

Wachusett Regional High School

Course Name: German-Scandinavian Literature

Level: Honors, Academic Foundations (AF)

Grade (s): 11 & 12

Course Description:

A study of the literature of Germany and Scandinavia from its roots in mythology and epic prose throughout the ages to include works of 20th Century writers: Goethe, Ibsen, Strindberg, Kafka, Mann, Brecht, and others.

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 be able to make decisions and solve problems using logical processes (e.g., scientific method, induction, deduction, syllogism, etc.).
5. All students will demonstrate the use of creative and critical thinking skills in an area of the Fine Arts.
6. 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:

- ✓ Cultural diversity
- ✓ Geography
- ✓ The Arts: visual art, film, music
- ✓ Historical background
- ✓ Philosophy
- ✓ German language study at WRHS

Essential Concepts:

1. A deep appreciation of literature and its direct link to culture is gained through exposure to the literature of a particular geographical area.
2. Exposure to literature from different cultures broadens a student's worldview as well as illustrates the commonality of all human experience and the universality of literature.
3. Effective communication, both written and oral, is an essential skill to develop in secondary education.

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Student Objectives:

1. Students will read German and Scandinavian literature from various genres and from different historical periods.
2. Students will develop their skill at formal critical analysis of literature as well as practice their skills as creative writers.
3. Students will respond informally in writing to themes and characteristics evident in the literature that differentiate this type of literature from that of other distinct cultures.
4. Students will participate in large and small group discussions and activities to share their personal responses to the literature.
5. Students will learn and practice rhetorical devices to be persuasive in oral presentations and in a philosophical position paper.

Suggestions for Instruction:

- ✓ Selected Scandinavian folktales and legends
 - ✓ The Saga of the Volsung
 - ✓ The Metropolitan Opera stories of Richard Wagner's Ring Cycle
 - ✓ Goethe's Faust
 - ✓ Ibsen's A Doll's House
 - ✓ Strindberg's The Father
 - ✓ Mann's Death in Venice
 - ✓ Brecht's Mother Courage and Her Children
 - ✓ Essays from contemporary German writers (Granta)
 - ✓ Selected short stories of Finnish and Norwegian writers
 - ✓ Films / Music
 - ✓ Bergman's The Seventh Seal
 - ✓ My Life as a Dog
 - ✓ Excerpts from Wagner's Opera "Ring Cycle"
 - ✓ Excerpts from Britten's Opera Death in Venice
1. Students will work individually to develop voice in their writing, to increase their awareness of the literature of Germany and Scandinavia, and to communicate that awareness effectively in formal essays.
 2. Students will explore and articulate their personal responses to the ideas the literature presents through informal journal writing.
 3. Students will work in cooperative learning groups.
 4. Students will read and discuss literature in a variety of genres, with a focus on themes, style, and cultural aspects.

Suggestions for Assessment:

- ✓ Quizzes for close reading and tests for analytical understanding
- ✓ Essays for critical thinking and to hone writing skills
- ✓ Oral presentations
- ✓ Journals for literature evaluation and personal reflection

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Curriculum:

- ✓ The Foundations of German-Scandinavian Literature: Mythology, Ancient Saga, and Folk Literature
- ✓ Faust and its Ramifications
- ✓ The Modern Era - The Plays, "Death in Venice"
- ✓ Films and Operas
- ✓ Contemporary Literature: Essays and Short Stories

Lesson Extensions:

- ✓ To provide students with additional suggestions for reading literature from German and Scandinavian writers.
- ✓ To encourage students to attend institutions, museums, and sites which in some way connect to German-Scandinavian culture and the literature it has produced.
- ✓ To enlighten students concerning the connection between the literature of a particular culture and the other arts it has produced
- ✓ To encourage students to be lifelong observers of other cultures and of the European influences in our own "melting pot" culture.