

“What can past America teach future America?”

Focus and Goals

American Literature focuses primarily on the study of the American experience through literature spanning our history. We will read texts from a variety of genres - sermon, history, poem, novel, short story, essay - always with the aim of understanding how these texts reveal the character of this country and its people.

Reading Goals: We will use texts to analyze the nature of this country, its history, its beliefs, its people. Reading texts from different genres and time periods, we will consider how the literature of this country influences its beliefs - and how the beliefs of the country influence its literature.

Writing Goals: We will write in a variety of different genres to learn (maybe by imitation) how and why these are crafted. We will write both fiction and nonfiction, time permitting, to experiment with and process ideas and techniques of major authors in American literature. We will also learn to organize our thoughts in writing, working through the writing process to plan, formulate ideas, develop drafts, and edit work to be handed in. We will try to develop our ideas fully, support our claims with evidence, and discover our personality in writing so that what we write is clearly our own and unique, rather than generic or indistinct.

Rules and Expectations

- 1) Preparation for class: You are expected to come to class each day – and on time - with appropriate textbooks, notebooks, writing utensils, and your charged Chromebook. You should keep a separate notebook for English class.
- 2) Absences: If you know you are going to be absent in the coming days or weeks, it is *your responsibility* to ask for work ahead of time and to complete it for your next day in class. If you are sick, **you have three days to make up your work**. It is *your responsibility* to ask me what you have missed, to get assignments, to make up quizzes and tests. Check Google Classroom for new assignments, documents, or posts. ****If you are absent on the due date of a long-term assignment (such as an essay or project), you must find a way to hand it in that day, either sending it with a friend, a parent, or via email or Google Docs.***
- 3) Homework: in an English class, you can expect regular homework. Written homework will be checked frequently, but not always. As a rule, late work will not be accepted.
- 4) Academic Integrity: All work must be your own. If you copy another student, or if you allow your work to be copied, you will receive a 0 for the assignment. If you copy a text – **either word for word or else by paraphrasing** – and do not properly cite it, you will be held

accountable for plagiarism and will receive a 0 for the assignment. Finally, if you use ChatGPT or any AI platform to generate responses or essays, you will receive a 0. The importance of written response is to develop your own thoughts, and any effort to circumvent this diminishes your education and constitutes cheating.

*Please note: If you receive a 0 on a major assignment, such as a paper or project, you will likely fail for the quarter. It is not worth it! For further explanation of plagiarism and the school's plagiarism policy, see the Student Handbook.

Grading

Unless otherwise notified, assignments in my class are graded according to a total points system, rather than a percentage system.

Each homework/classwork assignment will count once

Each quiz will count twice

Each test and project will count six times

Each paper will count ten times.

Grading Scenario: In a quarter, if we have 10 graded homework assignments, 5 quizzes, and 1 large paper, I would have 30 total grades in the grade book (1 for each homework, 2 for each quiz, 10 for each paper). Please note: If a student in this scenario does not complete homework but scores a 100 on each quiz and on the paper, the student ends the quarter with a 67. Or, if the student does all homework and scores a 100 on all quizzes but does not write the paper, the grade for the quarter would again be a 67.

Extra Help

I am unlikely to be able to stay after school without advance notice (because I must leave school by 2:45 at the latest in order to get my kids off the bus). If you need to meet, we will schedule a time that works.

Course/Text Schedule and possible texts (anticipated)

Quarter 1/3: Early America – Pursuit of Happiness

Texts include excerpts from the Puritan, Enlightenment, and Romantic literary movements.

Possible authors include

William Bradford

John Winthrop

Anne Bradstreet
Mary Rowlandson
Cotton Mather
Jonathan Edwards
Various Native authors from a vetted anthology
Benjamin Franklin
Patrick Henry
Thomas Paine
Frederick Douglass
Washington Irving
Nathaniel Hawthorne
E.A. Poe
Ralph Waldo Emerson
Henry David Thoreau
Sojourner Truth
Walt Whitman

.Quarter 2/4: Modern Values

Texts from realism and modernism:

Sample Authors/Texts Include

Mark Twain (*Huck Finn*)
F. Scott Fitzgerald (*The Great Gatsby*)
Ernest Hemingway (*The Snows of Kilimanjaro*)
Arthur Miller (*Death of a Salesman, The Crucible*)
Willa Cather (*O Pioneers!*)

Speeches (throughout)

Authors may include:

Ronald Reagan
JFK
Barack Obama
Monica Lewinsky

If you or your parents/guardians need to reach me, I am most easily contacted via email at Sean_Farrell@wrsd.net.

“All that we are is a result of what we have thought” – fortune cookie