

ENGLISH

2024-2025 **COURSE CATALOG**



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Our English program cultivates a lifelong passion for reading and writing and promotes student discovery and engagement. SCH students learn to think, read, write, and speak with clarity and conviction. They identify questions and share opinions about texts, wrestle with complex ideas, build persuasive arguments and interpretations, and use writing as a means of creative expression. Students will examine classic and contemporary literature, as well as diverse forms of media.

The courses in our required sequence (9th–11th) emphasize close reading and analytical writing. Eleventh grade English introduces AP English. The department’s electives offer students the opportunity to investigate a new and specific realm of study. As schedule and space permit, juniors may enroll in selected electives in addition to their core English course. In grades 10-12, the department offers Honors and AP options. Placement in Honors and AP is determined by the department.

Summer work is required for all English courses, and students who change their English electives after reading materials have been distributed must contact the English Department to be sure they do the appropriate summer assignment. Also, it is the expectation that any students who add a course during the add/drop period will complete the summer work for the added course.

Required English Classes

The Individual and Society (9th Grade English)

Grade 9; full-year course; 1 credit

Summer reading is required.

This course helps students read texts closely and unpack multiple levels of meaning in order to deepen and complicate their understanding of themselves in relation to the world around them. Students learn to see writing as a collaborative process that involves drafts and revisions, and they strengthen their skills and confidence in written and oral expression. The course is writing-intensive in nature and will incorporate close study of paragraph and essay structures as well as grammar, mechanics, and vocabulary. In order to give students meaningful opportunities to learn and develop, this course will incorporate the following: group projects, formal writing assignments, Socratic seminar discussions, project-based learning experiences, and portfolios of creative work. Texts are drawn from a range of genres (novels, plays, short stories, poetry, and nonfiction) and may include *We Are Not Free* (Chee) *Antigone* (Sophocles), *Fahrenheit 451* (Bradbury), and *I was Their American Dream* (Gharib).

Reading the World (10th Grade English)

Grade 10; full-year course; 1 credit

Summer reading is required.

In Reading the World, students explore questions of identity, community, gender, race, and class through a focus on global voices. This course continues the arc of 9th grade by asking students to take their new competencies in close reading, critical thinking,

student-led discussions, and persuasive writing into challenging works that experiment with literary form. Texts are drawn from a range of genres (novels, plays, short stories, poetry, and nonfiction) and may include *Born a Crime* (Noah), *Macbeth* (Shakespeare), *Night* (Wiesel), *Klara and the Sun* (Ishiguro), *The Alchemist* (Paolo Coelho) and selected poems and short stories.

Honors Reading the World (10th Grade Honors English)

Grade 10; full-year course; 1 credit

Summer reading is required.

In Reading the World, students explore questions of identity, community, gender, race, and class through a focus on global voices. This course continues the arc of 9th grade by asking students to take their new competencies in close reading, critical thinking, student-led discussions, and persuasive writing into challenging works that experiment with literary form. At the honors level, students are guided to unpack more complex texts and develop more nuanced writing. Texts are drawn from a range of genres (novels, plays, short stories, poetry, and nonfiction) and may include *Born a Crime* (Noah), *Macbeth* (Shakespeare), *Night* (Wiesel), *A Handmaid's Tale* (Atwood), and selected poems and short stories.

American Stories (11th Grade English)

Grade 11; full-year course; 1 credit

Summer reading is required.

Students learn how to read literary works with greater accuracy and interpretive skill and how to write analytical and personal essays with more polish, persuasiveness, and coherence. The literature studied over the course of the year comprises novels, short stories, essays, poetry, and plays. There is a focus on the literary elements and structure of these works and on a thematic study of the American dream and the invention of the self. Major literary works may include *The Things They Carried* (O'Brien), *The Great Gatsby* (Fitzgerald), *Between the World and Me* (Coates), *The Vanishing Half* (Bennett), and *Angels in America* (Kushner).

AP Language and Composition (formerly 11th Grade Honors English)

Full-year course; 1 credit

Summer reading is required.

Prerequisite: Departmental approval

The AP English Language & Composition course provides students with the opportunity to read rigorous texts from various eras and in different genres, analyzing the big ideas of the rhetorical situation, claims/evidence, reasoning/organization, and style. At SCH Academy, 11th grade English college preparatory classes study American Literature. So as not to miss these vital works, American fiction and non-fiction literature will be included in the course. The course is designed to prepare students for success on the English Language and Composition Exam.

