

 SYLLABUS/ Course Handbook	Mascenic Regional High School
	Course: Honors American Literature
	2016-17
	Instructor: Ms. Culliton
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Core Values Statement

Mascenic Regional High School’s mission is to create a respectful, secure and engaging learning environment. Our goal is to motivate all students to become knowledgeable, independent, lifelong learners who will be ethical, effective 21st century citizens.

Course Description

This is a college-preparatory course focusing American Literature from the 1600s to the 20th Century. We deal with topics both chronologically and thematically by reading primary non-fiction sources, historical background introductions, and fiction, essays, drama, and poetry.

In addition to “college preparation,” it is also a course goal to provide students, through our literary studies, tools that they can use in both and in public life as citizens; and to develop good workplace habits.

Prerequisites: Successful completion of required grade 10 English Course (Society in Literature Honors)

Required Resources

Conversations in American Literature text; *Readings in American Literature* text and individual novels and smaller anthologies (all provided by MRHS)

SAT Preparation text

Three-ring binder

Access to internet and a printer outside of school

USB Flash drive

MRHS Network account (provided by MRHS)

Course Competencies

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have demonstrated the ability to

- Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
- Seek out information on various research paper formats such as MLA and APA quickly and efficiently.
- Write to persuade and analyze, using effective composition strategies, to produce clear and coherent writing.
- Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions.
- Use the web site (www.culliton.org) I have set up.
- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support an analysis or position.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text.
- Delineate, demonstrate knowledge of and analyze the purpose and reasoning in seminal U.S. texts of historical and literary significance, including seventeenth-, eighteenth-, nineteenth- and twentieth-century foundational works of American literature.

Essential Questions

- What has the term “American Dream” meant in various time periods and for various sub-cultures?
- How have writers represented as well as influenced what it means to be American?
- What roles have such factors as individual nature, gender, race, class, geography and education played in the creation of America’s literature?
- How may reading America’s literature help us understand ourselves in relation to today’s America?
- How does possessing an overarching understanding of the country’s literature and its themes illustrate how we as a people came to be who we are today?

21st Century Learning Skills

In this course, students will develop the following skills:

Academic

- Apply effective decision-making, problem solving, and critical thinking skills both independently and collaboratively.
- Connect with others through written and oral communication.
- Acquire a broad base of knowledge in the history of American ideas.
- Demonstrate responsibility for their academic endeavors through adherence to school policies and requirements by being committed, engaged, participating students in the classroom community.

Civic

- Develop an ability to make intelligent and informed decisions as involved citizens within our democratic system.
- Honor commitments to groups, organizations, teams, and classes.

Social

- Demonstrate respect for the individual.
- Act with integrity.

Course Content

Literature Units

Meeting of Old and New Worlds

The Columbus Day Controversy

The Great Awakening versus the Enlightenment/Age of Reason

Literature of the Early United States

Transcendentalism (Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne)

Poetry of Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson

Post Civil-War Era

Realism & Naturalism (Crane, Cather)/The Gilded Age and Progressive Eras

The 20th Century: *The Great Gatsby*, *Inherit the Wind*, *Death of a Salesman*, and/or *The Crucible*; Modern Poetry

In addition, the following skills will be reinforced throughout:

Rhetorical Analysis

Close Reading

Argument

Synthesis

Use of Standard Written English

Understanding figurative language

Gathering relevant information

Drawing evidence from texts

Conducting research to answer questions/solve problems

Using technology

SAT/ACT Preparation (ongoing)

Here is the tentative course outline, subject to some change:

Aug – Sept

Unit 1: Rhetoric, Close Reading, Argument, and Synthesis; Introduction to the Literature of the Americas

Week 1-2:

Ch. 1 – pp. 1-6; 8-14; 21-23; 25-28

Ch. 2 – pp. 52-59 and Activity on pp. 60-62

Outline of American Literary and Philosophical Movements and Periods

SAT Prep Assignment 1

Week 3:

