

Wachusett Regional High School

Course Name: American Literature

Level: Honors, Academic Foundations (AF), Academic Enrichment (AE)

Grade (s): 11 & 12

Course Description:

An exploration of the literature of the United States, as well as the historical and cultural influences on that literature. All levels develop writing and critical reading skills along with media and oral presentation skills.

Links to Student Expectations:

1. All students will develop skills to utilize technology to gather, to evaluate, to assimilate, and to present information.
2. All students will utilize critical thinking by using skills to identify and to provide resources to solve a problem.
3. All students will learn to communicate critically, persuasively, and personally in both oral and written expression.
4. All students will demonstrate the use of creative and critical thinking skills in an area of the Fine Arts.
5. All students will develop skills to promote a sense of confidence in tackling the rigors of standardized tests such as the required MCAS and optional AP, SAT.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- ✓ Art
- ✓ Film
- ✓ Music
- ✓ History
- ✓ Technology

Essential Concepts:

1. American Literature: Honors, Foundations, Enrichment.
2. American Literature reflects the unique voices that are born from our diverse cultural heritage.
3. American Literature changed literature worldwide.
4. American Literature reflects the quest for individual freedom embedded in American ideals.
5. American Literature examines cultural, political, and social changes through art.

Student Objectives:

1. Students will examine literary periods and the impact of literary voices on political, cultural, and historical changes.
2. Students will critically analyze specific pieces of literature with an eye toward American themes, voice, and ideas.
3. Students will study literature from a wide range of cultural voices and will come away with an understanding of the contributions made by diverse voices to the American literary landscape.

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Suggestions for Instruction:

1. Students will work individually to develop a voice.
2. Students will work cooperatively in learning groups.
3. Students will read primary and secondary texts including:

Adventures in American Literature, (anthology) The Scarlet Letter (Hawthorne), Uncle Tom's Cabin (Stowe), Moby Dick (Melville), The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (Twain), Selected Stories and Poems by Edgar Allen Poe, The Great Gatsby (Fitzgerald), The Catcher in the Rye (Salinger), The Crucible (Miller), Death of a Salesman (Miller), All My Sons (Miller), Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (Williams), In Dubious Battle (Steinbeck), Sea-Wolf (London), Fool's Crow ?????, The Education of Little Tree???????, The Hunger for Memory (Rodriguez), Black Boy (Wright), Maggie, Girl of the Streets (Crane), My Antonia (Cather), The Age of Innocence (Wharton), The Red Badge of Courage (Crane), The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail, Walden (Thoreau), The Skin of Our Teeth (Wilder), Their Eyes are Watching God (Hurston), Native Son (Wright).

4. Supplemental handouts including, but not limited to, short stories, poetry, literary analysis, non-fiction.

Suggestions for Assessment:

- ✓ Various rubrics for long composition
- ✓ Reading quizzes (written and oral)
- ✓ Essays and essay tests for critical thinking
- ✓ Various written, oral, and other projects to assess critical thinking
- ✓ Reading journals and other journal writing

Curriculum:

Suggested Topics:

- ✓ Native American
- ✓ Beginnings of American Tradition
- ✓ Literary nationalism
- ✓ Classicism
- ✓ Local Color
- ✓ Romanticism (early and late)
- ✓ Transcendentalism
- ✓ Anti-Transcendentalism
- ✓ Realism
- ✓ Nationalism
- ✓ Modernism
- ✓ Post-Modernism

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Lesson Extensions:

- ✓ Field trips to museums, plays, and historical sites
- ✓ Guest lecturers
- ✓ Field study
- ✓ Research projects
- ✓ Additional analytical writing assignments
- ✓ Creative writing assignments
- ✓ Outside reading assignments for Honors
- ✓ Viewing and analysis of complementary films
- ✓ Synthesizing projects in alternate mediums
- ✓ Great American speeches