

COURSE SYLLABUS
CONTEMPORARY THEMES IN LITERATURE 7/8
(Ethics, Leadership, Work, Success)

READING STANDARDS

3.0—Literary Response and Analysis Students read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature that reflect and enhance their studies of history and social science. They conduct in-depth analyses of recurrent patterns and themes.

3.1 Analyze characteristics of subgenres that are used in poetry, prose, plays, novels, short stories, and essays

Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

3.2 Analyze the way in which the theme or meaning of a selection represents a view or comment on life

3.3 Analyze the ways in which irony, tone, mood, and the authors style achieve specific rhetorical or aesthetic purposes

3.4 Analyze ways in which poets use imagery, personification, figures of speech, and sounds

3.6 Analyze the way in which authors through the centuries have used archetypes from myth and tradition in literature, political speeches, and religious writings.

3.7 Analyze recognized works of world literature from a variety of authors; relate literary works and authors to the major themes and issues of their eras; evaluate the philosophical, political, religious, ethical, and social influences of the historical period that shaped the characters, plots, and settings.

Background and Focus—Ethics

- “Four Basic Virtues” from *The Book of Meng-Tzu*
- “Self-Love” by Aristotle from *The Nicomachean Ethics*
- “The Golden Rule” by Jesus of Nazareth from *The New Testament*
- “Conscientious Feelings of Mankind” by John Stuart Mill from *Sanctions and the Utilitarian Philosophy*

Background and Focus--Leadership

- #26, #8 from *Tao Te Ching* by Lao Tzu
- “A Civil Principality” from *The Prince* by Niccolo Machiavelli
- “Speech at Chicago, IL, March, 1859” and “Speech at Cooper Institute New York, February 27, 1860” by Abraham Lincoln.

Background and Focus--Work

- “Reinventing Work” from *Reinventing the Corporation: Transforming Your Job and Your Company for the New Information Age Society* by John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene
- “What Work Is” poem by Philip Levine
- Essay by G.K. Chesterton, “Furrows”
- Essay by Stephen Leacock, “Americans are Queer”

Background and Focus--Success

- “The Future Demands Attitude Adjustment” from *Are You a Transhuman* by FM-2030
- “Commentary on the List of Basic American Values” by L. Robert Kohls
- “The Western Intelligence” by G. Lowes Dickinson
- “My People Made It. . .What’s Wrong With Your People?” by Samuel Betances

ASSESSMENT: Teacher generated tests and quizzes. Quickwrites. Graded guided question classwork.

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- 3.4 Analyze the ways in which poets use imagery, personification, figures of speech, and sounds
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Literary Criticism

3.9 Analyze the philosophical arguments presented in literary works to determine whether the authors' positions have contributed to the quality of each work and the credibility of the characters. (Philosophical approach)

Core Literature--Ethics

- *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles (drama/tragedy)
- *Beowulf* translated by Seamus Heaney (poetry/epic narrative)
- "The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse" by William Saroyan (fiction/short story)

Core Literature--Leadership

- "The Ledge" by Lawrence Sargent Hall (fiction/short story)
- "The Hollow Men" by T.S. Eliot (poetry/free verse)
- *Leaders* by Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus (non-fiction)

Core Literature--Work

- "Shooting an Elephant" by George Orwell (expository/essay)
- "Quality" by John Galsworthy from *Inn of Tranquility* by (fiction/short story)
- *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens (fiction/novel)

Core Literature--Success

- *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe (fiction/novel)
- Poems about success by Shakespeare, Herrick, Carew, McLeod, Dickinson, Henley, Robinson, Bryant, Shelley, Frost, Hughes, Wright, Cole, Hayden, Khuyun, Hanh, Bishop, Mora, Ortiz-Cofer, Snyder, Kiyoko, et al.
- "The Unknown Citizen" by W.H. Auden (poetry)

ASSESSMENT: Teacher generated tests and quizzes. Essay exams. Graded in-class and out-of-class guided questions. Individual oral response (class participation)

2.0 Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)—Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They analyze the organizational patterns, arguments, and positions advanced. By grade twelve, students read two million words annually on their own, including a wide variety of classic and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, and online information.

Extended Reading--Ethics

- “Why Should My Conscience Bother Me” by Kermit Vandivier from *In The Name of Profit* by Neil Heilbroner
- Articles and editorials from *The Wall Street Journal* and current magazines and newspapers.

