

## Advanced English I - Foundations of Literature and Language

### Course Syllabus

#### Course Description

In Advanced English I, students read literary works that explore the world and the human condition. They learn to read deeply, moving beyond an understanding of plot into an analysis of character, theme, and author's craft. In addition to literature, students read and analyze informative and persuasive texts, focusing on advanced vocabulary and reading strategies to determine the author's purpose, hierarchy of ideas, and, as necessary, the unintended or purposeful use of bias.

As importantly, students learn to write effectively, sharing their ideas and insights through well-structured responses and analyses. Their writing is based upon a solid knowledge of grammar and organizational skills. As outlined in this syllabus, reading, writing, and critical thinking skills are introduced in unit one and then progress in complexity throughout the course.

In alignment with the school's *Portrait of the Crusader*, students learn the importance of developing and following a moral compass rooted in respect, integrity, hope, and kindness. The literature read and the discussions that follow encourage students to develop a compassionate understanding of others and themselves. The writing practiced in class encourages students to use thoughtful and precise words that facilitate clarity, cooperation, and productivity.

#### 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?
- What can we learn from the hero? The antihero? The seemingly ordinary person?
- How does each literary element contribute to the author's purpose?

##### Language

- Why does language have power?
- How should language change depending on our purpose?
- What is the ethical component of using language to persuade others?
- How does effective communication enhance cooperation and understanding? Efficiency?

## Course Curriculum

### Unit One: Reading and Responding to Nonfiction

8 - 9 weeks

In this unit, students learn and practice advanced-level reading skills that enhance comprehension of informative and persuasive texts similar to those they will encounter in high school coursework. In addition, students read nonfiction narratives, such as memoirs and biographies, and analyze how these texts combine factual information with literary elements and stylistic devices to engage the reader. Throughout the unit, students learn grammar and essential writing skills with a focus on constructing clear and fluent sentences, paragraphs, and essays. The culminating activity for the unit is a writing project that incorporates an expository and a narrative component.

#### Reading Nonfiction (Reading for Information)

Reading Options for Informative Texts: Articles and primary source excerpts focused on topics linked to the World History I curriculum; informative and persuasive articles.

Reserved Reading Options for Nonfiction Narratives: Tuesdays with Morrie, Mitch Albom

#### Skills:

- Apply specific reading strategies to varied texts: preview to determine text structure and topics; use headings to formulate focus questions before and during reading; determine whether author's purpose is to inform or persuade; identify the main idea of each paragraph/section; use context to determine word meaning; separate fact from opinion; recognize biased language.
- Annotate during reading to ensure focus and provide reference notes for analysis.
- Synthesize information from multiple sources through note taking and outlining.
- Conduct research: select credible sources; take notes, and organize information into a logical sequence (outline) for an expository research paper.
- Read nonfiction narratives and analyze narrative arcs; setting, character, conflict, and author's message.
- Evaluate the author's craft for vivid language and the elements of engaging story-telling (captivating plot, relatable characters, completing conflict).
- Contrast the purpose, content, and tone of informative texts with nonfiction narratives.

#### Grammar

#### Skills:

- Identify parts of speech and apply specific usage rules for each.
- Apply knowledge to all in-class writing assignments. Practice peer editing.

## Writing

### Skills:

- Write well-structured paragraphs in response to RFI texts. Use a specific method of paragraph development: narrative and description; main idea/supporting details; argument/reason, compare/contrast; cause/effect. Incorporate grammar rules learned in the unit.
- Research a significant event aligned with the World History I curriculum; create an outline and write an expository research paper of 700 words; use MLA format for citations and works cited; incorporate grammar rules learned in the unit.
- Write a first-person narrative. Plan the narrative arc to have an exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and conclusion.
  - Option 1: Write a personal, nonfiction narrative about a significant life event. Use the first person point of view and ensure that the conclusion focuses on how the event led to personal growth/change.
  - Option 2: Based upon the research essay, develop a fictional character who was involved in the historical event of the research paper. Write a memoir of the event from the character's perspective. Use first-person point of view and ensure accurate historical details.
- After-writing discussion: compare and contrast the purpose, structure, and style of the expository essay versus narrative writing.

### Mastery Assessments:

- Grammar Assessment: Parts of Speech
- Expository Essay: 700 words; MLA format.
- Narrative: 600 - 700 words.