Through exposing students to major periods, writers, and texts of American Literature (both in fiction and non-fiction), the course will also, as The College Board puts it, “engage students in becoming skilled readers of prose written in a variety of rhetorical contexts, and in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Both their writing and their reading [will] make students aware of the interactions among a writer’s purposes, audience expectations, and subjects, as well as the way genre conventions and the resources of language contribute to effectiveness in writing.”

The overarching theme for the course is the exploration of American identity, both of the individual and that ever-changing American’s ethos. Each major unit in the course will focus on thematic concepts related to this overarching theme, as well as major rhetorical styles and choices made by the authors/speakers/artists. Students will read a series of non-fiction (essays and speeches) and fiction (novels and poetry), as well as view a documentary film. These titles include, but are not limited to, the following: *The Vanishing Half* (Bennett), *Between the World and Me* (Coates), *The Great Gatsby* (Fitzgerald), *Into the Wild* (Krakauer)

English Electives and AP English

Please note: The English Department’s elective offerings are subject to change depending on faculty availability and student sign ups. Asterisk () denotes NCAA-approved English elective.*

Introduction to Creative Writing*

Grades 10–12; elective; fall semester; ½ credit

Summer reading is required.

Good writing in any form—essays, poems, or stories—reaches across the gap between writer and reader and makes the reader gasp in surprise, laugh with delight, consider new perspectives, feel, and think in new ways. But good writing doesn’t just fall from the sky or spring, fully formed, into its creator’s mind; it is the product of conscious choices. In this course, students will focus on these conscious choices of writers, by analyzing what makes nonfiction, poetry, and fiction effective. Students will read works by a variety of writers and investigate how each of the authors’ choices affects the finished work. Students will write analytical essays, short pieces, journals, poems, polished drafts, and everything between. Students will be required to share their drafts and writing collections with their peers through writing workshops. The goal of this course is to stretch our imaginations and become better writers. Course texts will vary while studying particular genres.

Advanced Creative Writing*

Grades 10-12; elective; spring semester; ½ credit

Prerequisite: Introduction to Creative Writing

“Fiction that isn’t exploring what it means to be human today isn’t art.”
~ David Foster Wallace

This course builds on the foundational skills students developed in Introduction to Creative Writing and allows them to delve deeper into their craft. In this cross-genre

course, students will focus on those elements that make for vivid, effective writing: significant detail, lyrical language, and memorable images; inventive metaphor and simile; resistance to cliché; and authentic voice, dialogue, and characterization. Students will be challenged to reflect on their growth as writers and work to see themselves as part of a community of writers through Writer's Workshops, peer edits, and the use of a portfolio. The course will focus on fiction, poetry, and/or nonfiction. Course texts may include *Vampires in the Lemon Grove* (Karen Russell), *The Making of a Poem* (Eavan Boland), and numerous short stories, poems, and personal narratives.

Monsters and the Monstrous in Literature*

Grades 11, 12; elective; fall semester; ½ credit

Summer reading is required.

In this course, we will explore the figure of the monster in myth, literature, and film, keeping in mind the cultural and historical background of various tales, as well as some central questions: What makes a monster? What distinguishes human from monster? What can monsters tell us about the values, anxieties, and fears of the cultures in which they emerge? Through extensive in- and out-of-class reading, writing, and project-based activities, students will investigate what the cultural politics of monstrosity have to tell us about what it means to be human. Course texts may include *The Odyssey* (Homer), *Beowulf*, *Frankenstein* (Shelley), and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (Jackson).

Literature of the Americas*

Grades 11, 12; elective; fall semester; ½ credit

Summer reading is required.

In Literature of the Americas, students will explore the literature of Central and South America and the diaspora of those voices, focusing on stories and histories that they may not have encountered! They will engage with the ways that history and religion combine in the magical realism of Garcia Marquez and will unpack how Neruda's tribute to warm socks can be so much more than what first appears on the page. We will digest the poetry of Pablo Neruda, the prose of Isabel Allende, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and Elizabeth Acevedo, and the musings of Eduardo Galeano. We may even get a chance to dive into world cinema with the works of Guillermo Del Toro and Patricia Cardoso. Possible texts include *100 Love Sonnets* by Pablo Neruda, *The House of Spirits* by Isabel Allende, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *The Book of Embraces* by Eduardo Galeano, *With the Fire on High* by Elizabeth Acevedo, and various films.

Rhetorical Theory: Persuasion in Prose and Poetry*

Grades 11, 12; elective; fall semester; ½ credit

Summer reading is required.

This course aims to study rhetorical traditions and rhetoric's application in the composition process through the prisms of short nonfiction, speeches, and music.

