

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Trumbull, Connecticut

HONORS WORLD LITERATURE
Grade 12
2026

(Last Revised 2014)

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HONORS WORLD LITERATURE

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The Trumbull Board of Education, as a matter of policy, prohibits discrimination on the grounds of age, creed, religion, gender, race, color, handicap, political affiliation, marital status, sexual orientation, or national origin.

CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS

The Trumbull High School community engages in an environment conducive to learning which believes that all students will **read** and **write effectively**, therefore communicating in an articulate and coherent manner. All students will participate in activities **that present problem-solving through critical thinking**. Students will use technology as a tool applying it to decision making. We believe that by fostering self-confidence, self-directed and student-centered activities, we will promote **independent thinkers and learners**. We believe **ethical conduct** to be paramount in sustaining the welcoming school climate that we presently enjoy.

Approved 8/26/2011

INTRODUCTION & PHILOSOPHY

World Literature is a one-semester, honors level elective offered to seniors who may select their course of study in English in their senior year. This elective course will allow students to engage with novels, short fiction, plays, non-fiction and poetry from an array of authors from across the globe. By reading and discussing the literature, students can experience the thoughts and opinions of classic and contemporary authors with backgrounds most likely quite different from their own. Students can then formulate their own opinions about a system of government or a way of life in another country, and communicate those beliefs about the readings and themes explored.

In keeping with the goal of the English Department, the hope is that students who take World Literature will, from here on, have their eyes and ears tuned to the written work of the world. They will be moved to read about what is happening in India or Japan on the international pages of *The New York Times*. They will seek out the poetry of Pablo Neruda or go see a foreign film and find connections between the lives lived in those faraway places and their own. They will come to see that while there is no replacing seeing Tuscany, Provence, or Johannesburg in person, sometimes a book can take them there in a different, but equally satisfying way. Broadened horizons, connections to our wider world - that is what World Literature is all about.

Students today are part of a global world. With a few keystrokes, a young person can be communicating with another in France; they can go online and read about the latest developments in the Middle East; they can study an economic structure in a third world country that hinges on the economy of first world nations. Yet, for all the swiftness of that connection, gulfs in knowledge of other histories, cultures and customs exist. Literature can take us to new vistas; it allows us to “travel” to other lands, to see, perhaps even for a brief moment, into the heart of another, to experience what his or her world is like.

Honors World Literature, a one-semester, elective course for seniors, can help bring new worlds to students, allowing them to bridge that gap between our lands. In this course, high school students who had previously read predominantly American and British Literature have the chance to read classic and contemporary works by authors from India, South Africa, France, Columbia, Russia, Ireland, Japan, and Germany. What these authors bring to the literature is not only their voice and literary style, but also their links to their own nations, their traditions and customs, their political sensibilities, and their cultural milieu.

Honors World Literature is a ticket to journey to a Soviet work camp in the far reaches of Siberia; to the bustling city of Johannesburg in the time of apartheid; to a small hut in India

where a young woman struggles to raise her young; to a nearly empty, hot beach in Algiers where a man makes a decision that changes his life forever. Along this challenging journey, students will have a chance to explore the magical realism in the deft hands of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, study the Existentialist philosophy of Albert Camus, admire the austere insight of a Beckett play or the lyrical beauty of Nobel prize winning author Arundhati Roy. Over the course of the semester, the “accidental tourist” -- the student taking Honors World Literature -- becomes a purposeful voyager who begins to see that the cultures, beliefs and political structures that were once alien are no longer foreign. Students will see that while there are vast differences in cultures, people have the same basic needs and hopes -- for a good meal, for settling down roots and building a family and community, for finding meaningful work and for a friend to pass the hours with, or to love.

Honors World Literature is taught thematically. Those themes include:

- *the outsider in the world* (both the outsider by choice and the outsider by force) *and the shared human experience* (the idea that there is a global connection among humans despite differences in philosophy, religion, and social, political, and economic circumstances),
- *the political and social world* (political frameworks, philosophies, class systems and other forms of systemic prejudice, poverty and wealth),
- *and the world of family and personal connection* (platonic, romantic and community relationships).

These themes are not only enriching: they connect well to the students taking the course. Students who are close to voting age, living in a democracy, in a land of choice and freedoms might see those freedoms and opportunities more clearly after reading of the opportunities people lack in other parts of the world. At the same time, students have their own complex relationships within their nuclear and extended families, and with their friends and the ones they love. Like those characters in the books they will read, many teenagers have felt like outsiders during their high school years. Yet, despite outward differences between them, seniors are beginning to realize that they are part of a larger community and are more connected to their peers than they may have first realized. As they embark on their own life-changing journeys to college and the world beyond, they will read literature that opens their eyes to the world at large, perhaps challenges their views, making them more aware that they are indeed part of a global community.

COURSE GOALS

The following course goals derive from the [2010 Connecticut Core Standards](#):

Reading Literature

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| CCSS.ELA RL.11-12.2 | Determine two or more themes or 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 produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text. |
| CCSS.ELA 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.

