly the African Congo, in the mid-late 1800's;
- Characters; Charles Marlow (narrator for most of the story—an unnamed narrator describes the scene of the men on the boat outside London, just waiting to sail out to the sea), Kurtz, the General Station Manager, the Company Accountant, the Russian/Harlequin, Kurtz's Intended, the physician, Marlow's aunt, the many natives, and the men on the *Nellie* to whom Marlow tells his story;
- Thematic issues: the inherent good or evil in man, man's desire to have dominion, man's seemingly instinctive nature of subordinating the weak to serve the few in power (colonialism), man's unrelenting greed;
- Summary: Five men are on a boat (no flippy-floppies!) and one of them seems almost meditative. He's Charlie Marlow, and he's reminded of another time he was on a river. Then he tells about how he loved maps and travel and wanted to go up the Congo River (a "snake" that charmed him) because it would take him to a place that was once a blank spot on maps. He should have stayed home. He goes: the natives are treated horribly, his boat needs rivets, progress takes forever, useful resources are wasted, and he becomes obsessed with meeting Kurtz—a guy who used to send the biggest ivory shipments but is purportedly ill now and maybe even dead. Marlow reaches Kurtz who has single-handedly taken over a region and rules over the natives through fear and intimidation (skulls on spikes, anyone?)—all because he abandoned ethics, morals, and human decency when he "went native." Marlow sees the possibility of his becoming just as depraved and high-tails it home, stopping to lie to Kurtz's fiancee, telling her his last words were her name.

Madame Bovary: a novel, by Gustave Flaubert

- Setting: Northern, rural France, 1830's, during the reign of Louis Phillipe, a time in France marked by the emergence of the middle, working class and their materialism and greed;
- Characters: Emma Bovary, Charles Bovary, Berthe Bovary, Leon, Rodolphe, Homais, Lheureux, Justin;
- Thematic issues: failures of the bourgeoisie, powerlessness of women, the folly of living by Romantic inclination alone, the dangers of isolation and delusion;
- The novel begins and ends with descriptions of Charles Bovary, the man who marries Emma Bovary, the main character of the novel. She is a creature of longing and belief that there is something better and more lovely for her, but it's somewhere other than where she is. She doesn't like living in the country on a farm, so she marries a country doctor (a social step up, but not far up enough for her taste). She has a child, but isn't mother of the year because actually caring for a child is a real drag. She buys lots of expensive, shiny stuff on credit and acts as if she'll never have to pay for any of it. She takes a lover. She takes another lover. She buys more stuff. She's never happy or satisfied with anything. Her husband disgusts her (he is a less-than-mediocre pseudo-doctor and a pretty oblivious husband). She gets in financial trouble; she tries to fix it and even goes to a last resort for help but gets none. She takes a bunch of arsenic but it doesn't kill her quickly enough (gross). Then Charles dies. Their daughter will work all her life to pay off the immense debt her mother accrued.

A Tale of Two Cities: a novel, by Charles Dickens

- Setting: late 1700's in and around London and Paris (the two cities)—much action focuses around events that lead to the French Revolution, including the Storming of the Bastille (July 14, 1789);
- Characters: Lucie Manette, Dr. Manette, Jarvis Lorry, Charles Darnay (neé Evremonde), Sydney Carton, Ernest & Madame DeFarge, Miss Pross, the Marquis (de Evremonde/sometimes a general description for the wealthy class).

- Thematic issues: Love as a redemptive power, Family and obligation, Honesty and Lies, Vengeance, Identity, Responsibility (social especially, but also family), War and violence, Justice, Loyalty, Suffering, Life and Existence, Juxtaposition.
- Summary: Famous opening lines set up the whole situation: best of times, worst of times, yada, yada, yada. Lots of plots to start, and the novel unfolds how they are all connected. Lucie Manette is reunited with her father who has been in the Bastille for 18 years (she recalls him to life—sort of), Charles Darnay narrowly escapes punishment in an English court case, at least two men (Darnay and Carton) fall in love with Lucie (one's a vampire, one's a werewolf—just kidding! But Darnay is hiding his true identity), Darnay and Lucie marry, he kind of tells her who he is, and they are happy. Over in the other city (Paris), the revolutionaries (let's call them "Jacques") have lost patience and gained enough momentum to begin their uprising. Bastille stormed, DeFarge knows to search through what had been Dr. Manette's cell and he gets a letter. The Marquis de Evremonde gets killed, the groundskeeper sends Charles Darnay a letter begging for help, Charles has a moment of clarity where he sees the need to go back to France and do the right thing for the people of his area, but he winds up getting hauled into court and condemned to death. For him, it turns out to be a good thing that Carton resembles him so well, as he stands in at the guillotine so Lucie can keep her husband and family intact. Great sacrifice, but he has one nice moment with a lady while they wait in line to die. The Darnay/Manette group is able to safely return to England (where Dickens seems to think everything is far better).

Final Words from Your Teacher

Dear Class of 2012 APES,

I hope you have enjoyed studying great literature this year as much as I have enjoyed sharing time with you. I hope you will apply a strong and steady work ethic (in spite of rampant senioritis) to your preparation for this AP Exam and as you work through each task on Exam Day (Thursday, May 10, 2010). If you will heed the advice I have given regarding your thinking, reading, and writing ***all year***, as well as all the bits of advice, strategies, and tips in this Awesome Packet, I am confident that you can perform well. My wish is for every one of you to prepared for the rigors of college-level reading and writing, and that you will have the added bonus of an AP English Exam score that provides three to six college credit hours.

Wishing each of you at least 40+ correct multiple-choice items and upper-level scores on all three essays,

Mrs. Davis