Rhetoric, the art of effective or persuasive communication, is practiced around us daily: on television, on the web, in our conversations, and on our iPods in our favorite songs. One of many goals in this course is to encourage students to be more aware and analytical of the messages broadcasted around them, and know that the “knowledge of rhetoric can help us to respond critically and appreciatively to advertisements, commercials, political messages, satires, [and] irony...of all varieties” (Corbett and Connors, 25). Texts: Course reader with selections from *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, excerpts from Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, President Kennedy’s Inaugural Address, “The Allegory of the Cave,” “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” in addition to excerpts from scholarly essays and song lyrics.

Dystopian Literature*

Grades 11, 12; elective; spring semester; ½ credit

This course will investigate the art of dystopian literature and short stories. By definition, a dystopia is a society in which oppressive social control is maintained through the illusion of a perfect society. Authors have created countless societies whose founding principles or end goals seem noble and just, but the end result is the opposite. Part of the brilliance of the dystopian form is its ability to cultivate a discerning eye; as the reader dives deeper into this imagined world, harrowing elements of his or her own reality may be illuminated. Through reading a variety of dystopian literature, students will identify and analyze how authors inspire their readers to question the world around them. In short, how do authors make a statement about the real world through an exploration of the imagined? In addition to close reading and analysis, students will create several of their own dystopian societies that illuminate a social issue of concern. Texts include *1984* (Orwell) and several dystopian short stories, ranging from Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery” to Philip K Dick’s “Minority Report.”

Film as Text: The Analysis of Cinematic Language

Grades 11, 12; elective; spring semester; ½ credit

This course offers a critical understanding and deep appreciation of one of the most influential of modern popular art forms of our time. The beginning of the course serves as an introduction to cinematic language and techniques, and then we will survey the styles, genres, and history of landmarks in American cinema. In order to begin looking at films more analytically and perceptively, we will look at each film through a variety of interpretive, stylistic, and theoretical frames, exploring the relationship between culture and the movies. Through extensive in-class and out-of-class reading and writing, film viewings, and lively class discussion, students will also explore issues such as the relationship of film to narrative fiction and to dramatic literature. Texts may include *Adaptations: From Short Story to Screen* (ed. Stephanie Harrison) and *Looking at Movies: An Introduction to Film*, 3rd ed. (eds. Richard Barsam and Dave Monahan).

Introduction to Journalism*

Grades 10-12; elective; fall semester; ½ credit

French philosopher and journalist Albert Camus said that “journalism can never be silent: that is its greatest virtue and its greatest fault. It must speak, and speak immediately, while the echoes of wonder, the claims of triumph and the signs of horror are still in the air.” Thus, the goal of the journalist is to illuminate the world, both its beauty and its horror. In this course, students will gain authentic journalism experience by becoming staff writers for our school newspaper as they learn what makes a story newsworthy, as well as how to write in a variety of journalistic formats, including news stories, editorials, and personality profiles. Additionally, students will examine how historically marginalized voices have been included and excluded from their own narratives. Possible texts include *The Influencing Machine* (Gladstone), selections from *In Fact: The Best Of Creative Nonfiction* (Gutkind), *Writing Tools* (Clark), "The Media's Stereotypical Portrayals of Race," Sam Fulwood, "How Implicit Bias Works in Journalism" Isaac Bailey, in addition to excerpts from news and media outlets.

Crime, Punishment, & Justice in American Lit*

Grades 11, 12; elective; fall and spring semester; ½ credit

Summer reading is required.

From Edgar Allan Poe’s 1841 “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” to the rise in popularity of crime dramas, podcasts, and documentaries, America has nurtured an age-old fascination with crime and punishment. This course pushes students to examine literature and media in which crime, punishment, and justice are the main subject. Students will consider how these sources reinforce or dismantle stereotypes of victims and perpetrators, and how questions of right, wrong, and fairness have been and are understood. Students will be expected to write critically and host discussions to demonstrate understanding of the topic from various points of view. Finally, this course asks students to explore how crime, punishment, and justice is impacted by one’s identity. More specifically, students will examine how crimes are represented in the media, and how justice is impacted by gender, race, ability, socioeconomic status, and cultural differences.

The Beautiful Game: Life, Death, and the Humanities*

Grades 11, 12; elective; spring semester; ½ credit

Bill Shankly, celebrated and influential manager of Liverpool Football Club, once said, “Some people believe football is a matter of life and death. I am very disappointed with that attitude. I can assure you it is much, much more important than that.” The import and aim of this course is to examine the human condition using soccer as the conduit. On a global scale, soccer—or, football, as it’s commonly known away from American shores—serves much the same purpose as religion or politics: a form of cultural identity for billions of people where allegiances and worldview, for better or worse, are generational and hereditary. In this context, the game is not only a metaphor for life, as suggested by Mr. Shankly, but also a promoter and purveyor of various societies across the globe. It’s also a game that has (and has had) many individuals who are heroes, anti-heroes, and tragic heroes, both on the field and off.

