

Honors American Literature

COURSE DESCRIPTION: In this course, students read and analyze works of American literature from colonial to contemporary times, including poetry, short stories, novels, drama, and nonfiction. The literary works provide opportunities for critical writing, creative projects, and online discussions. Students develop vocabulary skills and refresh their knowledge of grammar, usage, and mechanics in preparation for standardized tests.

PREREQUISITES: Honors Literary Analysis, Composition II, or equivalent, and teacher/counselor recommendation

COURSE LENGTH: Two Semesters

REQUIRED TEXT: Journeys in Literature: American Traditions, Volume C

MATERIALS LIST: The Great Gatsby, by F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Glass Menagerie, by Tennessee Williams

COURSE OUTLINE:

I. LITERATURE

Readings include:

Novels

- Students will read The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald and three of the following:
- The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway
- The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane
- A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest Gaines
- The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros
- Song of Solomon by Toni Morrison
- Catcher in the Rye by J. D. Salinger
- A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court by Mark Twain
- Billy Budd by Herman Melville

Drama

- The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams

Prose Fiction and Nonfiction

- Works by William Bradford, Jonathan Edwards, William Bradford, Benjamin Franklin, Benjamin Banneker, Ralph Waldo
- Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, Chief Joseph,
- William Faulkner, Julia Alvarez, Amy Tan, Richard Rodriguez, and others

Poetry

- Phillis Wheatley, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Edgar Allan Poe, Walt Whitman, Stephen Crane,
- Edward Arlington Robinson, Carl Sandburg, Robert Frost, H. D. (Hilda Doolittle), Paul Laurence Dunbar, Langston Hughes,
- Countee Cullen, Rita Dove, 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 literary analysis essays, writing in response to prompts similar to those students will encounter on standardized tests, research papers with correctly formatted citations, and a creative project presenting information and ideas in a speech, a song, a video, or a web page. In each composition, 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. In credit recovery courses, students do not turn in their planning and draft documents for a grade. Honors students complete independent projects that deepen their understanding of the themes and ideas presented in the curriculum.

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