



Call of the Wild: Literature of the Natural World

Course Information

Grade(s):	10-12
Discipline/Course:	English / Semester Elective
Course Title:	Call of the Wild: Literature of the Natural World
Prerequisite(s):	English 9 College Prep or English 9 Honors
Course Description: <i>Program of Studies</i>	Students will read literary depictions of the natural world from varied cultural and literary traditions, and across a wide range of genres. All reading and analysis for this course requires an introspective spirit and the ability to make productive connections among various texts to perceive and articulate common themes, ambiguities, and tensions. Call of the Wild challenges students to grow their own sensory awareness and deepen their relationships with nature. To this end, participation in some field experiences will be expected, both independently and as a class. Students will document their field experiences with field journal writing and develop some of these notes into more formal narrative reflections. Analytical and nature-writing skills will be developed and consistently required. All language standards will be addressed through students' authentic writing as they create pieces that could also be considered for inclusion in the portfolio.
Course Essential Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is a wild space, and why does it draw us away from our domestic lives? ● Why have modern people grown detached from the basic influences and cycles of nature, and what means can be employed to recognize and reestablish them? ● In what ways can our media technology alienate humanity from nature, and how can it be utilized to promote harmony with nature? ● How can close examination of local natural flora and fauna reveal truths about our own psychology and values, and enhance our ability to lead satisfying lives? ● What are the essential philosophical differences in viewing nature between mainstream Western and Indigenous attitudes, and how have those differences manifested themselves in the development of the modern world? ● How can we enhance our appreciation of and respect for place?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role should solitude and silence play in our lives?
Course Enduring Understandings:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language builds bridges between people, but it can also build walls; people need to recognize the power of words and act accordingly. • Wild spaces can exist almost anywhere and serve as a means of reconnecting with nature and the internal self, two needs that often go unmet in the domestic part of our lives. • Artificial pressures created by time, unrealistic goals, and conflicts in domestic life have pulled us away from nature, so crafting positive responses to these pressures and insisting on time for connection to nature are part of the remedy. • As the exponentially expanding powers of science and technology have become entwined with our relationship to nature, individuals must continually calibrate their awareness of and responses to this relationship. • Cultivating a dynamic sense of wonder and curiosity about the beauties and mysteries of the natural world offers continual material for the nature-writer, and opportunities for renewal in the stressful modern world. • Indigenous people’s attitudes and philosophies about nature are different from those of the European mindset, but they should also play a role in the continued development of the modern world. • By engaging with local ecological and human stories, a person develops a richer appreciation and respect for that place. • In today’s busy society, it is important to create time for silence and solitude in order to strengthen our bond with nature and enhance our relationships with one another.
Duration: Credit:	1 semester .5 credit
Course Materials/Resources:	Core Texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Into the Wild</i> by Jon Krakauer • <i>The Forest Unseen</i> by David Haskell • <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i> by Robin Wall Kimmerer • <i>The Earth is Enough</i> by Harry Middleton • <i>Mink River</i> by Brian Doyle

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>The Marrow Thieves</i> by Cherie Dimaline <p>Materials also include assorted short stories, book excerpts, myths, poetry, nonfiction essays, film, etc.</p> <p>Some commonly featured authors include: Henry David Thoreau, David Haskell, Annie Dillard, Sigurd Olson, Basho, Thich Nhat Hanh, Walt Whitman, Percy Shelley, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Brian Doyle, Michael Branch, Anthony Doerr, Tania James, Rachel Carson, Holly Morris, Mary Oliver, Robert Frost, Robert Macfarlane. Each year, teachers of this course will identify one common text to be read by all students.</p>
FPS Course Academic Expectation(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Synthesizing and Evaluating ● Conveying Ideas
Semester at a Glance (Units):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Portfolio <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The portfolio is an unnumbered, overarching literacy endeavor culminating in a multimodal, curated compilation of work that demonstrates a student’s understanding of content, mastery of skills, metacognitive awareness, and growth in these areas over time. ● Unit 1: Narrative Journeys into the Wild ● Unit 2: The Journey Home: Rewilding Ourselves

Units

Unit Number and Title:	Unit: The Portfolio
Duration:	One Semester
Resource(s):	<u>English Portfolio Directions</u>
Unit Overview:	The portfolio is a metacognitive, multimodal presentation exhibiting students’ acquisition of knowledge and skills over the course of their sophomore year in English. It is the culminating demonstration of district and State standards. Because the portfolio is an ongoing, year-long experience that captures a student’s achievement in language and literacy skills, all language standards related to grammar and the standard conventions of English are articulated in this part of the curriculum document and will be taught on an ongoing basis.
Standard(s):	<p>All of the Connecticut Common Core Standards 11-12 (Reading Literature, Reading for Information, Writing, Language, and Speaking and Listening) will be demonstrated in the portfolio. However, the following standards are the ones that most apply to the new, reflective writing students compose for the final metacognitive piece:</p> <p>Reading</p> <p>RL.11-12.10 By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.</p>

RI.11-12.10 By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing

W.11-12.2.b Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

W.11-12.2.c Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

W.11-12.3.a Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.