## **Unit Two: Reading and Analyzing Short Fiction**

**10 weeks**

In this unit, students practice advanced-level reading skills that enhance comprehension of short literary work, such as the short story and the novella. Initially, they learn how the elements of plot, point of view, setting, and character work together to illustrate one or more universal themes. Next, they learn how each author uses literary devices, such as figurative language, symbolism, foreshadowing, and irony, to enhance reader engagement, develop the theme, and create a unique writing style. Throughout the unit, students continue their study of grammar and writing skills and apply these skills to short literary analysis responses and essays. Culminating activities in this unit include an independent reading and analysis of a short story and an original persuasive essay.

### Reading Literature

Reserved Reading Options: Short Stories - "Gift of the Magi," O. Henry; "Charles," Shirley Jackson; "Lamb to the Slaughter," Roald Dahl; "All Summer In a Day," Ray Bradbury; "Thank You Ma'am," Langston Hughes; "War," Luigi Pirandello. Novel- The Pearl, Steinbeck.

#### Skills:

- Explore the essential question: *What can we learn about life in fifteen pages?*
- Identify and interpret literary elements while reading: determine how setting and point of view shape the text; trace the development of the plot and conflict; analyze how characters change as a result of conflicts and choices; infer themes and evaluate how conflict and character changes illustrate these themes.
- Recognize the unique components of each author's writing style, especially the use of literary devices: figurative language, foreshadowing, symbolism, irony, mood, suspense.
- Apply appropriate strategies to determine nuanced word meaning in context.
- Evaluate stories for specific strengths and defend opinions with text evidence.
- Work in small groups to award short story Oscars in a variety of categories and defend choices with text-based evidence. Categories are: (1) Best description of setting (2) Most memorable main character (3) Most despicable character (4) Most impactful ending (6) Best use of irony (7) Best life lesson (8) Overall winner - best short story read in class.)

#### Grammar

##### Skills:

- Define, identify, and correctly write all parts of the sentence.
- Recognize and use the five sentence patterns: S/AV; S/AV/DO; S/AV/IO/DO; S/LV/PN; S/LV/PA.
- Identify and use specific types of phrases (prepositional, appositive, verbal).

#### Writing

##### Skills:

- Write short literary analyses (constructed responses) that include a clear position statement, relevant text evidence, and sound reasoning to show how the evidence supports the position statement.
- Write a persuasive essay based upon a standard format: introduction with position statement, three points of argument with supporting evidence and sound reasoning, insightful conclusion. Incorporate grammar rules learned to date.

#### Mastery Assessments

- Grammar Assessment: Parts of the Sentence and Sentence Patterns
- Literature Assessment: Read a new short story, respond to questions, write a short literary analysis.
- Persuasive Essay - 450- 500 words.

### **Unit Three: Reading and Analyzing the Modern Novel**

**6 weeks**

In unit three, students read a modern novel, trace the development of conflict, character, and theme over the course of the text, and analyze how the author portrays complex characters and conveys sophisticated themes. The author's choice of literary devices is also a focus of this unit. Non-fiction readings explore the social and emotional issues that young adults face and provide positive options for dealing with internal and external conflicts. Advanced grammar and writing skills are taught and assessed in this unit.

#### Reading Literature

Reserved Reading Options: The Catcher in the Rye, Salinger; Speak, Andersen (excerpts).

#### Skills:

- Interpret and analyze literary elements: Trace the narrative arc and identify linear, episodic, parallel, and flashback plot lines. Determine how setting and point of view shape the text.
- Analyze the motivations and choices of main characters and how these characters develop over the course of the text. Investigate the use of dialogue to reveal character.
- Determine themes based on analysis of character, conflict, and setting.
- Interpret literary devices of foreshadowing, figurative language, mood, symbolism, and irony; evaluate how they enhance the text.
- Review the components of the author's style: stream of consciousness, word choice, sentence structure, descriptive technique, and tone. Evaluate the author's craft.

#### Reading Nonfiction

Reserved Reading Options: Growth Mindset for Teens (excerpts), Sheppard; relevant articles focused on author, setting or historical time period.

#### Skills:

- Read informative and argumentative texts focused on the themes of the unit.
- Apply reading strategies taught in unit one; make predictions and inferences when reading; draw conclusions and form opinions based on accurate information.
- Practice active reading through annotation and note taking.

#### Grammar

#### Skills:

- Identify types of clauses and their use in given sentences.
- Identify and punctuate simple, compound, and complex sentences correctly.
- Accurately write and punctuate varied sentence types with and without phrases.

## Writing

### Skills:

- Write two impactful letters to show the main character's feelings at specific points in the novel. The letters can be to any other character in the novel. 200 words each.
- Write a literary analysis focused on the development of one literary element (e.g., character or theme) or literary device (e.g., symbolism) over the course of the novel. Follow essay structure and MLA format; 800 words.

