

TAMALPAIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Larkspur, California

Course of Study

AMERICAN LITERATURE
Classical Strand

I. INTRODUCTION: COURSE DESCRIPTION

- A. American Literature is an upper division course designed to fulfill either one or two semesters of the District Classical Strand graduation English requirement. This course is designed to provide students with a foundation in their American literary heritage. The scope of the course is broad, covering outstanding authors and representative works leading to an understanding of the development of the American character. The course includes the study of novels, short stories, drama, poetry, and nonfiction.

At Redwood, American Literature is a one-semester upper division elective; while at Drake, the course, in collaboration with U.S. History, is a two-semester requirement. At both Drake and Tamalpais, the course is currently a two-semester requirement.

- B. American Literature addresses the following district student learning outcomes:

- #1. communicate articulately, effectively, and persuasively when speaking and writing;
- #2. read and analyze material in a variety of disciplines;
- #3. use technology as a tool to access information, analyze and solve problems, and communicate ideas;
- #10. analyze and propose solutions to contemporary issues using a variety of perspectives;
- #11. interpret, experience, create and/or perform artistic work.

American Literature addresses the following Tam 21st Century Goals,

- acquire, manage and use knowledge and skills;

- think critically and creatively;
 - develop respect and understanding for the diversity of our community;
 - understand individual and cultural differences;
 - take responsibility for self and community.
- C. American Literature provides an opportunity to study in more depth literature and themes that have been touched upon in previous course work at the freshmen and sophomore level. The course connects at the junior year with the study of American history and promotes an understanding of the major social, religious and political movement, with the historical periods.
- D. American Literature allows students to see themselves as part of the American landscape by exploring the emerging American character through literary history. The goals of this course include the following:
1. to examine and study the various periods of America literary history;
 2. to understand the major social, religious, and political movements, identifying leaders and writers within the periods;
 3. to trace and identify some language changes in and linguistic influences on American speech;
 4. to compare and contrast authors in their choice of subject matter, their purposes, themes, styles, attitudes and genres;
 5. to develop vocabulary through the study of literary terms and the authors' diction;
 6. to learn to use critical thinking skills in analyzing and interpreting literature;
 7. to establish the connection between writing and thinking through regular practice of the steps of the writing process.

II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- A. Writing:
- a. use the stages in the writing process, especially responding, revising, and editing (R/LAF W W/S 1.0; 1.9);

- b. apply basic grammar and appropriate vocabulary in the context of their writing (R/LAF W W/O 1.0);
- c. write well-developed essays using the thesis statement effectively to focus the essay, and practice patterns of organization, such as chronology, classification, and steps in a process, with appropriate transitional techniques, language and form to suit purpose and audience (R/LAF W W/S 1.3);
- d. draw generalizations from recorded observation and experience—e.g., from stories, poems, journal entries, autobiographical and biographical pieces, descriptions and accounts—and support them with convincing evidence and examples (R/LAF W W/A 2.2);
- e. use deduction and induction, understand logical fallacies, know what constitutes evidence and authority, while distinguishing between primary and secondary sources (R/LAF W W/A 2.2);
- f. develop an interpretation that uses convincing textual evidence for support and explain the interpretation rationally to convince the reader of its soundness (R/LAF W W/A 2.2 a - e);
- g. examine ideas and information from a variety of sources and draw conclusions about the point and purpose of that information and to evaluate the conclusions and determine whether or not they are sound (R/LAF W W/A 2.4 d);
- h. analyze information from various sources through systematic notetaking, integrate material from outside sources into their own work, and acknowledge those sources (R/LAF W W/S 1.6).