CCSS.ELA RL.11-12.6 Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

CCSS.ELA RL. 11-12.10 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.

Reading Informational Texts

CCSS.ELA RI.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA RI. 11-12.3 Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA RI.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.

CCSS.ELA RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA RI. 11-12.10 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

CCSS.ELA 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.

CCSS.ELA W. 11-12.2e	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
CCSS.ELA W. 11-12.3d	Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
CCSS.ELA W. 11-12.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
CCSS.ELA 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
CCSS.ELA 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.
CCSS.ELA W.11-12.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
CCSS.ELA W. 11-12.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Speaking and Listening

CCSS.ELA SL.11-12.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
CCSS.ELA 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.

CCSS.ELA SL. 11-12.1b	Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.
CCSS.ELA SL. 11-12.1c	Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
CCSS.ELA SL.11-12.4	Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.
CCSS.ELA SL.11-12.5	Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

Language

CCSS.ELA L. 11-12.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
CCSS.ELA L. 11-12.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
CCSS.ELA L. 11-12.3	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.

The following course goals derive from the [2016 ISTE Technology Standards](#):

ISTE 1.1.C	Students use technology to seek feedback that informs and improves their practice and to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways.
ISTE 1.2.B	Students engage in positive, safe, legal and ethical behavior when using technology, including in social interactions online or when using networked devices.

ISTE 1.2.C	Students demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the rights and obligations of using and sharing intellectual property.
ISTE 1.3.C	Students curate information from digital resources using a variety of tools and methods to create collections of artifacts that demonstrate meaningful connections or conclusions.
ISTE 1.4.D	Students exhibit a tolerance for ambiguity, perseverance and the capacity to work with open-ended problems
ISTE 1.6.A	Students choose the appropriate platforms and tools for meeting the desired objectives of their creation or communication.
ISTE 1.6.B	Students create original works or responsibly repurpose or remix digital resources into new creations.
ISTE 1.7.B	Students use collaborative technologies to work with others, including peers, experts and community members, to examine issues and problems from multiple viewpoints.
ISTE 1.7.C	Students contribute constructively to project teams, assuming various roles and responsibilities to work effectively toward a common goal.

COURSE ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

Students will understand that:

- Authors are influenced by and, in turn, can influence individual, social, cultural, and political contexts.
- People connect and interact within and across cultural divides.
- There are a variety of views, emotions, and responses that represent the diversity of our world.
- They are part of a shared, global community that exists across geography, culture, and political structures.
- They have a voice in this shared global community.

COURSE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. How do social, political and economic constructs of a people or a nation influence a culture and its individuals?
2. What are the effects of culture and its expectations upon the individuals who are a part of that culture?
3. Does adhering to specific cultural and political philosophies establish differences among individuals?

4. Despite geographic, political, social, and economic differences, how are we part of a shared, global, human community?

COURSE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- Students will know . . .
 - that they are a part of a global community.
 - that literature is a reflection of and response to the socioeconomic, political, and cultural systems of a nation and its people.
 - that literature can shape socioeconomic, political, and cultural systems of a nation and its people.
 - that reading the literature of a nation allows them a greater understanding and awareness of that nation and its people.
- Students will be able to . . .
 - compare and contrast the issues, points of view, and themes to other literary works and to their own lives and beliefs.
 - make inferences, comprehend, and reflect upon what they read to raise their awareness of and question the world around them.
 - move fluidly from reading one textual genre to the next and to consider one world view and then another.
 - identify the attitudes, customs, values, and beliefs that emerge from the pages of the literature being explored and examined, and then relate what they discover to their own lives.
 - write expository essays, reader response, and creative pieces that demonstrate high level thinking skills, close analysis of the works, and their own insights into the subjects.

Vision of the Graduate

The Honors World Literature course purposefully integrates the eight core competencies outlined in Trumbull Public Schools' Vision of the Graduate. These competencies are not treated as abstract ideals, but as real, observable behaviors and mindsets that students develop through reading, writing, discussion, collaboration, and reflective learning experiences.

Vision of the Graduate Competency	How It Is Embedded Throughout the Course
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Communication	Students communicate complex ideas through analytical essays, research-based writing, Socratic seminars, and multimedia presentations that require clear claims, textual evidence, and audience awareness. The course is discussion-based, and regular discussion of global texts builds students' ability to articulate perspectives thoughtfully and engage in civil, academically grounded discourse. In Unit One: The Outsider in the World & The Shared Human Experience, students articulate interpretations of existential philosophy through discussion and analytical writing on texts such as <i>The Stranger</i> and <i>Waiting for Godot</i>. In Unit Two: The Political World, students present their <i>Heart of Darkness/Apocalypse Now</i> visual flowchart analysis, synthesizing ideas across the two texts to construct and defend a clear, evidence-based conclusion.
Self-Efficacy	Through sustained independent reading of challenging world literature and ownership of long-term projects, students develop confidence in their ability to tackle complex texts and express original interpretations. In Unit One: The Outsider in the World & The Shared Human Experience, students independently analyze complex philosophical and symbolic texts and defend their interpretations in the Existentialism conceptual design project, building confidence in their intellectual voice. The long-term "Do Something" project challenges students to take meaningful action and reflect in a 2–3 page analysis, reinforcing ownership of learning and personal growth.
Critical Thinking & Problem Solving	Open-ended thematic inquiries push students to evaluate complex human, political, and ethical issues rather than seek single "right" answers. In Unit Two: The Political World, students evaluate how political systems such as communism and apartheid shape human experience, analyzing works like <i>Cry, the Beloved Country</i> and <i>One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich</i>. They must synthesize literature, film, and informational texts to answer essential questions about justice, power, and systemic oppression, developing nuanced, evidence-based conclusions.

