

Syllabus: *American Literature*

Course Description

American Literature is a year-long survey course in which students explore the literary significance of selected works within the historical context of the United States' growth as a nation—socially, politically, and culturally. Students are introduced to a range of literature from early Native American oral traditions through the Second World War. A research paper is required.

Primary Text

- *Into Literature* Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Selections posted on course website and Clever

Required Purchase

Each student is required to purchase personally two additional novels. ISBN numbers of the editions we will use in class are listed below for your convenience. Please purchase your copies **before the second semester begins**, so that you are prepared.

- *The Great Gatsby* F. Scott Fitzgerald ISBN: 978-0-7432-7356-5
- *The Catcher in the Rye* J.D. Salinger ISBN: 978-0-316-76917-4

Estimated Coursework

To provide context, each unit will be preceded by a lecture covering the sociopolitical nature of the United States in a given era and the way in which literature reflects and responds to these forces. Most of the reading will be accomplished *independently* at home, while most of the written work will be completed *inside* the classroom. As such, the only “homework” students will usually have *outside* the classroom will be to read and to study. Their work *inside* the classroom will be to identify, analyze, and interpret the literature through the prism of our lectures and discussions. Such classwork should be viewed as an opportunity to develop the critical thinking skills and analytical tools necessary to apply what they’ve learned on larger assessments.

- 200 points Classwork
- 100 points Quizzes
- 300 points Unit Exams
- 100 points Research Unit

- Semester Exam = 1/7th of Overall Grade

Grading Scale

- 100 – 90 A
- 89 – 80 B
- 79 – 70 C
- 69 – 60 D
- 59 – 0 F

Expectations

Good students arrive on time, stay in class, keep their heads up, keep their phones away, complete their work on time, and advocate for themselves. Please make me aware of any necessary accommodations—academically, physically, financially, etc.

General Policies

- No phones
- Check the class website daily—**especially when absent**
- Lost or misplaced assignments should be printed from the website
- Quizzes and exams should be made up after school or during a study period
- If an assignment is due and you are at school for *any* portion of the day, you are expected to turn it in promptly
- If an assignment is due via Schoology and a tech issue occurs, let me know immediately and send a screenshot of the issue
- **Plagiarism of any sort will result in a zero** and loss of any extra credit opportunities
- It is the student’s responsibility to meet all deadlines and complete missed work: **late work will earn no more than 50%**
 - Further policies for absences, tardiness, and make-up work can be found in the student handbook
- Field trips, athletic events, suspensions, and prearranged absences are *not* excuses for late work
 - Work must be turned in *immediately* upon return or *before* your absence (subject to teacher’s discretion)
- Extra credit will be given *only* to those students with **no late, missing, incomplete, or plagiarized** work
- When all else fails: **use your common sense**

Tentative Schedule Semester I: American Literature

Week	Unit and Reading Selections	Classwork and Assessments
1	Course Introduction Website, Syllabus, and Class Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz: Class Policies
2-3	Unit 1: Colonialism: Foundations and Encounters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Of Plymouth Plantation</i> (Bradford) • “Upon the Burning of Our House” (Bradstreet) • “To My Dear and Loving Husband” (Bradstreet) • <i>The Crucible</i> (Miller) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classwork: Guided Questions (<i>The Crucible</i>) • Exam: Colonialism
4-5	Unit 2: Enlightenment: Reason, Revolution, and Civic Duty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech in the Virginia Convention (Henry) • <i>The Autobiography</i> (Franklin) • <i>The Interesting Narrative of the Life...</i> (Equiano) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classwork: Rhetorical Strategies • Exam: Enlightenment
6-7	Unit 3: Romanticism: Imagination, Intuition, and Individualism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Devil and Tom Walker” (Irving) • “The Fall of the House of Usher” (Poe) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classwork: Indexed Notes • Classwork: Indexed Notes
8-9	Unit 4: New England Renaissance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Nature” and “Self-Reliance” (Emerson) • “Civil Disobedience” and <i>Walden</i> (Thoreau) • “Song of Myself” (Whitman) • Selected Poems (Dickinson) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classwork: Transcendental Translation • Classwork: Transcendental Scavenger Hunt • Classwork: Poetry Explication • Exam: New England Renaissance
10-12	Research: Primary Source: <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> (Hawthorne)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 Cornell Notes
13	Research: Secondary Sources and Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bibliography and Cornell Notes
14	Research: Interpretation and Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Thesis/Outline and Formal Outline
15	Thanksgiving Break – Shortened Academic Week	
16	Research: Interpretation and Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal Outline
17	Research: Construction, Revision, and Publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rough Draft and Final Paper
18	Research: Construction, Revision, and Publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rough Draft and Final Paper
Final Exams		

Tentative Schedule Semester II: American Literature

Week	Unit and Reading Selections	Classwork and Assessments
1	Course Re-Introduction Website, Syllabus, and Class Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz: Class Policies
2-3	Unit 5: Division: Freedom and Democracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What to the Slave Is the 4th of July?” (Douglass) • “Ain’t I a Woman?” (Truth) • “The Gettysburg Address” (Lincoln) • “I Will Fight No More” (Joseph) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classwork: Distilled Notes • Exam: Division
4-8	Unit 6: Realism: Exploration and Exploitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “An Occurrence and Owl Creek Bridge” (Bierce) • “The Outcasts of Poker Flat” (Harte) • “The Notorious Jumping Frog” (Twain) • “The Yellow Wall-Paper” (Perkins Gilman) • <i>Up from Slavery</i> (Washington) • <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> (DuBois) • <i>The Jungle</i> (Sinclair) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classwork: Indexed Notes • Classwork: Indexed Notes • Classwork: Indexed Notes • Classwork: Indexed Notes • Classwork: Distilled Notes (Wash/DuBois) • Exam: Realism
9-12	Unit 7: Modernism: Between the Wars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Great Gatsby</i> (Fitzgerald) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary Quizzes • Chapter Quizzes • Classwork: Indexed Notes • Exam: Gatsby
Spring Break		
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modernist Poetry • The Harlem Renaissance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classwork: Poetry Explication • Pen Your Own Poem
14-16	Unit 8: Postmodernism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> (Salinger) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz: Ch 1-14 • Quiz: Ch 15-26 • Quiz: Annotations • Classwork: Indexed Notes • Exam: <i>Catcher in the Rye</i>
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Death of a Salesman</i> (Miller) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided Questions: <i>Death of a Salesman</i>
18-19	Unit 9: Contemporary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Recitatif” (Morrison) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Class Essay
Final Exams		