B. Literature/Reading:

- a. understand and use the language of literary criticism, such as setting, characterization, foreshadowing, symbolism, and metaphor; consult sources to enrich understanding; recognize the relationship of specific incidents to theme; understand an author's method of narration, i.e., who tells the story and how far the narrator is from the action; be aware of and understand shifts in point of view (R/LAF R L/RA 3.0 S/F 3.1; N/A 3.2, 3.3, 3.4. 3.5 a—c);
- b. put ideas in one's own words through such devices as paraphrase, precis, modeling, unscrambling sample passages, reading and interpreting maps, charts, and graphs; recognize that rereading enhances the reader's understanding and appreciation;

- c. determine the author's point of view and distinguish his or her bias from established fact (R/LAF R C/A 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5);
- d. recognize the importance of reading beyond the assigned works and use outside sources of reference; refine the use of research techniques;
- e. develop a greater understanding of the contributions of ethnic groups by studying their traditions, their cultural stance, their similarities and differences (R/LAF R L/RA 3.5 b).

C. Speaking and Listening:

When speaking, students will:

- a. function effectively in class discussion by answering and asking questions coherently and by clarifying responses with clear explanations; conceive and develop ideas that are soundly reasoned and well supported;
- b. become more proficient in the various roles in editing and response writing groups; learn new roles: for example, panel chair, panel member, large group discussion leader, recorder, resource person;
- c. learn argumentation techniques that allow both sides of a question to surface; learn skills in logic and reasoning to support arguments on conflicting sides of a question (R/LAF L/S O/D 1.5, 1.6);
- d. give careful attention to preplanning a speech; develop a regard for the audience with respect to gaining attention, sustaining interest, making efficient use of time; learn skills in organizing for various modes of presentation: analysis, persuasion, explanation, interpretation, direction, and comparison (R/LAF L/S O/D 1.7 A/E 1.13);
- e. practice oral interpretation of literature, using the techniques of emphasis, expression, dramatic pause, inflection; practice parts in dramas, attempting realistic character identity, fluency in reading dialogue, and appropriate tone and mood (R/LAF L/S S/A 2.3 a—e; 2.5).

When listening, students will:

- a. develop techniques that promote supportive, polite concern for the speaker, and learn the skills necessary to offer tactful, constructive criticism;
- b. identify main and subordinate ideas presented in lectures and discussions, and evaluate them for sound reasoning and convincing support; take into

account the nuances, the subtle shades of meaning (R/LAF L/S A/E 1.11—1.14).

D. Student Assessment

Students will be assessed through a variety of indicators including homework, group work, oral presentations, visuals related to the reading, quizzes on the literature, essays and other writing assignments.

Students will be expected to take an essay examination that requires them to apply the thinking and writing skills they have developed in order to synthesize and analyze material from 3 to 4 major works covered during the semester. Students will be expected to support their main ideas with specific examples from the works under discussion.

Test questions might ask student to:

- a. compare and contrast the way various authors treat a particular subject, such as rites of passage;
- b. explain how a particular genre evolves through a series of works;
- b. trace a theme, such as the upward mobility of the middle classes or the changing role of women, through several works.

E. Course Assessment

American Literature will be assessed through formal and informal surveys of the students.

See the American Literature Resource Binder for sample assessments.

III. METHODS AND MATERIALS

A. Methods

Students will complete a variety of interrelated writing assignments adapted from the James Moffet writing sequence. More than one paper may be required for each assignment. In addition to four process papers per semester, minor papers will be assigned regularly.

Eight different writing types have been identified as the focus for the upper division writing program: observation, reflection, controversial issue, interpretation, autobiography, evaluation, report of information and speculation.

See the introduction to the Upper Division program for specifics on the writing modes.

B. Materials

Every teacher of American Literature will teach a selection of the following titles to guarantee consistency throughout the District. Each student will read at least four major works per semester, with required reading including a variety of short stories, poems, novels, and nonfiction.