Collaboration	Group presentations, design projects, and research tasks require students to assume roles, manage responsibilities, and work toward shared goals and collective problem-solving. In Unit One: The Outsider in the World & The Shared Human Experience, students work in small groups to design and justify a conceptual representation of an existential text, assigning roles and collectively defending interpretive choices. In preparation for <i>One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich</i> , the “Virtual Field Trip to Siberia” research activity requires teams to curate multimedia resources and teach their peers about historical and political context.
Growth Mindset	Across all three units, students draft, revise, and refine analytical essays, strengthening their writing through feedback and iteration. In Unit Three: The World of Family/Personal Connection, students tackle complex generational and cultural narratives such as <i>One Hundred Years of Solitude</i> and <i>The God of Small Things</i> , learning to persevere through challenging structures and layered storytelling.
Integrity	Discussions across units require respectful engagement with diverse cultural, religious, and political perspectives, reinforcing accountability and principled discourse. In Unit Two: The Political World, students conduct research on political systems and historical contexts, practicing ethical citation and responsible use of sources. Students follow MLA citation guidelines and evaluate source credibility as outlined in CCSS W.11-12.8, reinforcing responsible scholarship.
Innovation	In Unit One, the Existentialism set design project invites students to interpret literature through creative, multimodal expression while justifying their conceptual decisions in analytical writing. In Unit Two, the visual flowchart synthesis task requires students to transform literary analysis into a structured visual argument that connects 1899, 1979, and current year’s contexts in original ways. Students select tools and formats that best communicate their ideas, blending creativity with academic rigor.
Emotional Intelligence	Across all units, reflection and discussion of loss, exile, injustice, and love cultivate empathy and perspective-taking within a global context, strengthening self-awareness and sensitivity to others. In Unit Three, students explore themes of family, identity, gender roles, and belonging in texts such as <i>A Doll’s House</i> and <i>The Metamorphosis</i> , examining how societal expectations shape personal relationships.

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Name

Honors World Literature

Level

Honors

Prerequisites

Successful completion of grade 11 English

General Description of the Course

In this semester-long course, students in Honors World Literature will explore the cultures, themes, and personalities of different writers from across the globe, experiencing new worlds and seeing how we are all connected by universal feelings, hopes, and dreams that cross geocultural lines. Some of the themes that students will engage with are: The Outsider in the World and The Shared, Human Experience; The Political and the Social World; The World of Family and Personal Connection. After taking Honors World Literature, students will have a broader and deeper insight into the world at large and the global community in the 21st century. Making these connections to cultures different from their own will heighten their global awareness.

Students will read a wide variety of world literature that may include novels, short stories, poetry, plays and non-fiction pieces. Students will be expected to write expository essays, reader response, and creative pieces that demonstrate high level thinking skills, close analysis of the works, and their own insights into the subjects. Class participation is a vital part of this course. Students will be expected to share their understanding of and questions about new and challenging works from around the world. Presentations and group assignments will allow students the opportunity to work closely, communicate, and refine their ideas in small group settings.

The final examination in Honors World Literature will be a seated assessment that requires students to demonstrate their ability to analyze, synthesize, and critically evaluate the materials covered in the course by composing a focused, accurate, insightful, well-developed, well-supported, and well-articulated essay.

Assured Assessments

Formative Assessments:

- Short in-class writings and responses
- Class Participation
- Discussions

Summative Assessments:

- Existentialism Project
- Critical Article Response
- *Heart of Darkness/Apocalypse Now* Presentation
- Essay: formal and/or in-class

Core Texts:

- *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad and *Apocalypse Now* by Francis Ford Coppola
- At last two of the following titles: *The Stranger* by Albert Camus, *The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka, *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett
- *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Alexander Solzhenitsyn
- And one of the following: *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy, *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk

Supplemental Texts:

- *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen
- *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton
- *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez
- *Rashomon* by Ryunosuke Akutagawa
- Anthology: World Literature by Donna Rosenberg

Unit One

The Outsider in the World and The Shared, Human Experience

Unit Goals

At the completion of this unit, students will:

Reading Literature

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| CCSS.ELA RL.11-12.2 | Determine two or more themes or 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 produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text. |
| CCSS.ELA 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. |
| CCSS.ELA RL.11-12.6 | Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement). |
| CCSS.ELA RL. 11-12.10 | 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. |

Reading Informational Texts

CCSS.ELA RI.11-12.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
CCSS.ELA RI. 11-12.3	Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
CCSS.ELA RI.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.
CCSS.ELA RI.11-12.7	Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
CCSS.ELA RI. 11-12.10	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.

