Course Title:	English II (H)
Grade(s):	10

Course Description

This course builds on the reading, writing, and communication skills developed in English I and deepens students' ability to analyze complex texts and express ideas clearly. Students engage in independent reading, collaborative discussions, and a range of writing experiences designed to strengthen critical thinking and communication skills.

The course places increased emphasis on literary nonfiction, drama, and the novel. Students read modern American novels and drama, Shakespearean plays, selections from world literature, and thought-provoking nonfiction that explores how writers use their craft to examine the challenges and questions of their time. Through discussion, analysis, and writing, students consider how authors use language, structure, and perspective to shape meaning and influence readers.

Honors-level courses are designed to challenge the advanced learner. Students should expect to reach a deeper scope of skills than the academic class: a higher reading stamina, the motivation to revise work, critical thinking skills, and the propensity to finish complex tasks in a timely manner. Students in honors-level classes are expected to have a solid foundation of skills from previous courses, an ability to connect these skills to new learning, and the ability to apply them in problem-solving. Students taking an honors-level class have demonstrated the ability to take responsibility for their own learning and work fluidly both independently and collaboratively. These students should consistently aspire to achieve higher-level quality work through self-reflection and self-advocacy. These classes are recommended to students by teachers who have evaluated a student's past practice and achievement.

Approved Curricular Materials/Textbook(s)

Whole-class texts:

- *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck
- Modern novels (*The Book Thief, 1984, A Chance in the World, The Kite Runner, In Darkness*)
- Various nonfiction essays
- *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller
- *Serial* podcast
- Narrative nonfiction book club books (various age-appropriate texts with a similar theme)
- *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare

Unit Title	Unit Description (Include Unit Objectives)	Unit Pacing
Unit 1: The Art of Reading and Writing	In this unit, students focus on the responsibility of authors as storytellers and influencers of the world. Students start by reading a Nobel Prize speech by John Steinbeck, which lays out various components of what makes a writer an effective and responsible one. From there, students explore various non-fiction essays and short stories to examine how authors showcase their unique responsibilities in their writing. Throughout this process, students annotate the texts for meaning, and they also identify the subject, audience, and purpose of each text through their close reading. They end the unit by writing an essay on *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck and one additional text from the unit, highlighting the extent to which the authors fulfilled their writing responsibilities.	6 weeks (September-October)
Unit 2: Book Clubs: Oppression and Persecution	Students explore themes of oppression, persecution, and individual agency through a combination of short stories and self-selected book club novels. Using anchor texts such as *"Civil Peace"* by Chinua Achebe and *"Harrison Bergeron"* by Kurt Vonnegut, students analyze how authors use literary devices to develop themes and examine questions about power, conformity, and resistance. Through discussion and close reading, students consider how power influences human behavior, how bystander mentality can allow oppression to persist, and how individuals respond to unjust systems. Students apply these analytical skills to their chosen book club novel, identifying literary devices and exploring how authors develop themes related to oppression and identity. The unit culminates in an analytical essay in which students explain how literary techniques contribute to the development of themes in their selected novel.	4-6 weeks (October-November)
Unit 3: Writing in Place: Research Presentation	Students examine the concept of "place" and consider how people assign meaning to the environments around them. Through discussion and analysis, students explore how places shape identity, community, and experience. Students then conduct a multi-step research project focused on an environmental	6 weeks (December-January)

	issue or feature of their local or global environment. Using credible sources, students develop an annotated bibliography and create a visual presentation that raises awareness about their chosen topic while demonstrating their ability to research, evaluate sources, and communicate information clearly.	
Unit 4: Perceptions of Innocence and Guilt	In this mini-unit that serves as an anticipatory set for the unit on the play *The Crucible*, students listen to the first season of the *Serial* podcast, which follows the arrest and conviction of Adnan Syed, to evaluate how people's perception of another can change based on both internal prejudice and external information or misinformation. We study the impact of one's reputation on the outcomes of innocence and guilt and whether or not "the truth" as a concept is ever really attainable.	3 weeks (February)
Unit 5: Innocence and Guilt	In this unit, students read Arthur Miller's drama *The Crucible*. Students study the impacts of reputation on the perception of innocence and guilt, how mass hysteria can take hold of and impact a community, and the responsibility of the writer in reflecting back to their readers the good and bad of society.	5 weeks (February-March)
Unit 6: Redemption and Perseverance	In this unit centering on narrative nonfiction, students read various works of narrative nonfiction in book clubs in order to address and respond to the following questions: ● Where does an individual find the strength to persevere? ● What compels individuals to "tell" their or someone else's story? ● How does one effectively tell their or someone else's story? They will engage in both independent and whole-class reading, collaborative discussions, and comparisons with visual media and other anchor texts (*Unbroken, Devil in the White City, Boys in the Boat*) to discuss the impact of these essential questions while learning to identify the hallmarks of narrative nonfiction.	5 weeks (April-May)
Unit 7: Power and Persuasion	Students use Shakespeare's classic tragedy *Julius Caesar* to learn about the way power and manipulation go hand in hand. Through the reenactment of key scenes, rhetorical analysis of key speeches, and comparison through visual media, students will address and answer the following essential questions:	3 weeks (May-June)

	● What makes a person persuasive in written, spoken and visual language? ● How do individuals balance social influences from individual decisions? ● How does power influence the dynamics between people? This unit will end with the course final exam, where students will study the Stanford Prison Experiment and complete a synthesis essay evaluating the impacts of power and influence on individuals and groups.	