

Course Syllabus: 10th Grade Literature & Composition

Instructor: Ms. Heather MacCorkle

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Room: 2244

Extra Help Hours: Upon Request

Course Overview & Purpose

Welcome to 10th Grade Literature! This 10th-grade course is a compilation of works by various authors. It emphasizes literature as a dual activity involving reading and analysis. Students are invited to view literature as a reflection of life and encouraged to extend their imaginations to the possibilities it provides. The study of literature in this course is accomplished in three ways: **Experience**, through the reading of a work; **Interpretation**, through the analysis of a work; and **Evaluation**, through the assessment of a work's social, moral, and cultural value.

Course Units & Themes

Our semester is divided into three major units. Through these works, we will explore five core themes: **Justice (divine and social), Family, Identity, Conflicts with Authority, and Loyalty. Note: If there is time before the end of the semester, we will also read *The Hate U Give*, by Angie Thomas.**

Unit 1: Classical Drama, Conscience, and Divine Law

- **Core Text:** *Antigone* by Sophocles
- **Thematic Focus:** We will examine what happens when individual conscience and family loyalty clash with powerful political institutions. We will examine the tension between divine/moral law and social/human law, as well as the characters' tragic flaws that lead to their demise.

Unit 2: Modern Systems and Social Justice

- **Core Text:** *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson
- **Thematic Focus:** Moving into contemporary non-fiction, we will directly confront issues of institutional authority, systemic inequality, and human dignity, exploring how modern social justice compares to historical ideals.

Unit 3: Truth and Justice

- **Core Text:** *Serial Podcast* by Sarah Koenig
- **Thematic Focus:** This investigative series scrutinizes the 1999 case of Hae Min Lee and the subsequent conviction of Adnan Syed. We will re-examine the original evidence and analyze the fairness of the judicial outcome, considering how this narrative sparked a global conversation on truth and justice.

Required Materials

Please bring the following items to class every day, starting the day after Labor Day:

- An independent reading book that you will select, take with you each day, and bring to class each day
- A dedicated composition notebook or binder for independent reading responses, literature notes, and writing
- Pens (blue, black, and red/purple ink), pencils, and highlighters (5-6 different colors, please)
- Your school-issued laptop/device (fully charged)
 - Please note that the goal is to use your devices only for Membean, exams, and crafting *final drafts* of writing assignments. You will place your device on the table, using the organizers to hold it upright when directed. Most of our work will be completed on paper.

Classroom Expectations & Procedures

To ensure a safe, productive, and respectful learning environment, we live by three core values:

1. **Be Respectful:** Listen when others are speaking, respect diverse viewpoints, and treat classroom materials with care.
2. **Be Responsible:** Arrive on time, bring your materials, and take ownership of your learning.
3. **Be Ready:** Be in your seat and working on the "Do Now" activity when the bell rings.
4. **Follow the Rules:** There are several new rules at MaST III this year that **MUST** be followed, such as the personal device policy and uniform code. If you do not want detention, follow the rules.

Typical Classroom Schedule (Subject to Change)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
• Do Now: Independent Reading (10 minutes) and Response (5 minutes) • 1-minute grammar • Vocabulary Word of the Day • Guided Instruction • Independent Work / Group Work • Exit Ticket	• Do Now: Membean (15 minutes) • Independent Reading (10 minutes) and Response (5 minutes) • Guided Instruction • Independent Work / Group Work • Exit Ticket	• Do Now: Independent Reading (10 minutes) and Response (5 minutes) • 1-minute grammar • Vocabulary Word of the Day • Guided Instruction • Independent Work / Group Work • Exit Ticket	• Do Now: Membean (15 minutes) • Independent Reading (10 minutes) and Response (5 minutes) • Guided Instruction • Independent Work / Group Work • Exit Ticket

Fridays are reserved for unit tests, longer writing assignments, and projects.

Late Policy & Academic Expectations

Please review the specific policies below. Students and parents/guardians should initial each box to indicate they understand these academic expectations.

Late Policy Category	Policy Description	Student Initials	Parent Initials
General Assignments	You will submit assignments on paper and / or via Google Classroom. Turn in the assignment on the due date for full credit. Assignments handed in on paper will be date-stamped upon receipt. A 10% penalty per day will be applied after the due date. A 0 will be put in the gradebook on the day it is due if it has not been turned in. After 1 week, the 0 stays and cannot be made up.		
Absences	If you are absent, you must turn in the missed assignment within 2 days of your return for full credit evaluation. It is your responsibility to check Google Classroom for missed work. A link to our Unit Plans will be available for you to reference.		
Membean Minutes	Membean minutes are due on Sunday and will be graded on Monday. Accuracy will count toward your grade. You cannot turn in extra minutes after Sunday, and no extra credit will be awarded.		
Digital Platforms (IXL, NoRedInk, Study Island)	These assignments are due on Sunday. - IXL assignments will be linked in Google Classroom, so I can see your score. - NoRedInk and Study Island submissions require you to take a screenshot of the assignment score and attach it to the Google Classroom assignment. - A zero will be entered into the gradebook on Monday if they are not turned in. A 10% penalty per day will		

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	be factored into the score; after 1 week, the zero remains permanent. <i>Note: You must score 100% on the platform in order to receive full credit. You may re-attempt the assignments as many times as needed before the due date to reach 100%.</i>		

Grades Breakdown

Tests - 40%
 Classwork - 35%
 Homework - 10%
 Quizzes - 15%

Technology & Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones, smartwatches, and headphones must be silenced. Cell phones and headphones must be put away before class begins. I recommend you leave such items in your locker, as they are not supposed to be in classrooms. **There is a new policy for personal devices this year, which I will give you as a separate handout. If you do not want your personal devices confiscated, I recommend you follow the policy.**

Laptops should be opened only when explicitly instructed for class activities. Otherwise, they should be in the organizer at the back of the room.

Academic Integrity & AI Policy

All work submitted must be your own original thoughts. Copying from a peer or a website, or using AI tools (like ChatGPT) to generate your writing or analysis, is a violation of academic integrity and will result in a zero and a referral.

Depending on the class dynamics, we may work on responsibly using AI for a project or two.

Communication & Syllabus Sign-Off

To Parents & Guardians:

Open communication is vital for student success. I will routinely update grades online via **PowerSchool**, and I welcome you to reach out via email at hmaccorkle@mast3.org or via TalkingPoints with any questions or concerns.

Please sign and return the section below to confirm that you and your student have read, discussed, and understood the expectations and policies for 10th Grade Literature.

Student Name (Printed): _____

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Email/Phone: _____

Teacher Only: Date stamp below upon receipt.

Please complete the Communication Preferences survey at this URL:
<https://forms.gle/fGb6GMvi4B4sUio4A> or via the QR code below. Thank you.



Please complete the Parent
Communication Survey