

Courses Open To Seniors

These are year-long electives. In each course, students will be expected to read, write, and discuss their coursework in a graded, formal setting. Students can also expect nightly homework assignments comparable in type to your junior year experience. While, there is some variation in the pacing of courses due to the length and medium of texts, all electives are at the Honors level, and therefore involve a comparable amount of classwork, homework, projects, quizzes, discussion, and essays. Teachers and texts vary from year-to-year, so students should be sure to pick two courses that are most compelling to you in terms of general themes and content. In addition to an elective course selection, students must identify an alternate elective course of interest during the course selection period. While every effort is made to meet student requests, there is no guarantee that every student will be placed in their first choice.

1418 - The Heroine's Journey: Women in Literature & Film

4 credits

Level: Honors

This course will explore representations of women in literature and film spanning time, race, ability, class, and sexuality. Students will explore the implications of the gender binary on society through their readings, and by the end of the course, students will develop vocabulary and theory knowledge to critically examine the gendered world they live in. Each unit is designed around the pairing of a novel and film and may include the following: *The Red Tent* by Anita Diamant and *Barbie* (2023), *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte and *The Shape of Water* (2017), *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* by Maxine Hong Kingston and *Everything Everywhere All At Once* (2022), *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston and Beyonce's visual album *Lemonade*, *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood and *9 to 5* (1980) along with various poems, short stories, and nonfiction texts.

1428 – Shakespeare to Sherlock Holmes: Intro to British Literature

4 credits

Level: Honors

In this course, we will explore the development of British literature from *Beowulf* through Shakespeare and up to the present through close readings of poems, novels, plays, and essays by a variety of British writers. Together we will work to identify major themes, patterns, obsessions, and other features that distinguish these texts and genres. Students will also spend the year developing their expository and analytical writing skills. Past course highlights include a field trip to see a Shakespeare production in Boston, guest lectures from visiting scholars, and an independent Victorian Novel book club project. The year culminates in a final thematic project. Major works we'll read may include *Hamlet*, *Beowulf*, *Jane Eyre*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *The Sign of Four*, and *White Teeth*. Other representative authors and artists include Jane Austen, Hillary Mantel, Seamus Heaney, and George the Poet.

1438 – Creative Writing

4 credits

Level: Honors

In this course, students craft short fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction while drawing inspiration from their own experiences, writing prompts, and mentor texts. They analyze professional writing, expand vocabulary, and improve the coherence and cohesion of their own work. Participants are active members of a writing community; students workshop and share their writing with class members on a regular basis. Readings include short pieces and excerpts by mostly contemporary writers.

1448 – Introduction to Black Literature**4 credits****Level: Honors**

This course focuses on the foundational contributions Black artists have made to the cultural fabric of American society. Through the lens of art, we will study how identity is created and impacts our interaction with both literature as well as with society. It is hoped that, through exposure to authors and artists whose ideas and values reflect diverse backgrounds, students will appreciate not only the differences, but the similarities, among all people. This will be a discussion-based course predicated on specific norms the class creates, with an eye toward empowering all students to think critically about the lessons of race, history, and identity in the works we explore. Students will be exposed to a variety of authors presenting views on the Black American experience through drama, memoir, novels, short stories, music, poetry, film, and visual art. Taking a step back to study African oral tradition steeped in the aesthetics of performative story-telling, we will then go forward, studying the development of Black identity throughout American history through narrative, speech, song, poetry, fiction, and film. From Harriet Jacobs to Beyonce, Ida B. Wells to Audre Lorde, Langston Hughes to Terrance Hayes, James Baldwin to Childish Gambino, trickster tales to Key & Peele, *Boyz n the Hood* to *Black Panther* . . . there is something for everybody.

1458 – Media of the Moment**4 Credits****Level: Honors**

In this course, students will examine modern media in order to interrogate definitions of literacy, truth, and reality in the digital age. Course texts will include a variety of media, from literature and journalism to film, art, performance, music, radio/podcasts, reality TV, data sets, social platforms, AI, and more. As we learn how to critically examine diverse media, we will also seek to answer how each medium has historically and contemporarily shaped our societal narratives. The course begins with a survey of media studies through the present moment and culminates with a community archive project, allowing students the opportunity to develop an original record of their time at LHS. Over the course of the year, students can expect to engage in familiar reading, writing, and discussion activities, as well as project-based work that allows them to independently choose content. Designed with interdisciplinary connections in mind, this course will appeal to students who have enjoyed content about human connection,

communication, and innovation in their English, History, Art, Theater, Law, and Psychology coursework.

