

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

ENGLISH I HETEROGENEOUS: COURSE #112

Contact Information

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The Department's Educational Philosophy

Proficiency in English is an essential component of education in the United States. An ability to understand and communicate in English is fundamental to the preservation of our democratic system and to the well being of its citizens.

Guiding Principles

An essential component of education and the learning process is the development of proficiency in the arts of language. The ability to articulate and respond to complex ideas is a requirement of participatory citizenship and ultimately allows each of us to be more fully human.

- Speak and write clear, idiomatic English.
- Engage in the writing process, from pre-writing to editing and peer feedback to revision.
- Develop voice and depth in both personal and literary papers.
- Develop confidence, independence and critical judgment relative to one's own work.
- Understand as fully as possible what is read.
- Increase understanding of self and others through literature.
- Develop standards of judgment and taste in literature.
- Find enduring pleasure and value in reading good books.

ENGLISH I HETEROGENEOUS, FOUNDATIONS OF LITERATURE: COURSE #112

Course Frequency: Full-year course, five times per week

Credits Offered: Five

Prerequisites: Successful completion of 8th-grade English

Background to the Curriculum

This course continues to evolve from the original English I curriculum developed by teachers of the course in the summer of 1995.

Core Topics/Concepts/Skills

The underlying purpose of the ninth-grade curriculum is to promote understanding of the "big questions" and the various ways peoples throughout the ages have answered them. A secondary purpose is that, through this understanding, students will come to value those universal ideals fundamental to civilization. To this end, the course is organized into four thematic units, each with theme-specific concepts: The Nature of the Universe/The Nature of Man, The Nature of Goodness/Virtue, The Nature of Love, and The Nature of Evil. There are two equally important strands in this curriculum – reading and writing. Through assignments in both, students will explore the four themes as expressed through literature and their own thinking on the concepts.

Through the study of Bible stories and myths, classics and contemporary works, including poetry, short stories and nonfiction, students will gain an understanding of the following concepts.

Unit: The Nature of the Universe/The Nature of Man

- The nature of the hero
- Lessons on suffering
- Image of the journey
- Self-discovery
- Duality of man and of the universe
- Laws of nature

Core works in this unit

- *The Alchemist*
- *The Odyssey*

Unit: The Nature of Goodness/Virtue

- The ambiguity of goodness
- Questions man might consider to reach a judgment of goodness
- Ways of defining courage and justice
- Factors influencing ethical choices
- The effects of prejudice
- Appearance vs. reality
- Tolerance

Unit: The Nature of Love

- Various types of love
- Reason vs. passion
- Altruism vs. self-interest
- The nature of friendship
- Loss of innocence
- Sacrifice

Unit: The Nature of Evil

- Self-knowledge of our capacity for evil
- Consequences of evil
- Manifestations of evil
- Sources of greed and jealousy
- Prejudice, indifference
- Appearance vs. reality

Core works in this unit

- *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- *Of Mice and Men*

Core work in this unit

- *Romeo and Juliet*
- *The House on Mango Street*

Core works in this unit

- *A Separate Peace*

Students will also be provided the opportunity to read two choice books during the year.

The writing program includes personal, creative, and analytical writing.

Also important in this course is the development and refinement of language skills emphasized in previous grades:

- reading
- speaking and listening
- writing
- vocabulary
- thinking

Course-End Learning Objectives

| <u>Learning objectives</u> | <u>Corresponding State Standards, where applicable</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>The Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts is comprised of twenty-seven General Standards organized into four Strands: Language, Literature, Composition and Media. The Learning Objectives for this course are matched to the appropriate Framework Strand and Standard.</p> | |
| <p>Reading and critical thinking skills are listed by increasing levels of difficulty, moving from the concrete skills of observing and recalling to the more abstract skills of interpreting, synthesizing, analyzing and evaluating. It is the goal of the English Department to move each student toward mastery of advanced skills.</p> | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1] Understanding of plot, characters, and setting2] Literal interpretations of events3] Understanding of theme4] Understanding of characteristics of different genres5] Comparison and contrast of myths and narratives from different cultures and geographic regions6] Understanding of structure7] Observation of connections and patterns8] Observation of recurring character traits9] Observation of similarities and differences among characters10] Making of inferences about plot events, character, and theme11] Interpretation of character12] Observation and understanding of cultural values13] Interpretation of symbolism14] Synthesis of concepts and patterns15] Analysis of the ways that style impacts theme and mood | <p>Lit. #9 Lit. #9 Lit. #11 Lit. #10 Lit. #16 Lit. #12, 13, 14 Lit. #12 Lit. #16 Lit. #12, 13, 14 Lit. #15</p> |
| <p>In addition to the above general reading skills, students will understand historical setting and culture, the way each work reflects the unit theme, and the sources of literary allusions.</p> | |
| <p>The writing skills listed below recognize that writing is a cumulative skill, with each level assuming the skills of the previous level. At this level, the student will:</p> | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1] Edit own and others' work for language conventions, organization of ideas, and assignment criteria.2] Make meaningful revision based on peer and teacher feedback. | <p>Comp. #22 Comp. #21 and 22</p> |

Types of Assessment, Including Unit-End Assessments

(In many instances, grading rubrics accompany assessments to provide students a clear outline of expectations.)

- Combination test (e.g., identification and passage analysis and essay)
- Multiple choice/objective quiz/test
- Essay quiz/test
- Analytical paper
- Personal/creative writing
- Group writing assignment
- Group/individual teaching assignment
- Oral work (e.g., class participation, presentation, speech, recitation)
- Special project
- Dramatic presentation
- Reading log
- Checked/graded homework
- Short answer quiz/test

Technology Learning Objectives Addressed in This Course

(This section is for faculty and administrative reference; students and parents may disregard.)

| <u>Course activity: skills and/or topics taught</u> | <u>Standard(s) addressed through this activity</u> |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1] Students will word process and properly format papers.2] Students will follow computer use guidelines and the academic integrity policy stated in the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Student Handbook.3] Students will see the value and the limitations of web sites offering literary assistance.4] Students will use and properly cite the internet for literary criticism. | |

Materials and Resources

The literature through which students will explore these themes consists of classics and contemporary works, including novels, plays, poetry, short stories, myths, and nonfiction.

Required works

- *The Alchemist* (Universe/Man)
- *The Odyssey* (Universe/Man)
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Goodness)
- *Of Mice and Men* (Goodness)
- *Romeo and Juliet* (Love)
- *A Separate Peace* (Evil)
- *The House on Mango Street* (Love or Goodness)

The following instructional methods may be employed in this course.

Teacher-centered activities

- Instruction/transmission of information and board notes
- Webbing or mapping to gather and organize information
- Correction/discussion of writings on overhead
- Question and answer in full-class discussion
- Solution to teacher-posed problems as individuals or in small groups
- Completion of study sheets and homework questions

Student-centered activities

- Brainstorming
- Student generation of questions to consider
- Collaboration on solutions to problems
- Division of tasks by group; sharing of information
- Reflective or creative writings, shared with class
- Peer editing
- Projects and oral presentations