

Northland Preparatory Academy
Mr. Lancaster

Writing through the Humanities

Syllabus 2015-2016

Course Description

This course introduces students to a variety of literature, predominantly from the Americas, but some from the other continents as well. Students will develop their understanding of literary elements by closely reading, discussing, and writing about poetry, drama, short stories, essays and novels, but we will also broaden our scope to mediums such as music, art, film, and the media at large. Because strong writing skills are closely connected with strong reading skills, the literature in this course will be used to facilitate both writing opportunities and the development of critical, analytical thinking about various literary elements. The English curriculum asks students to consider their own literacy practices and beliefs, analyze what it means to be literate in a learning community, and examine critically the rhetorical strategies of public discourse. Thus, the course investigates the relationships among individuals, communities, and society through the lenses of language and literate practices. It combines reading, writing, and discussion as means of inquiry.

Because communication always responds to a specific context—time, place, audience, purpose—students are asked to occupy the space between and within literary and creative non-fiction texts. What might literature and literary practices teach writers and readers about non-fiction writing as well as language in general? Are there particular aspects of the literary tradition that reveal new communicative opportunities when applied to other kinds of writing? In what ways are non-fiction texts themselves literature of a kind? How might literary texts themselves be non-fictional? We will attempt to answer these questions (and many more) in our attempt to develop students' skills in higher-order reading, writing, and discussion.

Works and Motifs Covered

First Quarter: **Motif – solitude, loneliness, alienation**

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian, Sherman Alexie

short stories, essays, and selections from authors that include (but are not limited to) Edgar Allen Poe, Shirley Jackson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Flannery O'Connor, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Langston Hughes, Juanita Platero, Sandra Cisneros, William Faulkner, T.C Boyle, Kurt Vonnegut, Chinua Achebe, Kate Chopin, Raymond Carver,...

Misc. non-fiction

Second Quarter: **Motif – the search for truth and meaning**

Bless Me Ultima, Rudolfo Anaya

Death of a Salesman, Arthur Miller

Misc. non-fiction

Third Quarter: **Motif – struggles with social responsibility**
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain
Misc. non-fiction

Fourth Quarter: **Motif – struggles with social responsibility**
Fahrenheit 451, Ray Bradbury
Vertigo, Alfred Hitchcock
Rebel without a Cause, Nicholas Ray
Misc. non-fiction and television/film media

Course Content

First Quarter:

Expository and persuasive writing, process analysis as social commentary
Literary response/analysis writing
Ideas and content, voice
Grammar
Vocabulary

Second Quarter:

Expository and persuasive writing
Literary response/analysis writing
Ideas and content, word choice
Grammar
Vocabulary

Third Quarter:

Research writing
Expository and persuasive writing
Literary response/analysis writing
Ideas and content, organization
Grammar
Vocabulary

Fourth Quarter:

Expository and persuasive writing, genre theory through satire
Literary response/analysis writing
Ideas and content, sentence fluency , organization
Grammar
Vocabulary

Assignments

Reading and writing assignments include both in-class and out-of-class work. There will be book reviews and research projects. You will be having some homework assignments dealing with the reading you do, and these need to be turned in on the date due in order to receive full credit. There will be tests and quizzes over what is read and over the vocabulary and grammar work. All assignments, quizzes, tests, and homework need to be placed in your notebook so that you can have them as study aids. Sometimes past work will be revisited for the purposes of revision.