Essential Questions

- How do authors develop the concept of the “outsider” through characterization, structure, and point of view?
- How does being an outsider shape an individual’s perspective, and how can these effects be analyzed using textual evidence and authorial choices?
- What central themes about the human experience emerge across texts, and how do authors develop and refine these themes over the course of a work?
- How can readers synthesize ideas across texts to evaluate how shared human experiences are constructed, communicated, and mutually borne across cultures?

Scope and Sequence

Since students have been exposed to predominantly American and British literature throughout their high school career, it is important to reinforce the idea that they are part of a global community and that the world does not revolve around just the United States and England. Reading works from around the world will demonstrate that people, regardless of geographic, political, economic and social circumstances, are united by their shared human nature. There are experiences and emotions that are intrinsically human and that bind us as a species despite our perceived outward differences. Some topics to explore are:

- **Making Tough Decisions** - Difficult decisions shape us as individuals: initially when we make them and then later as we live with the consequences of our choices. In each of the books in Honors World Literature, characters make difficult choices that impact the path of their life and the lives of those around them. Whether it is the characters in *Rashoman*

making difficult decisions about survival or Meursault in *The Stranger* altering the course of his life in a single moment, characters must live with the consequences of their path - sometimes with regret and other times with fond recollection.

- **Coping With Loss** - Everyone will experience loss at some point in their lives. For seniors who will soon say goodbye to their town and classmates or have experienced loss, it is important to see how characters in world literature cope so that they can learn from these examples and compare characters' reactions and decisions to their own lives. In *Cry, the Beloved Country*, Kumalo copes with the loss of his son and his sister, victims of an unjust system of apartheid. In *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, many of the characters cope with the destruction of their villages and the annihilation of their families and communities. In *The God of Small Things*, Esthappen and Rahel cope with the loss of their cousin and the death of a beloved friend.
- **Experiencing Joy** - Even in the face of adversity and hardship, humans can experience joy. All four characters in *Waiting for Godot* experience moments of joy - even in something as simple as taking off their boots or finding a turnip. In *Cry, the Beloved Country*, Stephen Kumalo is speechless when a white man aids his ailing congregation and village, funding a new church, irrigation, and farming lessons for his people.
- **Overcoming Fear** - Fear both motivates and hinders us as individuals. At times, it keeps us safe. Other times, it keeps us from living full lives. In *Cry, the Beloved Country*, Stephen Kumalo has to overcome his fear of what others will think of him because of his son's transgressions. In *Waiting for Godot*, Vladimir and Estragon are stifled by their fear of leaving the situation to live full lives, lest Godot appear and they miss it. In *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow's initial fear of the Congo and Kurtz turns into a type of awe and respect, which is echoed in Willard's experience in *Apocalypse Now*.

Despite existing in a global community, individuals can find themselves outside of a shared experience. Throughout the world and in its literature there are people who are forced to or who choose to live outside of society. By examining these individuals, students will see how successfully or unsuccessfully they cope with their status. Students will explore what it means to yearn for inclusion only to be excluded, and what it means to stay true to who you are despite pressure from outside forces to adopt an identity that is not your own. They will discover that the outsider exists everywhere. Focus points include:

- **The Outsider by Choice** - Students can read, debate, and discuss the philosophies that developed in Europe around the idea of Existentialism - where the individual is paramount. In *The Stranger* by Albert Camus, students will encounter Meursault who chooses to live a life by his own design, relying on no one, and who is also ultimately, a stranger to all he meets and possibly to himself.
- **The Outsider by Force** - Because of the nature of oppressive governments and the domination of one society or class or type of people over another, people have historically been, and continue to be, cast aside. They have been made to feel different, forced to live in poverty or to experience loneliness or degradation because of their skin color, class, ethnicity, religious or political affiliation, appearance, sexual orientation, or an action they have taken. For example, when Gregor Samsa undergoes a transformation of appearance in *The Metamorphosis*, he is cast aside by his employer, people in the community, and eventually his entire family. In *The God of Small Things* the rigid caste system prescribes roles that cannot easily be overcome.

- **The Outsider Who Used to be an Insider** - The pendulum of power swings back and forth and students will explore the notion that sometimes the very ones forcing people outside become outsiders themselves. Students can then examine the notion of political and personal power and why humans feel they must dominate others. Such is the case in *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, where the Soviet system imprisons writers, artists and thinkers who disagree with those in power.

