

Welcome to AP Lit!

2018-2019

We are really excited about what this year holds.
We have one philosophy:

We work hard, and we play hard!



What is AP Lit?

AP Literature is a British Literature survey course. After we finish *Frankenstein*, we will start way back at the Anglo-Saxons and read the adventure epic *Beowulf*. Then we will work all the way through the Modernists (hopefully). We spend quite a bit of time detangling the mysteries of poetry. The grades are weighted 55% for writing exercises (there will be 2-4 per quarter) and 45% for other assignments, which are mostly reading quizzes.

At the end of the year you will complete a senior capstone project. The project can be over any subject that interests you. It does not have to be a literary analysis research paper, but it can be. The purpose of this project is to illustrate your ability to generate a research question and participate as a scholar in the body of academic work, the research skills you have acquired during high school, the ability to read and understand dense scholarly texts, the focus of your particular interests.

The class culminates in the AP Literature Exam. The exam consists of 55 multiple choice questions over a combination of prose and poetry. There are three essays. One is a prose analysis question over a text you will likely have never seen before. One is a poetry analysis question over a poem you will likely have never seen before. One is an open-response analysis question that you may answer using “any work of literary merit.”

Who are your teachers?

Ms. Wyeth is beginning her 6th year of teaching AP Lit, and this is her 13th year of teaching. She received her BA in English from University of Arkansas Little Rock and her MA in English with an English teaching specialty from Bowling Green University.

Ms. McCuien is beginning her 3rd year of AP Lit, and this will be her 26th year as a teacher. She received her BA in English and her MA in Education from University of Arkansas Little Rock.

We have similar professional philosophies, are we very good friends personally. We both believe it is important to have a balance of work and fun, and we are constantly checking and recalibrating our curriculum and practices to make sure we maintain that balance. We are also constantly reimagining what literature to teach and the best way to teach those texts. We are both self-professed literature nerds and both have a serious travel bug.



Why should you take AP Lit?

Because it's fun! No seriously! OK, well if that doesn't convince you, here are a few concrete reasons.

- You can earn college credit. For the last five years Central's AP Lit Exam pass rate has between 75% and 86%. To put that in perspective, the national pass rate is about 50% to 54%.
- HOWEVER. We don't treat the class like a test prep class because that would be dreadful. Enough said
- The class will teach you to read and to write and to discuss at a university level. By the time you leave AP Lit, you will be a college student ready to walk into any university in the country, whether state or Ivy League.
- You will enjoy the intellectual stimulation of being in conversation with other intellectuals.
- We really do have a lot of fun.

FAQ

Will it be hard?

Yes and no. At first you will find the material difficult. You have mostly been reading Modern and Post-modern lit, and most of it American. The material in AP Lit goes back a long way, and it may be the first time in a long time that you will have difficulty simply understanding what you're reading. But you really will get used to it. After a while it won't be nearly so challenging. We also read a good deal of literary criticism. That is upper-level academic reading that you struggle with. **BUT** Nobody expects you to understand every word on every page. We expect you to read and engage with the text, but if you didn't need help, you wouldn't need a teacher! We will also guide your writing all year long. Just trust us. You'll be fine.

Will the work load kill me?

No. You will not die. Seriously though, we find that the workload ebbs and flows. It will be heavy at times, but then there are periods where it is very light. The homework is almost exclusively reading. There is not a lot of out-of-class "homeworky" homework. You absolutely must read, but if you read, you will do very well.



Summer Reading Assignment

Part 1

- Watch and take notes on the BBC documentary *Frankenstein: Birth of a Monster*. At the time that I am writing this, it is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3sQMFGxZTM>. The documentary disappears and reappears. So far (crossing my fingers), I have always been able to find it. If the link doesn't work, do a Google search, and if you still can't find it, shoot an email to virginia.wyeth@lrsd.org. The documentary is a little cheesy, but it's got good background information.
- Be sure you take notes on the documentary. Also, be sure to bring these with you the first day.

