

Wachusett Regional High School

Course Name: Foundations of English

Level: Academic Enrichment (AE)

Grade (s): 11 & 12

Course Description:

This course is required for students who failed the English/Language Arts portion of the MCAS. The guiding philosophy is that writing well is inseparable from reading well. Furthermore, writing itself enables students to analyze what they have read. Designed to improve students' responses to reading and to increase their knowledge and skill in the English language, "Foundations of English" focuses on developing and improving both reading and writing skills. Course content emphasizes close reading, provides practice in answering open-ended questions, and uses appropriate software to provide individualized instruction and reinforcement in grammar and mechanics. Unlike other courses, this course begins in January, has a midyear exam in June, and a final exam the following January. (This schedule accommodates the State's MCAS test reporting timetable.) Assessments include grammar tests, reading comprehension tests; compositions graded on the WRHS and MCAS rubrics and filed in individual "Network" portfolios; midyear and final exams.

Links to Student Expectations:

1. All students will develop skills to manage technology such as gathering, evaluating, assimilating, and presenting information.
2. All students will assess information in a critical manner by using skills that demonstrate the ability to identify and approach, and 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 develop skills to promote a sense of confidence in tackling the rigors of standardized tests such as the required MCAS and the optional AP, SAT.

Interdisciplinary Connections: Technology

Essential Concepts:

1. All students must pass the MCAS English Language Arts in order to graduate from WRHS.
2. Writing well is inseparable from reading well.
3. Writing well will enable students to analyze what they read.

Student Objectives:

1. Students will read and discuss short stories, poems, and novels.
2. Students will practice answering open-ended questions on close-reading passages.
3. Students will read short novels and practice writing critiques.
4. Students will use appropriate software to reinforce skills in grammar and mechanics.

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Suggestions for Instruction:

Texts:

- ✓ Daybook
 - ✓ Elements of Writing (CD-ROM)
 - ✓ Language Workshop (CD-ROM)
 - ✓ Writer's Workshop
 - ✓ The English Workshop
 - ✓ Assorted texts and novels
1. Students will work individually on active reading and writing in the Daybook of Critical Reading.
 2. Students will read and discuss stories and poems in Globe Literature.
 3. Students will work in the Writing Center on individualized essays and on grammar skills.
 4. Students will read several short novels.

Suggestions for Assessment:

- ✓ Reading and grammar tests and quizzes
- ✓ Critiques and MCAS-style essays
- ✓ Assessment of active reading and writing in the Daybook

Curriculum:

Units:

- ✓ Point of View
- ✓ Plot Structure
- ✓ Imagery
- ✓ Dialogue and Sound Techniques (alteration and onomatopoeia)
- ✓ Audience and Purpose
- ✓ Diction
- ✓ Figures of Speech
- ✓ Theme
- ✓ Setting and Mood
- ✓ Characterization
- ✓ Genre
- ✓ Poetry
- ✓ How to Ask Questions about Literature
- ✓ Structure and Style

Throughout the course, we work on grammar from The English Workshop.

Lesson Extensions:

1. To extend beyond the scope of the class lesson: the students will use the text Sports and Literature to create an independent oral presentation.
2. The students will independently read a novel and report on it to the class.