Unit Assured Assessments

Formative Assessments:

- Short in-class writings and responses
- Class Participation
- Discussions

Summative Assessment:

- Existentialism Project
- “Do Something” Project - assessed at the end of the course

Resources:

Core:

- At least two of the following titles: *The Stranger* by Albert Camus, *The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka, *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett
- At least one of the following titles: *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy, *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk

Supplemental:

- Anthology: World Literature by Donna Rosenberg

Time Allotments/Pacing Guide

Approximately 6-8 weeks.

Unit Two The Political World

Unit Goals

At the completion of this unit, students will:

Reading Literature

CCSS.ELA RL.11-12.2

Determine two or more themes or 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 produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

- CCSS.ELA 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.
- CCSS.ELA RL.11-12.6 Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).
- CCSS.ELA RL. 11-12.10 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.

Reading Informational Texts

- CCSS.ELA RI.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- CCSS.ELA RI. 11-12.3 Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.**
- CCSS.ELA RI.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.
- CCSS.ELA RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.**
- CCSS.ELA RI. 11-12.10 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.
- CCSS.ELA 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.

CCSS.ELA W.11-12.7 **Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.**

CCSS.ELA W. 11-12.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Unit Essential Questions

- How do authors represent political systems and their impact on individuals, and how do these representations shape meaning and theme within a text?
- How can readers analyze and compare how different texts portray political systems across cultures, using evidence from both literary and informational sources?

Unit Scope and Sequence

Literature is indelibly linked to the community from which it arises. Writers do not write in a vacuum. They are products of their own histories, traditions, cultures, families, and homelands. Those ties and sensibilities often seep into their work. In their travels by way of books, students have the chance to examine the themes that exist in the books in the context of the political framework of the country the author hails from. How people live is greatly affected by how their government lets them live their lives. Using their own political system as a reference point, students will compare and contrast our nation's interactions with other first, second, and third world countries and their own political ideologies. The close examination of these and other related topics, as well as related events happening in the world as the course unfolds, will allow students to share their own thoughts and feelings as well as their background and understanding of the social studies. Some of the possible focal points within the larger theme are:

- **Political frameworks** - communism, socialism, democracies and the effects these governments have on people. In *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, students can explore what it means to live under an oppressive government where men are locked away in work camps for years because of minor transgressions.
- **Class systems and apartheid and their effects on human life** - In *Cry, the Beloved Country*, the native black South Africans lived trapped in a system that strips them of many rights in their own homeland. The book follows the intertwining lives of black and white South Africans and the struggles the black South Africans endure to maintain dignity in a political system designed to degrade them. From *The God of Small Things* to the short stories in *Rashomon*, the caste system is explored. Students will come to see a way of life far different from the United States that was founded as "the land of opportunity." They can read, reflect, and write about other lands where a person's choices are limited and often prescribed from birth.

Because of these vast differences, students will be encouraged to question the way governmental systems are established, to question justice and injustice in these lands, and to question their own place in the larger world. They will have the opportunity to research, read, and discuss so they may discover the answers to many of their questions.

Unit Assured Assessments

Formative Assessments:

- Short in-class writings and responses
- Class Participation
- Discussions

Summative Assessment:

- *Heart of Darkness/Apocalypse Now* Presentation

Resources:

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich

Heart of Darkness

Apocalypse Now

Time Allotments/Pacing Guide

Approximately 5-6 weeks.

Unit Three

The World of Family/Personal Connection

Unit Goals

At the completion of this unit, students will be able to:

Reading Literature

CCSS.ELA RL.11-12.2	Determine two or more themes or 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 produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
CCSS.ELA 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.
CCSS.ELA RL.11-12.6	Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).
CCSS.ELA RL. 11-12.10	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.

Reading Informational Texts

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| CCSS.ELA RI.11-12.1 | Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. |
| CCSS.ELA RI. 11-12.3 | Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text. |
| CCSS.ELA RI.11-12.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text. |
| CCSS.ELA RI.11-12.7 | Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem. |
| CCSS.ELA RI. 11-12.10 | 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. |
| CCSS.ELA 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. |
| CCSS.ELA W. 11-12.2e | Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. |
| CCSS.ELA W. 11-12.4 | Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. |
| CCSS.ELA 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 |

Unit Essential Questions

- How do authors develop relationships between characters, and how do these relationships contribute to theme and meaning within a text?
- How do family structures and dynamics influence character development and conflict, and how can these influences be supported through textual analysis?
- How do authors from different cultures represent and define “family,” and how can readers compare and evaluate these perspectives across texts?

