

## American Literature

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** In this genre-based course, students sharpen their reading comprehension skills and analyze important themes in classic and modern works of American literature, including short stories, poetry, drama, and novels. Students refine their skills of written expression by writing memoirs, persuasive essays, research essays, workplace documentation, and more. They develop vocabulary skills and refresh their knowledge of grammar, usage, and mechanics in preparation for standardized tests.

**LITERATURE:** Students read short stories, poetry, drama, and novels, sharpening their reading comprehension skills and analyzing important themes in American literature.

**LANGUAGE SKILLS:** Students continue to work on their oral and written expression skills, writing a variety of essays including memoirs, persuasive and research essays, and workplace documentation. Students plan, organize, and revise their essays in response to feedback.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Identify character traits and motivations.
- Describe characters based on speech, actions, or interactions with others.
- Demonstrate knowledge of authors, characters, and events of significant works of literature.
- Identify conflict and resolution.
- Recognize the effect of setting or culture on a literary work.
- Recognize author's attitude or tone.
- Recognize author's purpose and devices used to accomplish it, including author's language, organization, and structure.
- Identify theme.
- Recognize how point of view affects literature.
- Compare and contrast literary characters or selections.
- Recognize the use of language to convey mood.
- Identify rhyme scheme.
- Identify and interpret the use of imagery.
- Identify and interpret the use of figurative language.
- Identify elements of a short story.
- Identify climax.
- Identify point of view.
- Identify choices and consequences.

- Identify elements of drama and dramatic conventions.

**PREREQUISITES:** Literary Analysis and Composition II, or equivalent

**COURSE LENGTH:** Two Semesters

**REQUIRED TEXT:** Explorations: An Anthology of American Literature, Volume C

**MATERIALS LIST:** Our Town, by Thornton Wilder; To Kill a Mockingbird, by Harper Lee

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

**I. LITERATURE**

**Readings include:**

Novel

- To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

Drama

- Our Town by Thornton Wilder

Prose Fiction and Nonfiction

- Works by Kate Chopin, O. Henry, James Thurber, Mark Twain, Russell Baker, Maya Angelou, Henry David Thoreau, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and others

Poetry

- Works by Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Gwendolyn Brooks, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, Langston Hughes, Stephen Crane, and others

**II. COMPOSITION**

- In this writing program, students practice writing essays in various genres. Many units use the literature lessons as a springboard and thereby reinforce the connection between reading for meaning and writing to communicate one's own ideas. Students learn the form and structure of a variety of essays they will encounter in their academic careers, including memoirs (narrative), research papers, arguments, and speeches. In writing each essay, students go through a process of planning, organizing, and revising, and they learn to examine their own writing with a critical eye, paying attention to ideas, organization, structure, style, and correctness. Throughout the course, students write in response to prompts similar to those they will encounter on standardized tests.

#### Memoir

- After reading a group of literary memoirs, students will craft their own memoir about a meaningful event in their lives. Students will plan, write, and revise their memoir, incorporating what they learned about showing language.

#### Argument

- Students will craft a persuasive argument incorporating elements of logical thinking and supporting evidence for their position.

#### Research Paper

- Students learn about information sources, plagiarism, note taking, outlining, and proper citations in this comprehensive unit.

#### Practical Writing

- Students will work on practical communications or workplace documents.

### **III. CRITICAL SKILLS PRACTICE**

- Critical Reading Skills
- Passage-Based Questions
- Sentence Completion Questions
- Vocabulary Analysis
- Comprehension and Analysis

#### Writing Skills

- Responding to Prompts
- Identifying Errors and Improving Writing