

English I

In English I, students read literature from a variety of cultures and historical periods, examining how each piece of literature reflects the social, cultural, and global issues of its immediate context while illuminating the perennial questions of human nature. Students will also learn to recognize and critique the conventions of various genres and the effects of those conventions on authorial intent and purpose. In terms of writing instruction, English I integrates grammar, usage, and mechanics, and emphasizes the four modes of writing: narration, description, exposition, and persuasion. The course also covers current formal research techniques and practices.

Grade Level: 9

Classification: Core

Credit: 1

Prerequisite: None

English II

What is true justice? How does the lure of power and success shape society, and how do we balance the tension between individual responsibility and communal, even global, responsibility? These will be questions this course seeks to answer through the reading and discussion of a variety of literary works from different time periods and geographic locations.

In English II, students will continue to refine the skills they built in English I: reading, writing, mechanics, usage, and vocabulary building. They will read classics of world literature from c.1000 B.C.E. to the present, examining the rich intellectual heritage of various cultures and epochs. Guided by these great texts, as well as shorter works of fiction and poetry, students will pose and discuss questions about human excellence and depravity-- about heroism, tyranny, and ambition--and will continue to refine their research skills by examining how the literature interacts with its historical and cultural context.

Grade Level: 10

Classification: Core

Credit: 1

Prerequisite: English I

English II Honors

English II Honors is an English course for tenth grade students who have exceptional talents and motivation for reading and writing. The course is designed to prepare students for the rigors of AP English Language and Composition through an intensive study of world literature and extensive work in composition. Students will continue to work on vocabulary development to enhance their writing and to prepare them for standardized tests.

World Literature II, Honors will conduct studies in representative works of world literature from antiquity to the present. The course emphasizes the study and consideration of the literary, cultural, and human significance of selected great works of the Western and non-Western literary traditions. An important goal of the class is to promote an understanding of the works in their cultural/historical contexts and of the enduring human values which unite the different literary traditions.

The course's pedagogy gives special attention to critical thinking and writing within a framework of cultural diversity as well as comparative and interdisciplinary analysis.

Every student will complete a major research project on a contemporary world poet.

Grade Level: 10

Classification: Core

Credit: 1

Prerequisites: English I and English teacher recommendation

English III

What does it mean to be American? To come from this country? How has our country's past shaped us into who we are, as a nation, and as individual Americans, today? These will be questions this course seeks to answer through reading a survey of American Literature in several genres including, but not limited to: the novel, short story, poem, speech, memoir, and play. Students will become familiar with major American literary figures, as well as the major themes they've addressed and the literary movements to which they contributed. English III emphasizes the study of literature as an academic discipline, preparing students for work in college literature and writing classes. Every student will complete a major research project, learning and writing about a specific work and its overarching themes.

Grade Level: 11

Classification: Core

Credit: 1

Prerequisite: English II

AP Language and Composition

Rhetoric has been called "the art of finding all the available means of persuasion in particular cases," and "soul-leading by means of language," and "that which creates an informed appetite for the good." In this course, we will study rhetoric and composition. This means that, at the very least, we will study how people convince each other with language. We will do this by reading and studying a variety of texts (i.e., biography, autobiography, journal, memoir, essay, speech, image, and so on) while paying particular attention to the speaker of that given text's rhetorical strategies and the intended effects of those strategies. In addition to this, you will write in a variety of persuasive modes, and in doing so, you'll practice sharpening and shaping your voice on the page, along with your grammatical, mechanical, and research skills. This course is designed according to the requirements and guidelines of the current AP English Language and Composition Course Description. AP Language is a college-level class in which you will be expected to read critically, think analytically, and communicate clearly in written and verbal forms.

Grade Level: 11

Classification: Core

Credit: 1

Prerequisites: English II or English II Honors and English teacher recommendation

English IV: Mysteries, Mayhem and True Crime

Whether you are drawn to mysteries and true crime because of your macabre fascination, or you want to experience the thrill of the solution, the genre requires us to evaluate the importance of its status. Are we all capable of the atrocities depicted in this type of fiction? Can we empathize with assailants, and if so, what does that say about human nature? What makes crime and mysteries so intriguing? Delving into the genre, we will focus on these questions as well as the author's attempt to enact justice. This course will allow students to engage in literature, pushing them to inquire and reflect on the purpose of and fascination with mayhem and mysteries. Beginning with Edgar Allan Poe and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, we will explore the fundamental elements of the mystery genre, looking particularly at detective fiction. As we continue in the year, we will progress into modern examples of mysteries, exploring the implementation of classic methods of mystery writers in addition to new deviations from those methods.

At the close of the year, students will study the popular genre of True Crime through podcasts, exploring how different modes of literature still point back to the same questions regarding the depths and depravity of humanity.

Grade Level: 12

Classification: Core

Credit: 1

Prerequisite: English III or AP Language and Composition

English IV: Science Fiction

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? Stories of science fiction offer us some of the strangest and most thought-provoking experiences in all of literature. Whether we read them to be entertained or comforted or terrified or alienated, speculative fiction still attempts to do what all great literature does: grasp some of the deepest questions of human existence. Who are we? What is our purpose? How do we live a good life? We will read works by Ray Bradbury, Arthur C. Clarke, Isaac Asimov, Ursula K. LeGuin, Octavia Butler, Philip K. Dick, Kazuo Ishiguro, Stanislaw Lem, Ted Chiang, Margaret Atwood and others.

Grade Level: 12

Classification: Core

Credit: 1

Prerequisite: English III or AP Language and Composition

AP Literature and Composition

In AP English Literature, students read critically and analyze imaginative literature—poetry, drama, and fiction—from various geographical locations, genres, and periods, concentrating on works of recognized literary merit. The course includes extensive research, regular timed writings, and college-level expectations for both volume and difficulty of texts and essays. Every student will complete a major research project, writing about a specific work and its overarching themes.

Grade Level: 12

Classification: Core

Credit: 1

Prerequisite: English III or AP Language and Composition and English teacher recommendation

Creative Writing I and II

Creative writing is a form of artistic expression that allows individuals to explore their imagination and express their thoughts and ideas through written words. In this course, students will learn the fundamentals of creative writing, including character development, plot structure, and dialogue. They will also have the opportunity to practice their writing skills through a variety of exercises and prompts, as well as workshops and discussions, designed to develop their own unique voice as writers. Upon completion of each course, students will have a better understanding of their own writing style and voice, and will have a collection of their own work to share. Students must take both Creative Writing I and II to qualify for enrollment in Advanced Creative Writing. This is an elective course and does not replace a required English course.

Grade Level(s): 9-12

Classification: Elective

Credit: .33

Prerequisite: None

Advanced Creative Writing

This course introduces students to the process of creating, revising, and publishing short stories, poems, and nonfiction. Students learn techniques from master writers, then proceed to write their own pieces and find their own voices. Throughout the trimester, students share their works-in-progress during in-class workshops and offer written and oral commentary on their peers' work. By the end of the term, each student will produce a polished and refined piece of writing to submit for consideration to the Parish literary magazine. This is an elective course and does not replace a required English course.

Grade Level(s): 9-12

Classification: Elective

Credit: .33

Prerequisite(s): Creative Writing I and II