Unit Scope and Sequence

At the very heart of the human experience are the platonic and romantic connections we make with others. Establishing and maintaining relationships molds us as individuals, while also shaping the experience of those around us. We are born into our first relationships with members of our family, and we choose other individuals to connect with as we step outside the home. Many factors influence whether or not an individual is able to build and hold these relationships. Some of the topics to explore within the theme of Family/Personal Connection include:

- **Family structures** - In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Marquez writes of how generations of the Buendia family exist under one roof at the same time, and one family member’s actions can immediately and permanently affect the lives of each member of the household. In *Cry, the Beloved Country*, Paton demonstrates that families can crumble or stand strong against outside forces, be they poverty, restricted choice, or racism. In *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*, the community functions as a family for the characters who live in the remote wilderness.
- **The role of women and family culture** - Many stories, plays, and novels illustrate the treatment of women in other cultures and time periods. In much of this literature, women are shown to have little or no power to choose a mate, to choose a career, or even to have the option to work outside the home. In *A Doll’s House*, Nora comes to see that her role as mother in the household holds little if any power or sway as her husband desires to keep her “in her place.” In *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*, Tokarczuk’s main character, Janina, does not conform to the typical feminine gender norms and lives alone. Students will examine, discuss, and write about the differing roles of women and what distinguishes them from what happens to women in the United States.
- **The roles people play in families** - Everyone plays a unique role within the structure of their own family. In *The Metamorphosis*, Gregor Samsa is the breadwinner for his parents and sister until he is transformed into a large bug, fired from his job, and ultimately shunned by the family he had long cared for. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, family members play specific roles such as “the good son” or “the prodigal son” - roles they either accept or rebel against.
- **Friendship and personal connection** - Students will see that friendship can cross many perceived borders and enrich people’s lives. This type of human connection - a rich, recurring theme - is evident in many works. In *Cry, the Beloved Country*, the Reverend Kumalo regains hope in South Africa when a white man helps him strengthen his community and his church. In *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, where a bit of stale bread and a cigarette are solace in a harsh unyielding land, men share what they have with one another and the unbearable becomes bearable. *The Stranger* demonstrates

what can happen to a person in the absence of friendship or personal connection as Meursault is distant even from those who love him. Lastly, *Waiting for Godot* shows two characters who strive for personal connection yet fail to achieve it. The importance of such a connection is demonstrated in their drive and desire to possess it.

- **Love** - The many faces of love are revealed on the pages of the texts - the love of a parent and child, the love between individuals, love gone wrong, unrequited love, love that crosses cultural divides. Marquez demonstrates how love can drive characters to do the unexpected or even engage in taboo behaviors in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. In the poetry of Pablo Neruda, students can read and discuss why even lost love matters. Students will be able to see reflections of their own feelings in these pieces of literature.

Formative Assessments:

- Short in-class writings and responses
- Class Participation
- Discussions

Summative Assessment (choose one):

- Critical Article Response
- Essay: formal or in-class

Time Allotments/Pacing Guide

Approximately 5-6 weeks.

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

The following is a list of Academic Language terms that will be used to discuss the novels, plays, and films in the course.

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| ● allusion | ● metaphor |
| ● antagonist | ● mood |
| ● archetype | ● motif |
| ● characterization | ● narrator |
| ● conflict (external and internal) | ● personification |
| ● dialogue | ● point of view |
| ● diction | ● protagonist |
| ● existentialism | ● satire |
| ● foreshadowing | ● setting |
| ● flashback | ● simile |
| ● genre | ● symbolism |
| ● imagery | ● tense |
| ● irony (dramatic, situational, verbal) | ● theme |
| ● juxtaposition | ● tone |

COURSE CREDIT

One-half credit in English - semester course
Three class periods in a four day cycle for one semester
Category - honors level elective literature course

PREREQUISITES

The prerequisites for taking Honors World Literature include successful completion of junior level English (American Perspectives 11 ACP, AP Language and Composition, AP Literature and Composition) and teacher and/or department chairperson recommendation into the class.

TEXTS

Core Texts

Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad
Apocalypse Now by Frances Ford Coppola
The Stranger by Albert Camus
The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka
Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett
One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich by Alexander Solzhenitsyn
[*The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy](#)
Anthology: World Literature by Donna Rosenberg

Supplemental Texts

Cry, the Beloved Country by Alan Paton
The Chekov plays including *The Cherry Orchard*, and *The Three Sisters*
One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel Garcia Marquez
Rashomon by Ryunosuke Akutagawa
[*Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk](#)

CURRENT REFERENCES

Rosenberg, Donna. *World Literature: An Anthology of Great Short Stories, Drama, and Poetry*.
NTC Publishing, 1992.

ASSURED STUDENT PERFORMANCE RUBRICS

- [Vision of the Graduate Skill and Distribution Rubrics](#)
- Existentialism Project
- “Do Something” Project
- *Heart of Darkness/Apocalypse Now* Presentation
- Critical Article Response

CLICK [HERE](#) FOR GRADES 9-12 VOG RUBRICS AND FEEDBACK FORMS CREATED BY THE DISTRICT VOG COMMITTEE

TPS Vision of a Graduate



Critical Thinking & Problem Solving

The ability to use knowledge, facts, and data to effectively solve problems.

Innovation

The ability to look at something familiar and see new possibilities, which leads to curiosity about new learning and the desire to create something original or imaginative.

Communication

The ability to understand others and be understood for a variety of reasons and purposes.

