

Ridgefield Public Schools

Mystery, Mayhem, and True Crime Elective Course

Overview

Are you interested in solving puzzles, participating in escape rooms, or playing Clue? Do you like to watch mysteries or listen to true crime podcasts? Then this class is for you! This half-year Humanities elective will explore and investigate the popular genre of mystery. Through analysis of written, oral, and visual texts, students will identify major elements of the genre and discuss how it has evolved over time. Students will examine short fiction and nonfiction through stories, films, and podcasts to develop critical thinking, reading, discussion, research, and writing skills. Additionally, students will work collaboratively with peers to invent, craft, and solve mysteries. As with all English electives, students will meet for a writing conference with their teacher on a composition of their choice.

Units of Study	
<i>Unit Title</i>	<i>Learning Outcomes or Essential Questions</i>
The Origins and Evolutions of Mystery and True Crime in Media from the 1500s to Today	What are the elements of the mystery genre? How has the mystery genre changed throughout time?
Identifying and Analyzing the Elements of the Genre via Short Stories and Novels	What are the different elements of a mystery? What makes a mystery enticing and engaging?
Evaluating the Modern Podcast	What is a podcast? What are the elements of a successful podcast?
Mystery in Film	How do mise-en-scene, cinematography, and editing affect the mystery experience?



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	Can comedy be a part of mystery? How are the key elements of a mystery plot presented in the film format? What is suspense, and how is it produced on film? What are the mystery films that are essential viewing for cultural literacy? What role does intellectual curiosity play in solving mysteries?
Writing a Mystery	How do authors successfully develop characters in mysteries? How do authors use suspense as a writing tool?

