

English II Syllabus

CP-A and Advanced Levels

In English II, students study varied literary and expository works focused on the relationship between the individual and society: the challenge to be self-directed versus pressure to conform; the desire for power and control in governments throughout history; and, the struggle to maintain humanity in the face of injustice. They analyze how individuals and societies portrayed in literary works use language to support, persuade, and control others; how the author chooses words to impact and move others, and how they can use language to share ideas and feelings with others. In all cases, students examine the ability of language to inform, persuade, and manipulate - to support others, build a sense of community or alienate us from each other.

This course reinforces strategies for active reading and inferential comprehension, emphasizes grammar and text structure when writing, and calls for students to construct analytical essays with supportive evidence from the text. The syllabus developed for this course provides an overview for both CP-A and Advanced levels. The Advanced level course will include more independent reading and responding and additional readings from the Reserved Reading section of each unit. The CP-A level course will offer more active reading and scaffolded analysis as a class.

In alignment with the school's *Portrait of the Crusader*, all students learn to follow a moral compass rooted in respect, integrity, hope, and kindness. Students will practice respecting the beliefs of others, learn to value the uniqueness of every human being, and learn to advocate for justice.

Essential Questions for the Course

Literature

- How does literature change us? How does it change the world?
- How do life experiences affect the writer and the reader?
- When is a character a hero? What can we learn from the hero? The antihero?
- How does literature spark social change?

Language

- Why does language have power?
- How does an author make a text come alive?
- How can we make our creative writing vivid and engaging?
- How can we make our analytical writing clear and effective?
- How can we share our opinions, ideas, and feelings effectively and respectfully?

Life

- How does one develop a sense of self? How does our sense of self and our values influence our choices?
- How does one flourish in society?
- How do we navigate the gray areas of life?
- How do our actions define who we are? What does it mean to have character?
- What does it mean to be misjudged?

Unit 1 - Dystopia and Utopian Societies: *There is no "you," only "we."*

8 weeks

In this unit, students read fiction and nonfiction texts that introduce them to dystopia and utopian societies and the authors who portray them. Several of the texts focus on the dystopian elements of propaganda, government control, loss of environment, and fear of the outside world. These texts are used to engage students in discussions about personal identity, freedom of thought, and challenges that arise when living in modern societies that strive to balance individual freedom with security and control. Students engage in differentiated learning activities, including projects, short written responses, and creative assignments. Learning activities are designed to hone skill development in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Reserved Reading Options:

Novels: *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury; excerpts *1984*, Orwell (Advanced)

Short Stories: "The Lottery," Jackson; "Harrison Bergeron," Vonnegut

Concepts and Skills:

- Apply active reading strategies to varied literary works.
- Determine the setting and point of view and how these impact the work.
- Analyze characters' development over the course of the text.
- Determine how the interaction of conflict and character illustrates theme(s).
- Discuss the author's purpose.
- Examine the methods of control used and determine how each results in the loss of individuality.
- Compare and contrast the societies and methods of control portrayed in *Fahrenheit* with societies portrayed in *1984*. (Advanced)
- Recognize and analyze the impact of literary devices: symbolism, irony, foreshadowing, figurative and vivid language to create mood, suspense.
- Develop and write a short literary analysis focused on a clear claim/position statement, contextualized and relevant text evidence, and sound reasoning.
- Structure and punctuate simple, compound and complex sentences. Avoid run-on sentences.
- Understand use of MLA citations to deter plagiarism

Mastery Assessments:

- Literary Analysis Responses focused on short stories and the novel, using MLA citations (Advanced level includes *1984*)
- Student-Centered Project - multimedia project focused on one element of dystopian societies or language manipulation

Unit 2 - Societal Responsibility in Times of Crisis

8 weeks

In Unit 2, students explore the complexities of society, including the responsibilities that the community and the larger society have to promote justice. Through novels, speeches, and other nonfiction works, students work to compare understandings gained from their readings with broader, real-world contexts. Such exploration leads to the questioning of personal actions and responsibilities within a family, a community, and the world. Learning activities are designed to hone skill development in critical thinking, reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Reserved Reading Options:

Novels: *Night*, Elie Wiesel; *The Book Thief (excerpts)*, Markus Zusak (Advanced)

Non Fiction: “The Perils of Indifference” and Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech, Wiesel; Excerpts from “Letters from a Birmingham Jail,” Martin Luther King (Advanced).