Ch. 5 – Introduction to “A Meeting of Old and New Worlds” – pp. 187-192

Values embodied in Creation Stories: Literary Analysis

“White Buffalo Woman” (Reprint Handout)

“Earth on Turtle’s Back” (pp. 194-5)

Genesis Chs. 1-3 (Reprint Handout) and Study Guide questions

Eurocentric / Ethnocentric – meaning and examples

SAT Prep Assignment 2

Week 4:

Ch. 3 – pp. 85-96 on Arguments and Claims

Ch. 5 – from *Journal of the First Voyage to America* (p. 280)

also see <http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/zinncol1.html>

“Examining the Reputation of Christopher Columbus” by Jack Weatherford
(p. 289)

“The Columbus Day Controversy” by Michael S. Berliner” (p. 291)

“Wilma Mankiller Reflects on Columbus Day” (p. 293)

“What Columbus Day Really Means” by William J. Connell (p. 296)

Excerpt from *Columbus: The Four Voyages* (p. 300)

Ch. 2 – pp. 74-76 on Visual Texts

Visual Texts: *Salem Wolf* by Pyle and *Cornucopia Bear* (Handouts) by Nice
and Response Assignment

Week 5:

Review of the Reformation (Handout)

Puritanism: Calvinist Tenets (Handout)

Ch. 5 – from *A Modell of Christian Charity* by John Winthrop (p. 254)

from *Wonders of the Invisible World* by Cotton Mather (p. 243)

from *A Modest Inquiry into the Nature of Witchcraft* by John Hale (p. 248)

October

Unit 2: Enlightenment to 1800 — The Tug-of-War between The Great Awakening and the Age of Reason

Weeks 6 – 7:

Jonathan Edwards, excerpts from “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” (p. 257)

pp. 345-349, Intro to “A New Republic”

pp. 249-350, Intro to Benjamin Franklin

Benjamin Franklin: “The Speech of Miss Polly Baker” and Exploring the Text Responses; excerpts from *The Autobiography* starting from “I had been religiously educated as a Presbyterian...” and Study Guide (NOT questions in textbook)

SAT Prep Assignment 3

Weeks 8 – 9:

Thomas Paine: from *The Age of Reason* (p. 383) and Exploring the Text questions Ch. 3 – pp. 98-100 on thesis

The Letters of Abigail and John Adams (p. 385) and Study Guide questions (NOT questions in the text)

Excerpts from *Notes on the State of Virginia* by Thomas Jefferson, on religious freedom (Query XVII) and universal education (Query XIV) (Reprint Handout) and Study Guide questions

Ch. 4 – pp. 156-185 on Education Conversation

Weeks 10 – 11:

Writing Workshops: Grammar as Rhetoric and Style: Appositives (p. 535)

MLA Documentation Style (p. 1567)

Ch. 4 – pp. 116-120 on Shaping Argument & Classical Oration

Ch. 4 – pp. 147-152 on Using Sources

Persuasive Research Essay

October – November

Unit 3: Literature of the Early United States

Week 12:

pp. 547-551, Introduction to “America in Conflict”

pp. 72-74 on Close Reading Poetry

Edgar Allan Poe:

“The Raven” (Reprint Handout) and “The Fall of the House of Usher” (p. 576)

Poe in Film and Illustration

Close Reading and Literary Technique Analysis

p. 52-59 on Annotating & GOs, pp. 60-62

SAT Prep Assignment 4

November

Unit 4: Transcendental Optimism

Week 13:

excerpt from “Self-Reliance” (text) and from “The American Scholar” (Reprint handout)

Talkback: “The Foul Reign of Emerson’s ‘Self-Reliance’” by Benjamin Anastas (p. 602)

Week 14:

selections from Thoreau’s “Civil Disobedience” (book to be given to annotate) and historical illustrations on video

December-January

Mid-term Exam (tentative)

Unit 5: Transcendental Pessimism

Weeks 15-17:

The Scarlet Letter

SAT Prep Assignments 5 & 6

February

Unit 6: Mid-Late 19th Century Poets and Poetry

Weeks 18 – 19:

Walt Whitman’s Life and Work (*WW: Complete poems*)

Talkback: “A Supermarket in California” by Allen Ginsberg

Weeks 20 – 21:

pp. 134-136

Emily Dickinson’s Life and Work (Reprints, Handouts)⁷

SAT Prep Assignment 7

March

Unit 7: Reconstruction Era-Progressive Era; Realism and Naturalism (1865-1913)

Week 22:

pp. 823-828, Introduction to “Reconstructing America”

pp. 136-138 on Visual Texts as Arguments

Frank Leslie's *Illustrated Newspaper*, "Does Not Such a Meeting Make Amends?" (cartoon, 1869; p. 841)
Thomas Nast, "Worse than Slavery" (cartoon, 1874; p. 845)
Jacob Riis, "The Mixed Crowd" (1890; p. 869)
Stephen Crane. "An Ominous Baby" (Reprint)

Weeks 23 – 27:

Stephen Crane, *Maggie*
Willa Cather, "Paul's Case" (paperback)

Literary Analysis of *Maggie* / "Paul's Case" OR Whitman / Dickinson (PPT or Essay)

April

Unit 8: Post WWI America

Weeks 28 – 30:

pp. 1069-1074, Introduction to "America in the Modern World"
Era in Song mini-unit
pp. 69-71 on Argument in Fiction
The Great Gatsby

May – June

Unit 9: Modern Drama and Poetry (tentative)

Weeks 31 – 33:

pp. 1279-1285, Introduction to "Redefining America"
Inherit the Wind
Death of a Salesman
Selected 20th C. poems

In addition, students will develop vocabulary through the use of a **Vocabulary Notebook** in which to complete the **Perpetual Vocabulary Assignment**. This notebook is to be used throughout most units of the course. **The Perpetual Vocabulary Assignment is as follows:** Every time a student encounters an unfamiliar word, it is to be looked up and its definition—appropriate to its context in the literature—is to be written after it. Any word from any piece of literature could show up on a test or quiz, during which students may use their notebooks.

Instructional Methods

Close-reading Study Guides
Supplemental handouts
Graphic Organizers

Independent and group readings
Modeling/demonstrations
Film/audio depictions

Assessment Methods

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A+ = 100 – 97	B- = 82 – 80	D = 66 – 63
A = 96 – 93	C+ = 79 – 77	D- = 62 – 60
A- = 92 – 90	C = 76 – 73	F = 59 or Below
B+ = 89 – 87	C- = 72 – 70	
B = 86 – 83	D+ = 69 – 67	

Students will be assessed on the course competencies, content, and skills via the following:

The MRHS School-Wide Rubrics will be used as appropriate, especially in the areas of Written, Oral and Visual Communications.

There will be reading/note-taking and/or vocabulary homework almost daily. During class, we will have discussions of readings, individual and cooperative tasks. Voluntary participation by all students in oral discussions is crucial. There will be quizzes (some announced and some not) on readings due for the day, reading homework assessed by oral questioning, a major persuasive research essay, and tests. Proper citations of research sources according to MLA format; proper sentence, paragraph and essay structure; and correct usage and mechanics will also be included.

All assignments (including tests, quizzes, etc.) are given various “weights”—that is, grades for some will count one-quarter, one-half, one or two times (unannounced quizzes, in-class exercises), and still others will count three, four, or five times (announced quizzes, major tests, papers, projects, etc.). If you see “3X” beside something on your Assignment Schedule, that means the grade for the assignment counts three times, for example.

Overall class participation in discussions and activities will be assessed periodically during the year and will constitute approximately 20% of each quarter grade. I may also give grades for preparation and cooperation, which will count once.

The final examination for this class will, as per School Board policy, count as 20 percent of the course grade. There may be a mid-term at the end of semester one in January. If so, the grade on this will count as 10% of the course grade and the Final in June will count as 10%.

