

ENGLISH COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Title: English 12

Department: English Language Arts

Course Description:

This course concentrates on the writing of structured expository and persuasive essays and on the critical reading of poems, speeches, short stories, plays, essays, and novels from British literature and world literature. Grammar study is incorporated as students learn to refine and develop their voices as writers. Literature may include: *Beowulf*, *Grendel*, *Ethan Frome*, *1984*, *Things Fall Apart*, *The Stranger*, *Brave New World*, *Hamlet*, and *Pride and Prejudice* among other choices. The students are required to complete a research paper in order to meet the requirements of this course.

Primary Course Materials:

An asterisk (*) indicates a required title.

Anthology:

Bowler, Ellen, Douglas McCollum, et. al. *Literature: Adventures in the British Tradition*. Paramount Edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994.

Novels:

Grendel by John Gardner
Ethan Frome by Edith Wharton
Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf
1984* by George Orwell **OR
**Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley
Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe
Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad
Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
**The Stranger* by Albert Camus
Go Ask Alice by Anonymous
Tess of the D'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy

Short Stories:

Dubliners by James Joyce

Drama:

**Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller
**Hamlet* by William Shakespeare

Othello by William Shakespeare
Oedipus the King by Sophocles
A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead by Tom Stoppard

Poetry:

selections from *Beowulf*
selections from *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer
“The Seafarer” translated by Burton Raffel
“Break of Day in the Trenches” by Isaac Rosenberg
“Dulce et Decorum Est” by Wilfred Owen
“The Soldier” by Rupert Brooke
“The Hollow Men” by T. S. Eliot
“The Second Coming” by W. B. Yeats
“Sonnets 10” by John Donne
“Sonnets 14” by John Donne
selections from *The Sonnets* by William Shakespeare

Non-Fiction:

“An Image of Africa” by Chinua Achebe
“Tragedy and the Common Man” by Arthur Miller
“Why We Travel” by Pico Iyer
excerpt from *Gulliver’s Travels* by Jonathan Swift
excerpts from *Poetics* by Aristotle
Sample College Essays
Fist, Stick, Knife, Gun by Geoffrey Canada
“Lego” from *The New Yorker*
“My Dungeon Shook” a letter by James Baldwin
“An Extravagance of Laughter” by Ralph Ellison
Leaving Home edited by Hazel Rochman
“Let Freedom Reign” by Nelson Mandela
The Things They Carried by Tim O’Brien
A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini
Nickel and Dimed by Barbara Ehrenreich.

Grammar:

*Strunk, William, and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th Edition. New York: Longman, 1999.

Essential Questions:

Thematic Concept: Good and Evil

Is humankind inherently good or evil?

What is the function of human will in the relationship between good and evil?

How does conflict influence an individual's decisions and actions?

What is community, and what are the individual's responsibility to community as well as the community's responsibility to the individual?

Why is it important for people or cultures to compose narratives about their experiences?

What is the purpose or consequence of creating or maintaining a dystopian society?

Course Objectives:

MHS Learning Expectations:

Melrose High School students will:

- Write effectively using standard English
- Demonstrate the ability to read effectively
- Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively
- Demonstrate the ability to use technology responsibly and effectively

MHS Grade 12 English Course Goals:

Students will be able to:

- I. Write compositions that reflect knowledge of formal written English, including appropriate ideas, organization, voice, word choice, and sentence fluency.
- II. Read age and grade-level appropriate fiction and non fiction for comprehension and analysis.
- III. Complete a personal essay appropriate for submission with a college application.
- IV. Complete a formal research paper, using MLA style, investigating some aspects of the literature studied in this course and a topic to be determined in class discussion. This paper is a graduation requirement.
- V. Write and present an original boast in the tradition of *Beowulf*.

Content Outline:

Due to availability of books and individual class necessities, some substitution and reorganization may be necessary.