Concepts and Skills:

- Read and analyze the nonfiction narrative: trace central ideas, motifs, and themes; examine the author’s style and purpose. Determine what the work reveals about the time period and author.
- Make inferences and evidenced-based predictions while reading texts.
- Understand and recognize aspects of stereotyping and prejudice as portrayed in texts and revealed through nonfiction writings.
- Read and analyze arguments and recognize common rhetorical strategies used by Weisle and King.
- Delineate the author’s argument, assessing whether reasoning is valid and evidence is sufficient.
- Write a well-developed argument that includes a clear position statement, relevant, contextualized evidence, and sound reasoning.
- Create a clear, logical organization and use transitional words and phrases to link ideas and paragraphs.
- Incorporate text evidence to support claims using MLA formatting
- Write and accurately punctuate varied sentences. Avoid run-on sentences, comma splices, and fragments.

Mastery Assessments:

- Literary Analysis Responses
- Creative Writing: character memoir or letter writing
- Argumentative Essay: Well-structured, research-based argumentative essay with accurate citations.

Unit 3 - The Struggle for Individuality: *Discovering what makes us what we are*

In Unit 3, students read and analyze literary works focused on how the individual relates to society, specifically how individuals perceive themselves based on internal and external value systems. Students reflect on the societal pressures that drive us and the concepts of greatness and goodness, including how these ideas are informed by culture and those in power.

Reserved Reading Options:

Short Story: “The Open Boat,” Stephen Crane; “A Good Man is Hard to Find,” O’Connor; “The Rules of the Game” Amy Tan (Advanced).

Novels: *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe

Speech/Video: “The Dangers of a Single Story,” Adichie

Concepts and Skills:

- Apply active reading strategies.
- Determine the setting and point of view and how these impact the work.
- Analyze characters’ development over the course of the text.
- Determine how the interaction of conflict and character illustrates theme(s).
- Trace the narrative arc, identifying primary and sub plots and methods used by the author to engage the

reader through flashback and parallel plots.

- Analyze works for specific literary devices, including irony, symbolism, and figurative language.
- Write well-developed literary analysis responses, each with a clear position statement, relevant evidence, and sound reasoning; parse and contextualize quotes to support analyses.
- Discuss personal values of greatness and goodness and how these are influenced by family, culture, religion and nationalism.
- Write a well-developed personal narrative to convey a clear/thoughtful message about personal values. The narrative can be a chronology of how personal values were shaped or a reflection of personal, cultural, and other experiences that shaped personal values.
- Use quotation marks and other marks of punctuation accurately. Write/punctuate dialogue accurately.
- Use transitional words and phrases to link ideas and transition from one idea to the next.

Mastery Assessments:

- Literary analysis responses to ensure comprehension of texts.
- Personal Narrative of 600 -800 words

Unit 4 - When Power Corrupts

In Unit 4, students read literary works that explore choices and consequences and the quest for power and control. They apply the literary analysis skills learned throughout the course, and they use the themes and characters portrayed in literature as a springboard to reflect on broader existential questions, such as: *Does fate or free will determine our lives? Are leaders born or created? How easy is it for a person to lose his way morally? Does absolute power create an individual or reveal an individual? How can power corrupt even the best of people?*

Reserved Reading Options:

Drama: "Macbeth," Shakespeare

Short Story: "The Mask of the Red Death," Poe

Novel in Verse: (excerpts) *Long Way Down*, Jason Reynolds (Advanced)

Poetry "The War Works Hard," Dunya Mikal

Concepts and Skills:

- Examine the biography and impact of Shakespeare's work. Review and discuss the influence of the author on theater. Explore the time period of the play and the author's reasons for writing.
- Analyze the integration of literary elements to explore character and convey themes in the play.
- Define irony and dramatic irony and interpret both while reading the play.
- Analyze how the author uses language to create mood, mystery, and suspense. Define simile, metaphor, personification, allusion and symbol; interpret these devices while reading the play.
- Analyze and compare the writing style and themes of Shakespeare with the other authors studied in the unit. Analyze Poe's work for literary devices.

Mastery Assessment Options:

- Creative writing - letters or journal entries from Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, or Macduff to trace conflict and character development.
- Assessment focused on Macbeth - short answer and open-ended responses; quote interpretations.
- Literary Analysis 600 - 800 words.
- Seminar Discussion focused on a topic chosen by the class. Students reference the texts studied throughout the year.

Grading Practices - Percentage Breakdown of Assessments:

I - Mastery/Summative Assessments (40%)

- Essays and Original Writing
- Tests
- Projects and Presentations

II - Formative Assessments (40%)

- Reading quizzes focused on close reading and literary engagement
- Reading responses written, peer-reviewed, and presented
- Annotations, notes, and independent preparation
- In-class and homework writing assignments
- Independent, focused research assignments

III - Engagement/Participation (20%)

- In-class discussion and discussion board participation
- Active engagement in one-on-one meetings as a means of seeking additional feedback
- Displaying the engagement and awareness to ask questions
- Respectful consideration of all ideas.
- Understanding the classroom setting as a place of scholarly discourse and engagement.
- Self-advocacy.