Growth Mindset

The belief that one can improve their intelligence or skills through continued hard work and adapt when faced with challenges.

Collaboration

The qualities and competencies we use to collectively make progress toward common goals or outcomes.

Emotional Intelligence

The aptitude for identifying how and why a person is feeling the way they are and how to regulate and address those emotions.

Self-Efficacy

The belief that you are capable of successfully performing a task or managing a situation.

Integrity

The act of consistently doing the right thing even when it's hard or no one is looking.

Approved May 2022



Existentially, that's Absurd

What could be stranger than reading Existentialist literature? Perhaps seeing it lifesize (or miniature), or indoors (or out). Your task is to create a conceptual design for one of the works we have studied during this unit that conveys your understanding and interpretation of the work.

- It may be presented in two or three dimensions, and it can be in any medium. It must exist within the space-time continuum.
- It can be big or small, but not invisible; living or dead; animal, vegetable, or mineral; here or there; up or down; indoors or out (please tell us so that we wear appropriate attire and alert the proper authorities).
- You are not bound by an author's directions, and may follow them precisely if you wish; the degree of fidelity is your choice, but whatever decisions you make *must be justifiable*.
- You are all free to ignore practical considerations that an actual staging of your design might entail such as: size or expense, buildability, safety, entrances or exits. The object is to convey your concept of the work.

We will present these on _____.

Your group of no more than four people may choose one of the following texts to use for this assignment:

Waiting For Godot – Beckett
"The Metamorphosis" – Kafka
The Stranger – Camus

First come, first serve, may the odds be ever in your favor.

Group members: _____

Your text: _____

Work days in class: _____

Strengths	Grading Rubric	To Work On
	Medium & Dimension(s) - 20 points The size, scale, color and composition of your project accurately and appropriately enhance the meaning you are trying to convey. You have given careful thought to the proportions and constitution of your creation, and these choices echo the message of the work that you have chosen.	
	Location, Location, Location - 20 pts Your group has given careful thought to the placement of items within your set, and perhaps, to the placement of your set within time and space. If the ideas you are trying to convey are limited by the classroom environment, we better be traveling with a purpose.	
	Accuracy and Clarity of Ideas - 30 pts Your audience recognizes the motifs of the work and understands the ideas you present in your set design. You should leave your classmates contemplating your intelligence, not your purpose. All of the ideas and their manifestations are clear, unique, and on target with the text. If you veer from stage directions or plot, you are doing so to illuminate the author's message and your understanding of the work, which, in turn, your classmates should recognize.	
	Analysis - 80 points Your 2-3 page written analysis explains the decisions you made and the effects you were striving for. It clearly explains each of the facets of the set in relation to each other and to the text as a whole. You should reference specific instances from the play, novel, or story to solidify your point. This document is free from grammatical and mechanical errors and the ideas and vocabulary are college level. You may submit one document per group.	
	150 points	

Waiting for Godot “Do Something” Long-term Assignment

Vladimir breaks his pattern of inertia and fruitless musings to utter the following monologue on page 90:

VLADIMIR: Let us not waste our time in idle discourse! Let us do something, while we have the chance! It is not every day that we are needed. Not indeed that we personally are needed. Others would meet the case equally well, if not better. To all mankind they were addressed, those cries for help still ringing in our ears! But at this place, at this moment of time, all mankind is us, whether we like it or not. Let us make the most of it, before it is too late! Let us present worthily for once the foul brood to which a cruel fate consigned us! What do you say?

Inherent in this passage is one of Beckett’s messages: that we, as a species, spend far too long doing nothing of importance or purpose.

Your task is to heed Beckett’s call to action and to DO something of significance that you have been wanting (or needing) to do.

To choose a task, consider: who you are, what lies behind you, where you are headed, your goals, values, aspirations, etc. Do not use this assignment as an excuse to get a trite navel piercing or to egg your neighbor’s house. You should pick something significant and meaningful and accomplish it.

Once you have completed your determined course of action, you will submit the following:

1. A 2-3 page typed response explaining what you decided to do, why it was/is important to you, and what it was like to accomplish the task.
2. Proof of completion. This can be in almost any form (photograph, receipt, signed note, video recording, email, print out of an Instagram or Twitter, etc) as long as it documents the fact that you have done what you set out to do.

Be ready to share your journey (and its destination) with your classmates on _____.