Unit: “Heroes and Heroism, Past and Present”

Students will begin the year with rigorous vocabulary study in preparation for the SAT as well as a review of literary terms and rhetorical devices. Students will examine the origins of English literature, focusing on themes of heroes and heroism, good vs. evil, and human will. Students will address the Epic Hero as well as the Anti-Hero and the Tragic Hero through analysis of different works. In addition to other supplementary materials, teachers will choose from the following works:

Beowulf (excerpts)
Grendel by John Gardner
Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller
“Sonnet 10” and “Sonnet 14” by John Donne
“The Soldier” by Rupert Brooks
“The Seafarer” translated by Burton Raffel

The culminating assignment for this unit is the composition and performance of a boast in the style of *Beowulf*.

Unit: “Satire”

Students will continue their studies in the senior year with a focus on vocabulary and grammar. They will compare the use of satire in early English literature and in contemporary media. Students will analyze the function of human will in battles of good vs. evil, as well as identify the importance of composing narratives. In addition to other supplementary materials, teachers will choose from the following works:

The Canterbury Tales (excerpts) by Geoffrey Chaucer
Hamlet (the Simpsons version)
Monty Python’s *Quest for the Holy Grail*.
excerpts from *Gulliver’s Travels*
“Hummer Style” and other selections from *The New Yorker*

The culminating assignment for this unit will be a project requiring students to write a modern Canterbury tale in the style of Chaucer.

Unit: “Moral Conflict and Tragedy”

Students will continue their study of vocabulary and grammar, while moving forward in the history of British Literature to address ideas about serious inner moral conflict. Students begin their analysis by addressing the three types of conflict (Man vs. Man, Man vs. Nature, and Man vs. Himself) and by studying and comparing each in the context of literary texts. Students will spend time analyzing thematic ideas of constant uncertainty, prophecy, mistaken identity, incestuous love as well as good vs. evil in this unit. In addition to other supplementary materials, teachers will choose from the following works:

Hamlet by William Shakespeare
Othello by William Shakespeare
Oedipus the King by Sophocles
Go Ask Alice by Anonymous
Ethan Frome by Edith Wharton
A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams

The culminating assignment for this unit will be a long analytical essay, using *Hamlet* in response to the prompt: “In works of literature, many characters face a moral crisis. In a well-developed composition, identify the character and the crisis, describe how the character faces the crisis, and explain how the moral crisis relates to the work as a whole.” In addition, students will be asked to memorize, recite and perform at least fourteen lines of Shakespeare from either *Hamlet* or *Othello* as a culminating performance-based assignment for this unit.

Unit: “Utopia vs. Dystopia”

In addition to continued vocabulary and grammar study, students will address the idea of Utopian vs. Dystopian societies in the senior year. Students will focus on the purposes and consequences of creating and maintaining a dystopian society, while addressing the thematic idea of community responsibility vs. individual responsibility. The unit will culminate in students examining the fundamental question: Is humankind inherently good or evil? In addition to other supplementary materials, teachers will choose from the following works:

1984 by George Orwell
Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad
Brave New World by Aldous Huxley
“The Hollow Men” (excerpts) by T.S. Eliot
“Break of Day in the Trenches” by Rosenberg
scenes from *Apocalypse Now*

Unit: “Early Feminist Literature”

Students will address Feminist ideas in British Literature while still examining themes from previous units (Love, Mistaken Identity, etc.) This unit will focus on the development of the female character as an individual, as well as the female writer and the conflicts each must face. Students will focus on comparing feminist literature to anti-feminist works they have read in previous courses, with strong focus on the difference in conflicts and resolutions for men and

women. In addition to other supplementary materials, teachers will choose from the following works:

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
Tess of the D'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy
Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf
A Room of One's Own by Virginia Woolf (excerpts)

The culminating assignment for this unit will be an essay exploring the role of social satire in feminist fiction such as Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

Unit: "World Literature"

Towards the end of the senior year, students will branch out from a curriculum primarily based in British literature, to a broader study of world literature. Attention will be paid to cultural differences and the influence of culture on writing styles. Seniors will look at a variety of works from writers from different races and backgrounds in order to gain new perspective on the six essential questions posed throughout the year, with primary focus on the question: "Why is it important for people and cultures to compose narratives about their experiences?" In addition to other supplementary materials, teachers will choose from the following works:

Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe
The Stranger by Albert Camus
An Image of Africa by Chinua Achebe
Why We Travel by Pico Iyer
An Extravagance of Laughter by Ralph Ellison
The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan
Caramelo by Sandra Cisneros

For the culminating assignment, students will complete an Open Response essay dealing with the promise of hope recognized in the speech of Nelson Mandela on the occasion of his election. This speech will be read and analyzed in the context of other examples of world literature.