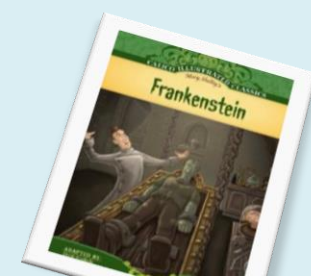
Part 2

- *Frankenstein* -- Norton Critical Edition. Don't worry. The novel isn't as long as it looks. The book is mostly essays and other supporting material. It is important that you get this copy because 1) it is the 1818 version of Shelley's novel and not the 1831 version, and 2) we will read several of the essays in class. Read the Introduction, the Preface, and the novel itself.

Shelley, Mary W., and J P. Hunter. *Frankenstein : the 1818 Text, Contexts, Criticism*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2012.

<https://www.amazon.com/Frankenstein-Second-Norton-Critical-Editions/dp/0393927938>

- Novel annotations:
 - Note any places in the novel that you think might be connected to her life (not just obvious stuff – think about this at a symbolic and/or psychological level), or places in the novel that reflect female/feminine/feminist concerns.
 - Note the role of nature/ how nature functions in the novel. Think of the archetypes you learned from Foster's *How To Read Literature Like a Professor*.
 - Note character doubling—how characters and their actions mirror each other.
 - Anything else you would normally annotate.



Field Trips

We have approval for up to FOUR field trips this year. Here is a look at the field trips we took last year.*



A university lecture at UCA on adaptations (film and otherwise) of *Frankenstein*. We have already scheduled this for the fall 2018 semester as well as a campus tour. You will love Dr. Jellenik!



*We do not anticipate that any trip will cost over \$20, and in general they will be much less. Discrete financial assistance for field trips will be given to any student who needs it.

Arkansas Repertory Theatre
John Miller-Stephany, Producing Artistic Director
Michael McCurdy, Managing Director

