

Syllabus, 2008/2009
Junior English - American Literature
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What this class is about:

The main literature focus of this class will be on studying American Literature. We will read novels, short stories, essays, and a play. In addition, you will write for a variety of purposes, study grammar and vocabulary, and prepare for testing, especially for the ACT exam, which will be given to all juniors in April.

The school year will be divided into quarters, with each quarter lasting approximately nine weeks. In each quarter, our goal will be to study the three to five standards for that quarter. Some standards will span some or all quarters, such as the vocabulary standard. Following, then, is the list of standards that we will cover for each quarter, as well as the major literary work that we will read for that quarter.

Quarter one

- 1C.I.8/2A.I.2: Explain and justify an interpretation of the text using relevant, accurate references from the text.
- 2B.I.6: Evaluate a character's behavior.
- 1A.I.3: Apply knowledge of roots and affixes to comprehend the meaning of difficult or unfamiliar words.
- **Novel:** Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*

Quarter two

- 1B.I.3: Analyze a variety of texts for purpose, structure, content, detail, and effect.
- 2A.I.8: Evaluate how a text reflects a culture, society, or historical period.
- 1A.I.3: Apply knowledge of roots and affixes to comprehend the meaning of difficult or unfamiliar words.
- **Novel:** F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*

Quarter three

- 3B.I.1/3B.I.2/3C.I.1: Use writing process of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing to produce work that contains the main idea in an essay supported with well-articulated evidence.
- 3A.J.1: Edit/revise draft documents to more effectively communicate the intended message.
- 5C.I.2: Use multiple reliable sources to develop and support major ideas.
- 5B.I.5: Develop a bibliography and a source(s) cited page using an appropriate format.
- 1A.I.3: Apply knowledge of roots and affixes to comprehend the meaning of difficult or unfamiliar words.
- **Novel:** J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*

Quarter four

- 5A.I.3/1C.I.5: Identify and apply criteria for determining the credibility and accuracy of multiple sources of information.
- 1C.I.3: Interpret concepts or make connections through analysis, evaluation, inference, and/or comparisons.
- 1A.I.3: Apply knowledge of roots and affixes to comprehend the meaning of difficult or unfamiliar words.
- **Novel:** John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*

Quarterly pretests and posttests

Each quarter you will take a pretest that will help me, and you, assess your overall knowledge of the topic to be studied during that quarter. Your pretest score will not count; your posttest score *will* count. It is likely that by quarter's end you will have learned enough to help you do well on your posttest. But, as with most everything, you will need to study to ensure a good grade.

Our Literary Text:

- *The Language of Literature: American Literature*; published by McDougall Littell

What you will need:

- **Binder** with loose leaf paper; you may use one exclusively for this class or split the binder with other classes. You will use the paper for in-class assignments and homework assignments (unless typing is required); you'll want a good amount of space for worksheets as I will be giving you a lot throughout the school year. You may also use the binder for your **Assertion Journal** entries. But please keep these separate from your other work.
- Daily Language Workouts journal (mug shot sentences)/Vocabulary journal – **a spiral notebook**
- **Pens or pencils**
- **Highlighters** – different colors for analysis of literature and structuring of paragraphs for essays (mostly used starting in the second quarter)

Grammar/Vocabulary

Because we will study language and literature so intensively in this class, it is important that you have a good command of the English language. It is also important that you be mindful of grammar conventions in order to improve your *own* writing – to help you revise and edit your first and second drafts. As such, we will study grammar usage. We will focus on different areas each quarter. Each of these areas of study includes areas that students get repeatedly wrong.

Mug Shot Sentences (spiral notebook)

Another approach to grammar will be more general, as I will project a sentence on the screen that will need to be corrected. The samples of these sentences come from *Writers Inc. Daily Language Workouts*.

Two or three days per week, at the beginning of class, you will be given a sentence and you will do your best to correct that sentence. We will then correct the sentence as a class and identify the parts given that are wrong; example, Week 23, Day five: Subject/Verb agreement error(s), Spelling error(s), and Commas in a series error(s) for the following example:

Areas of correction will include, but are not limited to:

- Dash usage
- Direct quotation
- Comma use (appositive, independent clause, nonrestrictive clause, introductory phrase, introductory adverb clause, numbers)
- Apostrophe usage
- Plural possessive
- Comma splice
- Usage (right word)
- Run-on sentence

Vocabulary (spiral notebook)

Every Monday (seven weeks per quarter; twenty-eight weeks total) you will be asked to write down *five new words* and their definitions (that I will provide you), the words' common base, and the base's meaning.

Example: MAGN: "great"

Magnanimous, Magnate, Magnetize, Magnitude, and Magnum Opus

There will be a short vocabulary pre-quiz once or twice a week (Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday), and a vocabulary quiz every Friday which will cover the current week plus the previous three weeks. The quiz will ask you to do the following from a list of twenty total words (five the current week, plus fifteen over the previous three weeks):

- Recognize a vocabulary word in a given context.
- Write a definition of a vocabulary word.
- Create a sentence using a vocabulary word properly.
- Recognize a vocabulary word's part of speech.
- Identify the relationships between vocabulary words in analogies.

PSAE's

We will study ACT English and Reading (mostly English) throughout the school year. We will study the Work Keys and ACT Writing starting a few weeks before the exams.

I. Assertion Journals

Throughout much of the school year, you will receive a quote (usually once or twice a week) from a published writer, philosopher, or politician. For each quote, you must:

1. provide a clear explanation of the person's assertion;
2. defend or challenge it; and
3. acknowledge any possible objections to your point of view, including your rebuttal to these objections.