Through the prism of soccer, students will explore topics of power, politics, poverty, race/racism, and gender within the world’s “beautiful game.” Using the texts and documentaries listed below, students will see a game that, at its best, is one that

brings people together highlighting the intensity and wonder of shared human experience. Conversely, at its worst, it is an enterprise that is “ethically fraught[,] morally bankrupt,” and lethal (World Corrupt). Possible Texts include selections from *The Ball is Round: A Global History of Football* (by David Goldblatt), *Soccernomics* (2022 World Cup Edition): *Why European Men and American Women Win*, and *Billionaire Owners Are Destined to Lose* (by Simon Kuper & Stefan Szymanski), *Gazza Agonistes* (by Ian Hamilton) as well as various podcasts, documentaries, and assorted poetry.

Gastronomic Literature: Exploring the Delicious Literary World of Food*

Grades 11, 12; elective; spring semester; ½ credit

This course offers a delectable journey into the realm of literature centered around food encompassing novels, children’s books, cookbooks, historical texts, memoirs, and articles that celebrate the cultural social and personal significance of food and literature. Students will explore the interplay between food and storytelling, examining how authors and chefs use food as a lens to explore identity, culture, memory, and human connections through diverse readings, discussions, and hands-on experiences. Students will savor the rich tapestry of food-centric literature.

Possible texts include excerpts from Ernest Hemingway’s *A Moveable Feast*, Anthony Bourdain’s *Kitchen Confidential*, Julia Child’s *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, Samin Nosrat’s *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat*, Alan Davidson’s *The Oxford Companion to Food* as well as the memoir *Crying in H Mart* by Michelle Zauner, the novel *Butter Honey Pig Bread* by Francesca Ekwuyasi, selected children’s books *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle, *Amy Wu and the Perfect Bao* by Kat Zhang as well as the short story “Fish Cheeks” by Amy Tan, the article “Consider the Lobster” by David Foster Wallace and articles, essays, blog posts, and digital media from Smitten Kitchen, NYT Cooking, Ruth Reichl, M. F. K. Fisher, and Craig LaBan.

Advanced Journalism*

Grades 10-12; elective; spring semester; ½ credit

Prerequisite: Introduction to Journalism

This course builds on refining the journalistic skill set developed in the introductory course, such as finding the story, interviewing sources, reporting in a variety of formats, and capturing a scene with intricate details. In addition to producing newspaper content and reading great examples of student and professional journalism, students explore topics in media ethics, such as approaching stories without prejudice, balancing intrusion and respect, deceit and reporting, intervening in a story, and journalism as a public service. This course is a requirement for students interested in serving as an editor for *The Lantern* their senior year.

AP Literature and Composition*

Grade 12; elective; full-year course; 1 credit

Summer reading is required.

Prerequisite: Departmental approval

AP students may also enroll in additional English electives each semester if space permits.

This yearlong course focuses on works from the three genres highlighted on the Advanced Placement Literature and Composition examination: poetry, drama, and narrative. Students read and interpret a wide range of texts written in varied styles and chosen from different centuries. Works studied may include novels and plays by Dickens, Chopin, Woolf, Conrad, García Márquez, Morrison, Shakespeare, Euripides, and Wilde, as well as poetry dating from the Renaissance to the 21st century. Students will also improve their writing skills through work on carefully argued, supported, and polished analytical essays. At the end of the course, students are prepared to take the AP Literature and Composition exam.

AP Language and Composition*

Grade 12; elective; full-year course; 1 credit

Summer reading is required.

Prerequisite: Departmental approval

AP students may also enroll in additional English electives each semester if space permits.

AP Language and Composition provides students with the opportunity to study the way rhetoric, the ancient art of persuasive speaking and writing, shapes our lives and our world. By reading and writing various forms of nonfiction, students will cultivate an understanding of author as architect, as well as the ability to analyze and articulate the way language operates in any text. Possible texts include works by Jonathan Swift, George Orwell, E.B. White, Annie Dillard, Martin Luther King, Zora Neale Hurston, and Judith Ortiz Cofer. Possible writing assignments include written response journals; letters; speeches; and personal, analytical, and persuasive essays. At the end of the course students are prepared to take the AP Language and Composition exam.