Remember to check your grades and regularly using Power School.
The portal is here: <https://mascenic.powerschool.com/public/home.html>

Course Policies

If something is affecting your performance in my class, or you do not understand something you have to do at home, TALK TO ME. I have no way of knowing what is going on with you unless you tell me. You MUST take responsibility in this area! See page 1 for contact information.

Set aside enough time to do homework assignments carefully. LOOK AHEAD ON YOUR ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE and plan your time. Work for this class is made clear well in advance. Take all relevant books and handouts home every night, plan your time to allow for glitches, emergencies, etc., and have everything you need with you for each class at the beginning of the period.

Use of technology is expected. Students will at times need to use web site I have set up to access study guides and other materials, print them outside of class, and bring them to class as required. Students will need a network password for use here at school, means to word-process or type papers at home, and access to the World Wide Web on a regular basis outside of class (our library, your town library, home, etc.).

Be prepared and willing to participate spontaneously in class discussions; it is only through these that we can go beyond superficial analysis of literature! Be thoughtful enough to make the leap and apply lessons, themes, ideals, values, etc., from literature readings to your own life, present and future.

Do not do anything that makes it difficult for yourself or others in the class to learn or for me to teach. (Always remember to LISTEN when someone else is speaking, SPEAK UP when it's your turn, and do NOT start side conversations or create distractions.) Be respectful; a classroom should be a safe space for all regardless of personal characteristics; rude comments are not allowed!

Keep up-to-date notes both from your own reading and from class discussions / lectures. You will need to have a LOOSE-LEAF (not spiral-bound), THREE-RING BINDER. I hand out many information sheets, reprints, and Study Guides that need to be saved in an orderly fashion by adding them to your notebook. Bring it to class with you every day along with a writing utensil and the book(s) we are using. You will also need a USB flash drive (1 gigabyte is more than sufficient) and are encouraged to bring your own laptop to class if possible.

Be in class every day. If you are absent, contact your study partner (see below) or me before you return to school; you will be expected to know, by the time you come back, what went on regardless of how much class you miss. You can also call me with any questions.

You must have a study partner who will bring things home to you when you are absent and discuss what went on in class, and for whom you will do the same. This person should not be involved in the same activities, teams, etc., as you are if these cause the activity members to miss class.

Attendance/Assignments/Late Work

See the *Student Handbook* for information on the MRHS attendance policy.

Be where you should be in the curriculum at all times. I expect you to do the work regardless of absences, during which **you are also responsible for getting the notes and/or any alterations in the schedule from your study partner and for doing all classwork/homework assignments before you**

come back to class.

I keep a **Make-up Work folder**; any **tests or quizzes** you miss will be in there, with your last name on them. Check this folder as soon as you come into the room after you miss ANY part of any class. You will usually have to compete missed tests or quizzes during class and/or advisory time (unless you have a free period during the day, in which case you may make arrangements with me to use that).

You may not hand in late an assignment whose answers we go over in class while you are present or which has been turned back to other students with answer corrections on it. In some cases, you may be able to have an alternative assignment.

Tests and quizzes must be taken and previously-assigned work turned in with the rest of the class regardless of previous absences as well. Absences on your part do not change your due dates!

You will need to contact me to ask for an exception if you were too ill to prepare for a test or quiz or complete an assignment. Do not wait until you are sitting in class to try to discuss this sort of thing; that's much too late. You have my phone number—use it! **(Parent calls to the office do not come through to me; you need to contact me directly.)**

If you come in late and have missed the entire class, come see me at some point during the day so I can give you anything that I may be passing out.

If are going to be absent from class for a reason other than illness or an emergency, you **MUST** follow the procedure outlined in the Student Handbook for vacations during school time. This will entail that you tell me several days beforehand; I will see to it that you have all you need to keep up. You **MUST** complete the work I assigned you while you are out, passing it in upon your return. This will avoid your having to come in after school or miss class to make-up work during the period. In the case of dismissals for sports or other school-sponsored activities, the same policy applies.

Cancellations

In case of snow days or other cancellations of school, do the all reading and Study Guide work assigned for that day anyway, to the best of your ability.