PRESENTS

THE SCHOOL FOR LIES

By
DAVID IVES

Adapted from
THE MISANTHROPE by Molière

Director
GIOVANNA SARDELLI†

Set Design
ROBERT MARK MORGAN*

Costume Design/Production Manager
RAFAEL COLÓN CASTANEDA

Lighting Design
MICHAEL GIANNITTI*

Sound Design
ALLAN BRANSON

Properties Design
LYNDA J. KWALLECK

Production Stage Manager
DANNY KUENZEL*

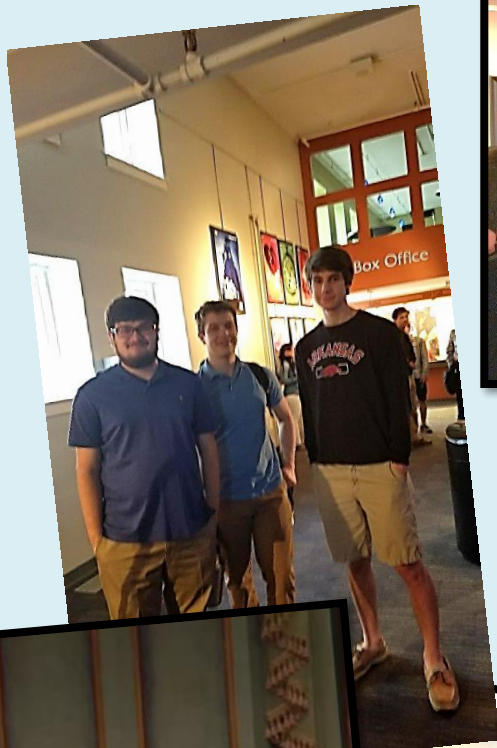
Wig Design
GERARD KELLY

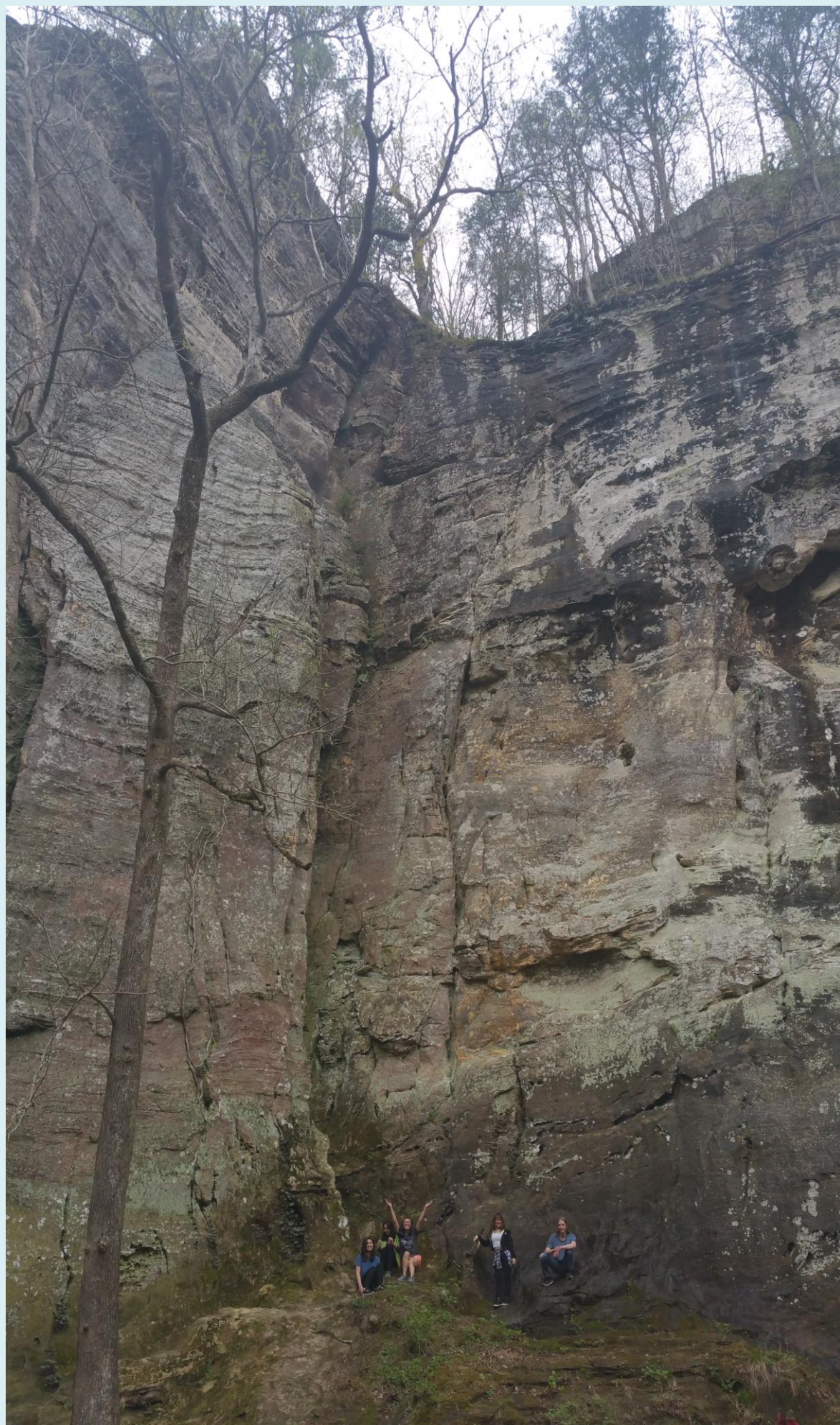
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Little Rock
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

Originally produced by Classic Stage Company.
Jirar Ratliff, Artistic Director, Jessica R. Jeron, Executive Director
The School for Lies is presented by special arrangement
with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

*Member, Actors' Equity Association. †Member, Stage Directors and Choreographers Society. *Member, United Scenic Artists.

School for Lies, an
adaptation of Molière's
bawdy French comedy
The Misanthrope. It was
an absolute scream.





Students were really able to see why the Romantic poets were obsessed with the awful awesomeness (and the awesome awfulness) of The Sublime when we visited the truly amazing Blanchard Springs Caverns. We followed it with a picnic and a little explore. What a great day!







Enjoy your summer!

We can't wait to meet you!



Ms. Wyeth

Ms. McCuien