



**ENGL 210 - English 9**

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: None*

All ninth graders begin their work in English with a structured creative writing unit. Students write every day, in a variety of genres ranging from dramatic dialogues to lyric poems and from flash fiction to longer form personal narratives. Daily writing is accompanied by routine feedback from teachers, and students practice exchanging critical feedback in peer review exercises. The writing unit occupies the first quarter of the ninth grade year and is ungraded—taken pass/fail—a practice which allows us to offer students space for fruitful risk-taking and experimentation with writing and revision. The rest of the year involves the practice of analytical writing, the extension of imaginative writing, and the close reading and analysis of literary texts such as *Frankenstein*, *Klara and the Sun*, *Purple Hibiscus*, *The Metamorphosis*, and *Macbeth*. Students' study of grammar and usage in English 9 supports their close reading analysis as well as their writing.

**ENGL 220 - English 10**

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: English 9 (ENGL 210)*

Students in tenth grade continue their literary studies in courses designed by their teacher. Tenth graders experience greater independence in their engagement with texts, a fact reflected in the more incisive, more energetic analytical and imaginative writing expected of them during the year. Tenth-grade students study drama, poetry, prose fiction and, increasingly, nonfiction—all with a continued, intentional focus on close reading. Typical texts include *Twelfth Night*, *Othello*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Passing*, *The Odyssey*, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, *Song of Solomon*, and *Sing, Unburied, Sing*. Tenth graders continue our grammar curriculum with an increased focus on the constructive uses of grammar in the context of their writing and thinking.

**ENGL 310 - English 11**

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: English 10 (ENGL 220)*

In English 11, literary study intensifies with extensive units on the major genres, often beginning with lyric poetry in the first quarter. Additionally, all English 11 students complete a long-form essay or creative nonfiction assignment that asks for extended attention to a single subject of the student's choice. The writing includes, in differing proportions, skills they have been working to cultivate since the ninth grade: close reading analysis that builds from evidence to argument and personal and descriptive writing that illuminates and engages. In each variation of this long-form project, students continue sharpening their critical thinking skills and honing a distinctive narrative voice; they work step by step over a period of weeks or months to explore a topic deeply, to research and engage with multiple sources, to complete multiple drafts, and to tell the story of a subject they find meaningful.

**ENGL 320 - Senior Electives**

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: English 11 (ENGL 310)*

*With the permission of the Department, senior electives may be taken by eleventh-grade students in addition to English 11.*

Students choose separate fall and spring electives with a good deal of freedom. The offerings each semester cover a diverse range of literary periods and movements, themes, and genres. Some courses stress expository or analytic writing; others engage students in writing original poems, short stories or literary nonfiction. The Department varies its electives according to its own evolving interests and its understanding of the needs of our students.

A sampling of semester-long senior electives recently offered:

Literature of Puzzles, Games, and Mysteries

Passages to India

Fabulist Literature

Short Fiction: A Writing Workshop

New Community Project

Kafka and the “Kafkaesque”

Why Look at Animals?

Toni Morrison

The Serious Pleasures of Detective Fiction

Bridging the Divide: The Modern American Identity

Speculative Fiction and the Power of Language

Short Masterpieces of Russian Literature

On Trial

The Sonnet from Petrarch to Terrance Hayes

What We Talk About When We Talk About Love

Emily Dickinson

Creative Nonfiction

20th Century African-American Literature

Writing Nature, Writing Ourselves

Things Fall Apart

History of the English Language

Poets of Moment

Literature and Film: the Art of Redemption

The Alien: Stories and Theories of Contact

Youth in Revolt: Social, Cultural, and Political Resistance in American Fiction

Posthumanism: Freaks and Cyborgs

**ENGL 410 - Seminar in Literary Studies**

*Full credit, meets 5 days/week*

*Prerequisites: English 11 (ENGL 310) and departmental approval based on the following criteria: submission of a timed writing sample, a history of exceptional class citizenship and literary engagement, and English grades that average A- or higher* Seminar in Literary Studies is a year-long senior elective open to all seniors interested in an intensive study of literature and literary scholarship. SLS is designed with the most inquisitive and committed English student in mind, the reader for whom extended, year-long study of a particular literary and critical approach or set of texts appears as a thrilling prospect rather than as a graduation requirement to be satisfied.

Some distinctive aspects of every SLS course include, but are not limited to, the following:

- \* Year-long immersion in the literary field/s of a teacher’s careful design;
- \* A higher volume of reading and writing assignments;
- \* An independent “capstone” project, designed with the teacher’s approval, that extends the seminar topic in the direction of a student’s interests;
- \* Required reading of secondary sources such as literary criticism and theory.

**ENGL 410.1 - Seminar in Literary Studies: LA LA Lit—Los Angeles, California, and the American Imagination**

As anyone who has paid attention to their social media feeds in the past year knows, California is a bellwether state. Whether we’re talking about the politics of climate change, the evolution of artificial intelligence, or the relationship of the individual to state power, California is now, and has long been, at the forefront of our national consciousness. For much of its history, California has been a region whose fortunes not only reflect but directly and deeply impact what we Americans conceive of as possible in our culture. In many ways, California is us, and we are California. And at the same time, the state’s unique presence in the visual arts of television and film has projected a long shadow over what the world abroad views as quintessentially “American.” Strangely, however, although it is arguably the equal of cities such as Chicago and New York in its glamorous appeal and international influence, Los Angeles—and its literature, by extension—boasts a far shorter history.

The aims of this Seminar in Literary Studies (SLS) course are myriad, but they can be meaningfully encapsulated as follows: first, to understand California, most specifically southern California and the Los Angeles metropolitan area, as the result of unique and specific cultural and historic forces; second, to look closely at salient examples of literature, art, and film produced in the 20th and 21st centuries by artists inspired both by the ideal of California and by the reality of life in and around Los Angeles (and Hollywood); finally, to analyze what this particular species of American literature suggests about broader, more enduring concerns of American

life whether a century ago or in our own time, such as the dreaded specter of race and racism, transnational immigration, the complexities and tensions of urban life, individual ambition (The American Dream), and the vital interplay between “lowbrow” popular art forms, particularly movies, and “highbrow” literature. As in every SLS class, students should expect to read not only literary texts but also criticism and literary theory. Students will also complete a group creative project in the first semester and an individual research, or capstone, project by the end of the year.

**ENGL 410.6 - Seminar in Literary Studies: British Romanticism: Contemporary Contexts, Modern Legacies**

British Romanticism is a relatively brief movement in art and thought whose radical focus on imagination, emotion, and everyday lives challenged orthodoxies of all kinds. That challenge reverberates through to the present day. In the literary arts, the movement is typically dated from 1798 to 1832—from the publication of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s *Lyrical Ballads* to the passage of the first Reform Act, which expanded voting rights in England. Aesthetic and political action are fitting bookends for this major shift in artistic expression that is often understood as coming out of these poets’ witnessing the failure of revolution in France and the rise of Napoleon, shifting their focus from social change to a radical change in individual consciousness. Students will explore this radical, revolutionary literary landscape by reading closely the works of the poets associated with this movement, reviewing contemporary responses to their work, and exploring key aspects of the broader historical contexts within which they emerge. A crucial component of the course will be to examine a set of contemporary artistic productions. Is all art that follows just more Romanticism as several scholars and critics argue? Is Nicki Minaj a Romantic? Jeff Koons? We will test that theory of Romanticism’s enduring legacy against our own favorite works of art, music, and literature from our time. The course will include writing assignments, both creative and analytical, periodic tests, and a year-long research paper.