1468 – Film as Literature

4 credits

Level: Honors

Filmmakers are artists who make formal choices to convey meaning. With a focus on analytical and creative writing, this course equips students with the language of film literacy in order to evaluate the relationship between cinema and culture. Once students have mastered film vocabulary, they analyze classic and contemporary films in a variety of genres as well as put film techniques into practice through collaborative group projects. Students will read film reviews, interviews, textbook chapters, and essays on film theory and history. This course aims to cultivate critical consumers and creators of media as we grapple with the role that cinema plays in challenging or perpetuating messages about gender, race, class, and sexuality. Films may include some of the following: *Citizen Kane*, *The Truman Show*, *Rear Window*, *Parasite*, *Okja*, *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*, *Arrival*, *Barbie*, *Creed*, *Robot Dreams*, *Into the Spiderverse*, *Past Lives*, *Lady Bird*, *Her*, and, *Get Out*.

1478 – The Still Mind: Philosophy, Landscape, and Literature in East Asia

4 credits

Level: Honors

At the heart of the philosophical and imaginative literature of East Asia lie a view of the self, of nature, and of society that are relevant to our lives today. In this course, we will examine these views in two different contexts. First, we will read and reflect on the literature and philosophy of the classical Chinese, Japanese, and Korean traditions, before their encounters with Europeans. Second, we will study Chinese, Japanese, and Korean stories and poems from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, in order to understand how East Asian societies have responded and adapted in the face of globalization. If you are interested in the outdoors, in Eastern philosophy and religion, in poetry, in translation, in art, in how not to be stressed, in transformation, in literature's place in the world, or in the relevance of big ideas to one's life, you will find something in this course for you. The course uses a variety of literary and informational excerpts and texts, which may include *Tao Te Ching*, *365 Tao*, *The Tao of Pooh*, *The Path: What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About The Good Life*, *Analects*, *Mencius*, *The Heart Sutra*, Junji Kinoshita's *The Twilight Crane*, a variety of short stories, Zuo Ma's graphic novel *Night Bus*, Yoko Ogawa's *The Housekeeper and the Professor*, and Kyung-sook Shin's *Please Look After Mom*.

1488 – Speculative Fiction

The world in which we live is undergoing massive changes. New technologies, new forms of order, new freedoms, and new means of repression have all been part of the twenty-first century. The texts we read in Speculative Fiction will allow us to see how writers have foreseen and described the ways we live today. We will read classic dystopian novels like *1984* and *Brave New*

World, which compellingly investigate what societies based on power and pleasure look like, and whether freedom can be found within them. Additionally, the post-apocalyptic novels *Station Eleven* and *The Road* will prompt us to reflect on the processes of change that mark contemporary life, and on what values, beliefs, and practices can help sustain, amidst all of the change, a rich and meaningful social world. We will also investigate cities as powerful manifestations of human dreams, and view outstanding examples of speculative fiction in film, such as *Gattaca*, *Blade Runner*, and *Ex Machina*. Finally, we will continuously ask, in everyday class discussions, formal and creative assignments, how these great texts can better equip us to live well now.

1498 – Literature and the Concept Album [New in 2026-2027]

4 credits

Level: Honors

What do Hozier and Dante Alighieri have in common? They both wrote about Dante's *Inferno*! What about jazz and William Shakespeare? Duke Ellington based his jazz concept album on Shakespearean characters!

This course connects the two discourses that most tether humans to each other, themselves, and the human condition: literature and music. Through an analysis of diverse and culturally significant concept albums and their relevant texts-- from dystopia to poetry, from *Spoon River Anthology* to *Binti*, from the Beatles to BTS-- we will expand the storytelling possibilities of reading, writing, and, of course, listening! We will engage with classic *and* current literature and music in a new, rigorous, and engaging manner. An understanding of music and music theory is not necessary!!

1518 – Monsters as Metaphor

4 credits

Level: Honors

Horror stories reflect specific anxieties and fears of the author, the reader, and the culture in which they were written. To try to understand the horrors of our existence, writers create and name a monster, and in doing so, we grapple with an attempt to understand a part of ourselves that we would rather look away from, yet we must confront. This course will examine specific literary and cultural monsters through a variety of media, including novels, short stories, theory, poetry, audio, art, and film. Students will examine how philosophy and theory can give us tools to explore and analyze how monsters are constructed in the horror genre, and tackle questions about morality and ultimately, what makes us human. Texts we will study may include, but are not limited to, novels such as *Frankenstein*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Jurassic Park*, *Carmilla*, and *Monstrillio*, and films such as *Frankenstein (2025)*, *The Host*, *Alien*, and *Jurassic Park*.