Significance and magnitude of task:	30 points
Written description/reflection:	100 points
Proof:	20 points
Total:	150 points

The Horrors Persist and We Think We Know Why

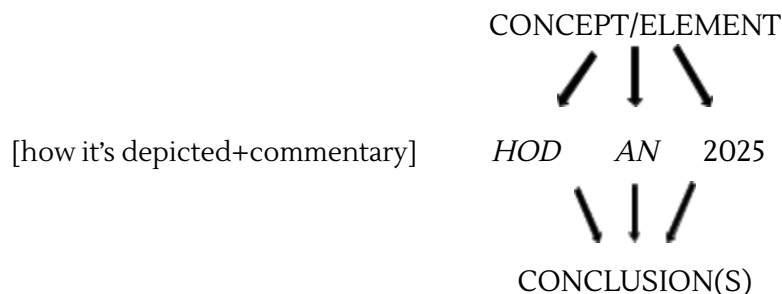
In 1899, Joseph Conrad's novel told of atrocities in the Congo. In 1979, Francis Ford Coppola set his film in Cambodia and Vietnam to outline similar brutalities. Arguably, the same horrors continue to exist in 2025 as transgressions repeat across history despite humanity's progress. Your task is to choose an element that is present in both *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now*, analyze its depiction in the texts, extrapolate the element forward to the present day, and synthesize your analysis and ideas into a final conclusion.

The final product will take the form of a visual flowchart that:

- introduces your concept or element;
- connects the depiction of and commentary about your element across *Heart of Darkness*, *Apocalypse Now*, and 2025; and
- leads to a final conclusion.

How is the chosen element depicted across the “texts” and what does it ultimately mean?

1. Choose one element or aspect that you found interesting or intriguing in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. It could be the setting, a character, a scene, a symbol, etc. Identify and analyze how it is presented and utilized in the text: what commentary is Conrad offering in 1899?
2. Next, perform a careful viewing of *Apocalypse Now*, noting how Coppola presents and utilizes that same element in his film. Identify and analyze how and why it is utilized in the text: what commentary is Coppola offering in 1979?
3. Then, offer a modern placement of that same element in the present day. What is the text upon which it is presented and how is it utilized: what commentary are you offering in 2025? How is this element depicted in our current world and what does that ultimately mean?
4. Finally, review your observations and craft your conclusions. In synthesizing the three depictions, what are your key takeaways about your chosen element?



Rubric in Google Classroom is set to calculate to 100 points

Chosen Element					
Chosen element is central to the message in both the novel and the movie, and can be easily extrapolated to the present day.					
	5	4.5	3.75	3.25	
	Exemplary	Goal	Working Towards Goal	Needs Support	
Analysis of Element in Conrad					
Thorough response to the question: Identify and analyze how the element is presented and utilized in the text: what commentary is Conrad offering in 1899?					
	25	23	21	19	17
	Exemplary		Goal	Working Towards Goal	Needs Support
Analysis of Element in Coppola					
Thorough response to the question: Identify and analyze how the element is presented and utilized in the film: what commentary is Coppola offering in 1979?					
	25	23	21	19	17
	Exemplary		Goal	Working Towards Goal	Needs Support
Extrapolation to Current Day					
Thorough response to the questions: How is this element depicted in our current world and what does that ultimately mean? What commentary are you offering in 2025?					
	25	23	21	19	17
	Exemplary		Goal	Working Towards Goal	Needs Support
Final Conclusions					
In synthesizing the three depictions, what are your key takeaways about your chosen element?					
	20	18	17	15	14
	Exemplary		Goal	Working Towards Goal	Needs Support

OTHER RESOURCES

1. **Existentialism Survey** - Prior to reading *The Stranger*, students will be asked to fill out a short survey related to the tenets of Existentialism. They will answer true or false to a variety of questions. Afterwards, they will defend and debate their responses, which usually reveal strong opinions about life, its purpose, the role of the individual and the larger group, the meaning of life and the implications of death. Students can further their exploration of Existentialism by researching an existentialist beyond Camus from a list provided by the instructor. Following the research, students will determine and explain their own philosophy.
2. **Existentialism Introduction** - Instead of the Existentialist survey, another way to introduce the concept is to have students read and react to Stephen Crane's short poem "A Man Said to the Universe." They should annotate the poem and take notes on the role of man and the role of the universe. Students can then have a discussion on the poem and can answer and debate the question: What gives meaning to our lives?
3. **Gulag Task** - In conjunction with *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, the instructor can attempt to simulate a gulag for one class period. When students enter the classroom, they are to place their backpacks in the front of the room and to take a seat in desks that have been arranged in groups of 4-6. Students are then to choose a "gang boss" - the only student from the group who is allowed to communicate with other groups. The instructor then hands out the task for the day with the instructions that it must be completed prior to the end of the period - it can be a list of analytical questions based on last night's reading. Each group is given some, but not all of the items they will need to complete the task. For instance, one group receives one piece of lined paper, another gets one unsharpened pencil, a third gets only a pencil sharpener, and a fourth group gets a copy of the novel. The newly made gulags will have to navigate their new parameters to complete the task together.
4. **Virtual Field Trip to Siberia** - In preparation to read *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, students will research Russia, specifically Siberia, in order to gain information prior to reading the text. Topics can include: Stalin, Solzhenitsyn, gulags, the geography of Siberia, the Russian prison system, Communism, etc. Students will work in groups and present their findings to the class, in essence taking the class on a virtual tour of that particular area and time frame in Russia. Presentations should include photos, images, primary sources, videos - anything that will make the class *feel* as if they are *there*.