Unit: "Personal Essays"

One of the most important writing assignments of the senior year is the personal essay. In addition to their reading and analysis of different novels and works of literature, students will all be required to complete a college essay within the first semester of the senior year. Attention will be paid to grammar, vocabulary, and most importantly, writing style. Students will complete brainstorming prompts and questionnaires to help determine the direction of their essay, as well as participate in an all class peer editing workshop, where each student's essay is publically edited by all members of their class, including the teacher. The culminating assignment for this unit will be a 500-word Personal Essay that is ready for submission to any college or university. To aid in writing these essays, students will read and analyze numerous personal essays, including authentic college essays.

Unit: “The Research Paper”

Students will fulfill the departmental research requirement by choosing an author and text included in the high school English department’s twelfth grade English curriculum. They must develop a thesis that investigates some aspect of the text in greater depth. They will complete pertinent research and write a paper that represents both an analysis of the topic and text and a synthesis of ideas gleaned from a variety of sources found during the research process. The final essay must conform to Modern Language Association standards for the research paper. This paper is a graduation requirement.

Students will complete a common mid-term and final assessment incorporating all units of study.

Literary Devices:

Plot Structures

Plot within a plot

Multiple Points of View

Stream of Consciousness

Archetype

Stock Character

Apostrophe

Deus ex Machina

Hubris

Hamartia

Conceit

The Epic Hero

The Tragic Hero

The Anti-Hero

Kenning

Epic Poetry

Grammar:

Rules of Usage

Active and Passive Voice

Tense

Commonly Misused Words and Expressions

SAT Preparation:

Students may complete parts of *SAT Preparation for Critical Reading*

Students will complete a common final assessment incorporating all units of study from the mid-year assessment to the end.

Major Evaluation Strategies:

Name of Assessment	Type of Assessment			MA Standards Assessed	MHS Learning Expectations Assessed
	Test	Performance			
Boast: <i>Beowulf</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25	1,2,3,4
Project: <i>The Canterbury Tales</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25	1,2,3,4
Essay: <i>Hamlet</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25	1,2,3,4
Essay: Utopia/Dystopia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25	1,2,3,4
Essay: <i>Pride and Prejudice</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25	1,2,3,4
Essay: <i>Things Fall Apart</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25	1,2,3,4
Essay: The Personal Essay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25	1,2,3,4
Project: The Research Paper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25	1,2,3,4
Open Response: Literary Analysis: comparing characters from <i>Pride and Prejudice</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		8, 10, 11, 12, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25	1,2,3,4
Open Response: Nonfiction Critical Reading: Describe what Mandela's speech reveals about his hopes for a new	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I, II	8, 10, 11, 12, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25	1,2,3,4

South Africa					
Open Response: Poetry Analysis: Identify elements of structure and layers of meaning in Shakespeare’s “Sonnet 116”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I, II	8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25	1,2,3,4
Open Response: Non-fiction critical reading: Explain the quotation: “Make your vocation your vacation.”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I, II	4, 8, 13	1,2,3,4
<i>Elements of Style</i> <i>Chapters 1-4</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I	5, 6	1,2,3,4
Poetry Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I, II	7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15	1,2,3,4
Vocabulary Quizzes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I	4, 5, 6	1,2,3,4
Mid-Year Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I, II	19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25	1,2,3,4
Final Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I, II,	4, 8, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25	1,2,3,4

Learning Standards from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks:

Reading Standards for Literature

1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
2. Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

5. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text. .
8. Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., *The Federalist*, presidential addresses).
9. Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.

Writing Standards

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Speaking and Listening Standards

1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.
5. Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 11–12 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 67 for specific expectations.)

Language Standards

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grades 11–12 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
6. Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.