W.11-12.3.c Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).

W.11-12.3.d Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

W.11-12.3.e Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in

standards 1-3 above.)

W.11-12.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grades 11-12 here.)

W.11-12.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

W.11-12.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Language

L.11-12.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.11-12.1.a Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.

L. 11-12.1.b Resolve issues of complex or contested usage, consulting references (e.g., *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of English Usage*, *Garner's Modern American Usage*) as needed.

L.11-12.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.11-12.2.a Observe hyphenation conventions.

L.11-12.2.b Spell correctly.

L.11-12.3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to

	<p>make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.</p> <p>L.11-12.3.a Vary syntax for effect, consulting references (e.g., Tufte's <i>Artful Sentences</i>) for guidance as needed; apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts when reading.</p>	
Essential Question(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How can a portfolio of work show achievement and growth in literacy skills? ● How does reflecting on one's growth as a reader, writer, speaker, listener, and thinker enrich and deepen one's understanding? ● How does growth in one aspect of literacy (reading, writing, speaking, listening, etc.) facilitate growth in other areas? ● How does a multi-genre and a multimodal approach to writing and expression create a more fluent and well-rounded learner? 	
Enduring Understanding(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● By collecting, reflecting on, and revising my work in one portfolio, I can track my achievement and formulate new goals for continued growth. ● Reflection allows me to continue to develop my literacy skills because I can step back from the individual works, try new strategies, and consider the level of success I've achieved with each piece. ● When I try new strategies and increase my skills in one area of literacy, I can use that increase to inform and expand my expertise in the other areas of literacy, as well. ● Because I can express my ideas through a variety of genres and modes, I am able to more fluently share my thinking with more people and across all disciplines. 	
Learning Goals:	Content: Students will know...	Skills: Students will be able to...

Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self-reflection/metacognition (understanding of one’s own achievement and growth in literacy skills) ● Comprehension strategies for reading and understanding literature and literary nonfiction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate the ability to read and comprehend literature (including drama, stories, and poems) at the high end of the Grades 11-12 text band. ● Demonstrate the ability to read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the Grades 11-12 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reflective writing techniques (such as use of voice, organization, and integration of illustrative examples) ● Technology platforms and tools for sharing and collecting writing in a meaningful way ● MLA style (humanities) ● APA style (sciences) ● Turabian’s Manual (research) ● Spelling rules and tools ● Metacognition ● Organizational structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use technology appropriately ● Write and edit work so that it conforms to the guidelines in a style manual (e.g., MLA Handbook, APA style, Turabian’s Manual for Writers) appropriate for the discipline and writing type. ● Spell correctly. ● Write metacognitive reflections. ● Employ personal voice. ● Organize reflective thinking
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parallel structure ● Types of phrases ● Types of clauses ● Semicolon usage and rules ● Colon usage and rules ● Capitalization rules ● Other punctuation rules for English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. ● Use parallel structure. ● Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or

		<p>presentations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.● Use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses.● Use a colon to introduce a list or quotation.● Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
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Unit Number and Title:	Unit 1: Narrative Journeys Into the Wild
Duration:	One quarter
Resource(s):	<p>The following books are best aligned with this unit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Into the Wild</i> by Jon Krakauer ● varied short stories, essays, poetry, film, art, etc. featuring people deliberately engaging wild spaces. <p>Some featured authors include: Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman, Mary Oliver, Sigurd Olson, Tania James, Annie Dillard, Anthony Doerr, Robert Frost, Andy Goldsworthy, Godfrey Reggio, David Haskell, Brian Doyle.</p>
Unit Overview:	<p>Students will establish a definition of “wild” spaces and consider why they draw us away from the domestic sphere. To that end, they will consider a broad range of literary journeys into wild spaces, and compare not only the exigencies provoking them, but also the texture and consequences of the journeys, as well.</p> <p>In addition, students will explore different literary and artistic depictions of various natural subjects, with particular attention to what is local and seasonal (changing foliage, snowfall, equinoxes/solstices..., migration, hibernation, spring ephemerals, etc). They will also mine psychological and philosophical approaches to enhance their understanding of these themes. Finally, they will be introduced to the process of learning how to observe and write as a naturalist.</p> <p>Specific content, including information and ideas connected closely to science, social studies, and the arts, will be explored and deeply considered as it is applicable to the works of literature read. Building background knowledge and learning how to recognize when and where it is needed are essential to being competent readers, and, as such, this type of content will be relied on in that way.</p>

Standard(s):	<p>Reading</p> <p>RI.11-12.2 Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <p>RI.11.-12.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.</p> <p>Writing</p> <p>W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <p>Speaking and Listening</p> <p>SL.11-12.1a Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.</p>
Essential Question(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is a wild space, and why does it draw us away from our domestic lives? ● Why have modern people grown detached from the basic influences and cycles of nature, and what means can be employed to recognize and reestablish them? ● In what ways can our media technology alienate humanity from nature, and how can it be utilized to promote harmony with nature? ● How can close examination of local natural flora and fauna reveal truths about our own psychology and values, and enhance our ability to lead satisfying lives?
Enduring Understanding(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wild spaces can exist almost anywhere and serve as a means of reconnecting with nature and the internal self, two needs that often go unmet in the domestic part of our lives. ● Artificial pressures created by time, unrealistic goals, and conflicts in domestic life have pulled