Miller, Wood, deDwyer McGraw/Hill (publishers)	<i>The US in Literature</i> (anthology) <i>Adventures in American Literature</i> <i>Writers, INC.</i> (handbook)
Prentice Hall (publishers)	<i>Literature: The American Experience</i>
Clark, Walter Van Tilburg	<i>The Oxbow Incident</i>
Fitzgerald, F. Scott	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>
Hawthorne, Nathaniel	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i>
Hurston, Zora Neale	<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>
McCarthy, Cormack	<i>All The Pretty Horses</i>
Miller, Arthur	<i>The Crucible</i>
Miller, Arthur	<i>The Death of a Salesman</i>
Steinbeck, John	<i>Grapes of Wrath</i> <i>The Harvest Gypsies</i>
Vonnegut, Kurt**	<i>Slaughterhouse Five</i>
Wharton, Edith	<i>Ethan Frome and selected stories</i>

** Redwood: Humanities

SUPPLEMENTARY

Anderson, Sherwood	"Sophistication"
Baldwin, James	<i>The Fire Next Time</i>
Caputo, Phillip	<i>Indian Country</i>
Doig, Ivan	<i>The Whistling Season</i>
Dubois, W.E.	<i>The Souls of Black Folk</i>
Faulkner, William	"A Rose for Emily" and selected stories
Franklin, Ben	<i>Autobiography</i>
Frazier Charles	<i>Cold Mountain</i>
Greer, Andrew Sean	<i>The Confessions of Max Tivoli</i>
Helfer and DuBurke	Malcolm X: A Graphic Biography
Heller, Joseph	<i>Catch 22</i>
Hemingway, Ernest	<i>A Moveable Feast</i>
Hemingway, Ernest	<i>Old Man and the Sea</i> and selected stories
Hillenbrand, Laura	<i>Seabiscuit</i>
Hughes, Langston,	Collected Poems

Jen, Gish	<i>Who's Irish?</i>
Lawrenry, J & Lee, Robert E.	<i>Night Thoreau Spent in Jail</i>
Lee, Gus	<i>China Boy</i>
Lent, Jeffrey	<i>In the Fall</i>
Lewis, Sinclair	<i>Babbitt</i>
Lewis, Sinclair	<i>Arrowsmith</i>
Melville, Herman	"Barleby The Scrivener"
Momaday, Scott	<i>House Made of Dawn</i>
Momaday, Scott	essay, "Way to Rainy Mountain:
Niphenek, Audrey	<i>Time Traveler's Wife</i>
O'Brien, Tim**	<i>The Things They Carried</i>
Olson, Tillie	<i>Yonnondio</i> , and selected stories
Tan, Amy **	<i>Joy Luck Club</i>
Twain, Mark	<i>Our Town</i>
Vonnegut, Kurt	<i>Cat's Cradle</i>
Williams, Tennessee	<i>Glass Menagerie</i>
Welch, James	<i>Fools Crow</i>
Wolfe, Tom	<i>Bonfire of the Vanities</i>
Wolff, Tobias	<i>This Boy's Life</i>
Wright, Richard	<i>Native Son</i>

AUTHORS

Bradstreet, Anne	Selected poems
Bryant, William Cullen	Selected poems
Cather, Willa	Selected stories
Cooper, James F.	Excerpts from novels
Crane, Stephen	Selected stories and poems
Dickinson, Emily	Selected stories
Dos Passos, John	Excerpts from novels
Frost, Robert	Selected stories
Hamilton, Alexander	Selected writings
Holmes, Oliver	Selected poems
Hughes, Langston	Selected poems
Irving, Washington	Selected tales and sketches
Longfellow, Henry W.	Selected poems
Lowell, Amy	Selected poems
Lowell, Robert	Selected poems
Millay, Edna St. Vincent	Selected poems
O'Connor, Flannery	Selected stories
Poe, Edgar Allan	Selected stories and poems
Porter, Katherine A.	Selected stories
Sandburg, Carl	Selected poems
Welty, Eudora	Selected poems
Whitman, Walt	Selected poems

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION

American Literature is a 5 credit course open to all juniors, seniors and second semester sophomores.

- A. Prerequisites: There are no course prerequisites.
- B. Requirements Met.

This course may be used in partial fulfillment of the English graduation requirement. It meets part of the District requirement for two Classic Stand Courses.

This course is accepted toward the "b" or "g" requirement for UC admissions. It is also accepted for the CSU English requirement.

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