



SILSA Course Syllabus

Course Name: English II Honors
Teacher(s): Katie Lowdermilk

Course Overview

In English II, students read, discuss, and write about classical and contemporary world literature (excluding British and American authors) to explore its cultural significance. Through cultural analysis, students examine global texts to better understand diverse perspectives and connect those ideas to their own experiences. Students continue developing their skills in expressive, explanatory, critical, argumentative, and literary writing, with an emphasis on informational contexts.

In addition to literature study, students:

- Analyze non-literary texts within cultural studies,
- Conduct research to support explanatory responses to real-world and literary issues,
- Critically interpret and evaluate experiences, literature, language, and global ideas,
- Apply standard grammatical conventions and tailor language to purpose, audience, and context.

Essential Questions to Spark Student Inquiry

1. How does literature reflect—and challenge—the values, beliefs, and struggles of a culture?
2. What can we learn about ourselves by exploring stories from cultures different from our own?

Assessment

Formative

What opportunities will students be given to show the development of their understandings and skills? What are the intermediate products and learning tasks that students will create and engage in?

Reading:

We will read at the beginning of **every day**. The goal is to help you think critically about texts and how they reflect the world around you. Be ready to engage in both small group and whole group discussions about what you read.

Seminars & Discussions:

You will be expected to participate in in-depth discussions and seminars on topics of social justice (in conjunction with Civics) as well as the major themes and implications of the texts we study. These cross-curricular conversations will explore both the social and historical aspects of literature. All students are expected to contribute respectfully and listen to the perspectives of others.

In-Class Activities:

To help you process and understand what you read, we will regularly use a variety of in-class activities designed to support your thinking and build your skills over time. These may include guided reading questions, graphic organizers, dialectical journals, quote analysis, and vocabulary-building exercises. These activities will help you break down complex texts, explore key ideas, and prepare for discussions and writing assignments.

Quizzes:

Quizzes will be given frequently to check your understanding of the reading. These will be announced ahead of time and will focus on your comprehension of the text before we begin discussion. You will also take vocabulary and grammar quizzes to track your mastery of key terms and language concepts.

Summative

What final, culminating product(s) will students present to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes?

Essays, Projects, and Writing:

Each unit we will build on specific writing skills to create more fluent, adept writers. We will reflect on personal experiences, write critically about text, write reflectively, write informally and formally. We will write for different audiences, analyze textual meaning, and synthesize multiple texts. Expect to write essays for every unit and informal reflections every day. I don't believe in tests for my class, so all major assessments are projects and writing-based.

Possible Summative Assessments:

- Multicultural Literary Analysis Essay
- SPACECAT Rhetorical Analysis One-Pager
- Community Action Research Essay
- Importance of Being Earnest Theme Project
- Literary Circles

- Poetry Portfolio Project
- Book Museum Final Project

Grading

In alignment with [Board of Education Policy 3400 Evaluation of Student Progress](#), describe the grading scale/weight and how the five principles of grading will be integrated (i.e. accurate; reflects proficiency of academic standards; supports a culture of revision; provides timely and actionable feedback; and distinguishes means of learning (habits of scholarship) from the ends (academic success). Clearly describe your policy around homework, retakes, and revisions.

Grading Breakdown & Scale:

- Core Assignments (Essays & Projects) – 60%
 - Multicultural Analysis, Research Essays, Theme Projects, Poetry Portfolio, etc.
- Practice Assignments – 20%
 - Literary Circles, dialectical journals (summative versions), close reading tasks, seminars, discussions, presentations, grammar, vocabulary quizzes, sentence structure exercises
- EOC Exam – 20%

Late Work & Extensions:

- Formative Work (Practice): Must be submitted within the unit. If it's missing after the unit ends, it's a "Not Yet," but doesn't heavily impact the grade.
- Summative Work (Essays/Projects): Must be turned in by the due date to receive feedback and revision opportunities. If it's late, students schedule a check-in and submit within a two-week window.
- Work not submitted by the window = "Not Yet Attempted" (0), but can still be attempted before the end of quarter with teacher approval.

Attendance

Per [Board of Education Procedure 3420-P](#): Students who exceed the number of absences to earn course credit must attend attendance recovery within two weeks of their last absence.

Per [Board of Education Procedure 4400-P](#): To receive credit for a course, a student must not have more than five (5) unlawful class absences.

When a student must miss school, a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian must be presented to the student's teacher on the day the student returns after an absence. Absences due to extended illnesses may also require a statement from a health care practitioner.

Additional/Supplemental Information

Materials

- Binder or binder section
- CHARGED Chromebook
- College-ruled paper
- English dedicated composition notebook
- Pencils, pens, erasers, and highlighters
- Independent reading book

Classroom Community

I encourage open dialogue and self-advocacy, emphasizing respectful communication.

In this course, it is important to maintain a discourse that is both respectful and constructive. Any language or behavior that is inflammatory, hateful, or disrespectful will not be tolerated. This includes the use of violent, belligerent, or insulting remarks directed at peers.

I will not engage in any form of teaching or assistance that promotes hate or violence towards others. Let us collectively strive to create a productive and inclusive learning environment where everyone feels empowered to participate and grow.

AI Policy

It is the student's responsibility to ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of information used from AI tools. AI use is permitted for the following activities and assignments brainstorming only for the Collaborative Research and Final Exam. Do not use AI for any

Harmonize Forum Post. Your work should be from your perspective: your ideas, your curiosities. AI is a tool. This tool can provide you with the bones of a writing assignment. Never use AI content as a final draft.

Acceptable AI Use

A few points to consider when using AI:

AI tools may be used only for brainstorming or idea generation on select assignments (Mid-Term & Final Exam). Do not use AI for reading responses, forum posts, or final drafts. You are here to grow as a writer and thinker. AI cannot replicate your personal voice, lived experience, or the kind of reflective thinking that this course develops. Submitting AI-generated writing as your own is considered plagiarism and will result in assignment failure and possible disciplinary action.

- Your brain is better, more imaginative than any computer.
- I know it may feel like the class and/or the instructor is not worth your time. Or, maybe, you just don't have the time. You need extra help; you need this assignment off your plate. And, AI is easy, does the work for you. And, by thinking this way you put yourself at risk for failure.
- You are in college to build skills. You want to learn. You want to develop curiosity. These skills will help you earn the careers you want. Why cheat yourself?
- Instructors can plug your assignments into AI and it says, "Yes, I wrote this." Just so you know. You are easily found out with the same tool you used to cheat.
- And if you are determined to use AI to do all your work for you, you better get proficient in asking it what to do, because I don't have to ask it if you cheated. I can immediately detect AI because the prompt is not answered and personal experience is not incorporated. AI does not know how to write thesis/purpose statements or prove them.
- Do not devalue yourself. Don't. You are enough. You are amazing. Don't let a computer think for you.

If you choose to experiment with AI:

- Use it following the Acceptable AI Use document
- Use it for brainstorming, summarizing, or revising, but not for creating the writing
- Always revise thoroughly to reflect your own ideas and voice
- Never copy/paste without critical thought or citation