	<p>us away from nature, so crafting positive responses to these pressures and insisting on time for connection to nature are part of the remedy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As the exponentially expanding powers of science and technology have become entwined with our relationship to nature, individuals must continually calibrate their awareness of and responses to this relationship. ● Cultivating a dynamic sense of wonder and curiosity about the beauties and mysteries of the natural world offers continual material for the nature-writer, and opportunities for renewal in the stressful modern world. 	
Learning Goals:	Content: Students will know...	Skills: Students will be able to...
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The motif of the journey into the wild ● The term “exigency” ● Theoretical lenses (e.g., structuralist, ecocritical, postcolonial, feminist, archetypal, etc.) ● Several specific author’s craft techniques nature writers employ ● Dichotomies in literature (sentient vs non-sentient, aesthetic vs utilitarian, human vs animal, domestic vs wild, it vs thou...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use literary works as mentor texts to elevate powers of observation about the natural world and to understand the journey into the wild motif ● Determine and analyze themes and central ideas ● Identify author’s craft techniques used by nature writers ● Analyze the impact of the author’s craft choices ● Evaluate dichotomies in literature
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A variety of author’s craft techniques ● Structure of field journal entries ● The process of capturing observations effectively ● Informative or explanatory text structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write field journal entries to capture experiences and observations using effective author’s craft techniques ● Write informative or explanatory texts that convey complex ideas about nature

Speaking and Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Active listening strategies● Effective discussion strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Engage with others in thoughtful discussions about the content of the unit
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Unit Number and Title:	Unit 2: The Journey Home: Rewilding Ourselves
Duration:	One quarter
Resource(s):	<p>The following books are best aligned with this unit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>The Marrow Thieves</i> by Cherie Dimaline ● <i>I Heard the Owl Call My Name</i> by Margaret Craven ● <i>Mink River</i> by Brian Doyle ● <i>The Earth is Enough</i> by Harry Middleton ● <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i> by Robin Wall Kimmerer <p>Film Choices: <i>Whalerider</i> or <i>Smoke Signals</i></p> <p>Varied essays, poetry, film, art, etc. offering guidance on deepening one's sense of place through close observation, and following curiosity into learning more about local flora/fauna.</p> <p>Varied forms and styles of poetry about animals to study as mentor texts.</p>
Unit Overview:	<p>In this unit, students will build upon the naturalist writing and activities from the first unit to heighten their sense of wonder and connection to/knowledge of local ecosystems and wildlife. They will also explore indigenous perspectives on home spaces and wildlife in contrast with the traditional European mindset.</p> <p>Students will continue to develop a critical stance and employ reading and writing strategies as well as experiences in nature to support that stance. The culminating project will involve research, guided creative writing, and literary explication.</p> <p>Specific content, including information and ideas connected closely to science, social studies, and the arts, will be explored and deeply considered as it is applicable to the works of literature read. Building background knowledge and learning how to recognize when and where it is needed are essential to being competent readers, and, as such, this type of content will be relied on in that way.</p>

Standard(s):	<p>Reading</p> <p>RL.11-12.3 Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).</p> <p>RL.11-12.5 Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.</p> <p>Writing</p> <p>W. 11-12.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.</p> <p>Speaking and Listening</p> <p>S. 11-12.1d Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.</p>
Essential Question(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are the essential philosophical differences in viewing nature between mainstream Western and Indigenous attitudes, and how have those differences manifested themselves in the development of the modern world? ● How can we enhance our appreciation of and respect for place? ● What role should solitude and silence play in our lives?
Enduring Understanding(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Indigenous people's attitudes and philosophies about nature are different from those of the European mindset, but they should also play a role in the continued development of the modern world. ● By engaging with local ecological and human stories, a person develops a richer appreciation and respect for that place. ● In today's busy society, it is important to create time for silence and solitude in order to

	strengthen our bond with nature and enhance our relationships with one another.	
Learning Goals:	Content: Students will know...	Skills: Students will be able to...
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listening Points ● Indigenous philosophies of nature ● Close observation ● Reflection ● Ecosystems ● Land trusts ● Deep ecology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine themes and central ideas, analyzing their development to produce a complex account ● Analyze text structure ● Analyze author's choice ● Explicate a poem ● Conduct close observation ● Reflect on experiences and reading
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Narrative structure ● Development of ideas as a writing skill ● Techniques of powerful narration ● The process for sequencing events ● Powerful details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write narratives ● Develop real or imagined experiences ● Use effective narrative technique ● Structure events effectively ● Choose powerful details to include
Speaking and Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diverse perspectives ● Synthesis of ideas ● Focused research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respond thoughtful to diverse perspectives ● Synthesize comments, claims, and evidence from all sides ● Identify gaps in research and find the information necessary to complete the task