Extended Reading--Leadership

- *Leaders* by Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus (non-fiction/expository writing)
- *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe

Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

2.3 Generate relevant questions about readings on issues that can be researched.

2.4 Synthesize the content from several sources or works by a single author dealing with a single issue

2.5 Extend ideas presented in primary or secondary sources through original analysis, evaluation, and elaboration

Extended Reading--Work

- Articles and editorials from current magazines and newspapers about entrepreneurs and workplace demands
- Choose an author and literary work from a particular historical period in England. Read the literary work carefully before beginning your investigation. Relate the literary work to major themes and issues of the era it represents concentrating always on the idea of the universality of human nature and human problems.

(*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte or *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte)

Extended Reading—Success

- Articles and editorials from current magazines and newspapers on the concept of success

ASSESSMENT: Group presentation grade by class and teacher; teacher-generated tests and quizzes; graded research paper.

WRITING STANDARDS

1.0 Writing Strategies—Students write coherent and focused texts that convey a well-defined perspective and tightly reasoned argument. The writing demonstrates students’ awareness of the audience and purpose and progression through the stages of the writing process

Organization and Focus

1.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the elements of discourse when completing narrative, expository, persuasive, or descriptive writing assignments

2.0 Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)—Students combine the rhetorical strategies of narration, exposition, persuasion, and description to produce texts of at least 1,500 words each.

2.1 Write responses to literature

2.2 Write autobiographical narratives

2.4 a. Use persuasion to support the main proposition

1.0 Written and Oral English Language Conventions—Students write and speak with a command of standard English Conventions

Writing Exercises--Ethics

- Summarizing and reacting to readings (timed in class expository essays)
- Narrative essay (Autobiographical/College Essay)
- Extended Definition Essay (on a virtue)

Writing Exercises--Leadership

- Persuasive Essay: My Position on an Ethical Issue in the News
- Summarizing and reacting to readings (timed in class essays)
- Research Paper: Leader (Social, Political, Religious, Education, Military)
- Subject A exams (two hour timed essay) for mid-term exam

Research and Technology

- 1.6 Develop presentations by using clear research questions and creative and critical research strategies
- 1.7 Use systematic strategies to organize and record information
- 1.8 Integrate databases, graphics, and spreadsheets into word-processed documents
- 2.4 Write historical investigation reports

Writing Exercises--Work

- Memo, letter, short essay ("Our work is who we are.")
- Database and reports generated on characters in **Hard Times**
- 2.1 Write autobiographical narratives
- 2.3 Write reflective compositions
- 2.4 Write job applications and resumes

Writing Exercises--Personal Success

End of year project: Personal Portfolio

- Autobiographical Incident Essay
- Reflective Essay "Why I Have Been Successful"
- Resume and Letter of Application
- Name Poem, Seven Poem, etc.
- Summary Memo
- Letter of Transmittal

SPEAKING STANDARDS

2.0 Speaking Applications (Genres and their Characteristics)—Students deliver polished formal and extemporaneous presentations that combine traditional rhetorical strategies.

Speaking Exercises--Ethics

- Small group collaboration
- Large group report out
- Pair Share

Speaking Exercises--Leadership

- Cooperative/Collaborative Group Project and Presentation using technology
- Group presentations to class incorporate group process skills, presentation skills, technology skills, and management skills.
- Deliver oral reports on historical investigations

Speaking Exercises--Work

- Oral report on historical investigation report project
 - Report out/class presentations of internet research projects on **Hard Times**, Charles Dickens, "Shooting an Elephant," and George Orwell (social, political, religious context; literary allusions, etc.)
- 2.3 Deliver oral responses to literature; significant ideas of literary works; analyze the imagery, language, universal themes, and unique aspects of the text; accurate and detailed references to the text or other works; awareness of author's uses of stylistic devices; complexities within the text.
- 2.4 Deliver multimedia presentations
- 2.5 Recite poems, selections from speeches, or dramatic soliloquies

Speaking Exercises—Success

- Poem presentations (Core Readings)—Large group presentations involving visuals and technology

WRITTEN AND ORAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS STANDARD

This standard is infused throughout the course of study and is taught in context with the other standards. Assessment of this standard is on-going throughout the year.

Supplemental texts used:

Insights into Academic Writing: Strategies for Advanced Students by Margot C. Kadesch, Ellen D. Kolba, & Sheila C. Crowell
Longman Publishing Group, 1991.

The Best Short Stories of the Modern Age Selected and Introduced by Douglas Angus
A Fawcett Premier Book Published by Ballantine Books.