## Mastery Assessments

- Grammar Assessment - Sentence Types and Punctuation
- Literary Analysis Essay: 800 words; focused on one element of the novel; MLA format

## **Unit Four - Reading and Analyzing Drama and Poetry**

**6 weeks**

In this unit, students read and analyze a Shakespearean play and study classic and modern poetry, focusing on the writers' command of the language and exploration of the human experience. At the end of the unit, students write original poems and explain each poem's meaning in a teacher conference or to the class (student choice).

## Reading Drama

Reserved Reading Options: Romeo and Juliet or Midsummer's Night Dream, Shakespeare.

### Skills:

- Understand the format of the written play: act, scene headings, dialogue, directions.
- Interpret literary elements: setting, point-of-view, primary conflicts, and plot line.
- Analyze character development, including the underlying motivations; recognize foils.
- Analyze literary devices, allusion, monologue, soliloquy, aside, motif, symbolism, dramatic irony.
- Interpret specific sonnets for meaning; analyze figurative language.
- Analyze themes and determine how a play reflects and transcends the time-period.
- View a film version of the play and review literary elements. Analyze and evaluate the choices of the director in adapting the play to film.

## Reading Poetry

Reserved Reading - Rhyme: "The Bells," Edgar Allen Poe; "Fire and Ice," Robert Frost; "An Obstacle," Charlotte Gilman; "We Wear the Mask," Paul Dunbar; "Still I Rise," Maya Angelou.

Reserved Reading - Free Verse: "At the Window," Carl Sanburg; "Theme for English B," Langston Hughes; "Remember," Joy Harjo; "Tree of Fire," Adonis (Translated by Hazo); "The Rose That Grew From Concrete," Tupac Shakur; "Enough," Andru Defeye. "Small Frogs Killed on the Highway," Wright.

#### Skills:

- Recognize poetic form.
- Examine how sound creates mood and evokes emotion.
- Interpret figurative language: metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole.
- Determine the central purpose of each poem.
- Compare and contrast the form, language, and speakers of varied poets.
- Compose poetry, exploring different forms and stylistic features to convey a specific message.

#### Grammar

##### Skills:

- Recognize and correct fragments, comma splices, and run-on sentences in written work.
- Accurately use marks of punctuation in written work.
- Apply the conventions learned throughout the year.

#### Writing

##### Skills:

- Delineate an argument to prove who is responsible for the deaths of Romeo and Juliet and use this as a basis for a class debate. Create a bulleted list with parallel structure to use in a Socratic Seminar or class discussion.
- Create two original poems modeled after selected poets and focused on the same theme. One is rhyme and one is free verse. Each poem should be 10 -12 lines.

#### Mastery Assessments

- Test: Romeo and Juliet and the elements of the Shakespearean tragedy; analysis responses.
- Grammar - Year-End Grammar Assessment

#### **Grading and Make-up Policy**

In all units of study, students are assigned formative and mastery work. Formative work helps the student apply the skills learned each day and guides the teacher to plan and adjust future instruction. Formative assessments are based on student response and will vary from year to year. Much of the formative work is focused on reading comprehension and writing practice. Mastery work is given at the end of a teaching unit to assess student knowledge. This syllabus lists the mastery assessments given during each unit. In general, students receive 7 - 9 formative grades per unit and 2 -3 mastery grades depending on the length of the unit.

Students who do not do well on formative assessments may make-up the assessments during office hours. The recorded grade will be the grade scored on make-up assessment up to a grade of 80. Students are not able to make-up mastery grades as these are announced well in advance, and

students are given the opportunity to come to office hours for extra help before the assessment. It is important to note that many of the mastery grades are essays, so students receive feedback while writing and have the opportunity to revise the essay before submitting the final document for a grade.

Homework is primarily reading assignments, and, periodically, students may be given unannounced quizzes to ensure that they have read the assigned work.

When a student is absent, he or she should arrange a time for make-up work within the week.

### **Late Work Policy**

The English Department has a uniform policy which is posted on the board and explained to students in class.

### **Grading Percentages Each Marking Period (Quarter):**

Class Participation and Engagement - 20%.

Formative Work: classwork and homework; quizzes - 40%.

Mastery Assessments: essays, tests - 40%.

Participation grades offer a valuable way for students to show effort and commitment. From a teacher's perspective, they provide a way to encourage engagement, collaboration, student-to-student learning, and an academic environment.

Please note: The pace and/or elements of this syllabus may be modified based on student need.

Please review the school's website for additional information - <https://www.holycrossct.org> .