



English III

2021-2022
Room 131

Instructor: Mr. Summitt | jsummitt@valorcollegiate.org

Office Hours: Tuesdays (7:05am - 7:25am)

Dear caregivers,

Hello! My name is Jeremy Summitt, and I am excited to be your student's English III teacher for the 2021-2022 school year. I enter this school year with six years of teaching experience, four of which took place at Valor's Flagship Academy where I taught 5th and 6th-grade ELA. I am thrilled to be a part of the Valor College Prep team, and I have already enjoyed getting to know many of the 11th graders.

Valor's English III curriculum is designed to refine and build upon students' existing foundation for college and career readiness, with one such component being explicit instruction around the English and Reading portion of the ACT. The English III course is much aligned with Valor's dedication to producing outstanding academic results and the social and emotional development of scholars. I am motivated to ensure that your scholar enjoys exceptional growth in their reading comprehension, literary analysis, and written response to a broad range of high-quality literary and informational texts. Students will learn to write as a means of expressing themselves, analyzing texts, and perceiving the world around them.

We support our scholars in learning to use writing as a means to support and defend a claim, showing what they know about a given subject, and expressing what they have experienced, imagined, thought, or felt. They become well-versed in the ability to independently gather relevant support for their claims, evaluate their sources, integrate them with sophistication, cite their sources properly in order to report and present their findings in a clear manner. We also support scholars in learning to carefully consider task, purpose, and audience in addition to choosing words, information, structures, and formats deliberately to produce complex and nuanced writing.

In order to prepare for college, 11th-grade students will frequently be asked to engage in small-group and whole-group discussions. The class discourse that exists in our classroom allows for us to share the unique perspectives we each bring to the experience of reading a piece of literature and pushes our ability to become better orators and public speakers. It is in these conversations that we will be able to learn from one another and push and deepen our understanding of the core texts' thematic concepts.

I believe strong analytical skills and the ability to express oneself through discourse and discussion helps establish a learning community of empowered young adults who can thrive as agents of positive progress in their world. As students enter their junior year, it is important that students gain more independence and agency over their work in this course. Therefore, more focus will shift to providing opportunities for scholars to incrementally be challenged so that they may develop their own lenses, questions, and critical approaches to our study in the hopes of empowering them to see their voices as impactful, important, and capable of working through highly complex, real-world problems.

I appreciate the opportunity to teach your student, and I'm grateful for you trusting Valor with your child's education each day. Here's to an excellent school year. Please feel free to reach out with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Sincerely,
Jeremy Summitt

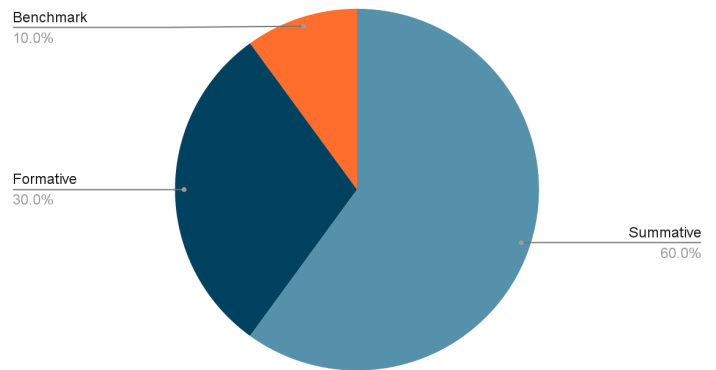


Course Description: This grade 11 course will familiarize students with the common themes and ideas that have developed throughout the literature of the United States through the study of various genres, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. Emphasis is placed on understanding literary context, author's purpose for writing, and analysis of common literary and rhetorical devices. This course will also include targeted, explicit preparation for the English portion of the ACT and serve as a Pre-AP course for those electing to take AP Literature in grade 12.

Core Texts:

- Unit 1: *"On The Rainy River" and "The Red Convertible"*
- Unit 2: *Sula*
- Unit 3: *Death of a Salesman* and *Fences*
- Unit 4: *The Handmaid's Tale*
- Unit 5: Research Unit (no core text)

Grade Breakdown by Category



Grading Categories and Distribution:

Category	Assignment Type	Assignment Pt. Value
Summative - 60%	Test or Performance Task	100
	Quiz	50
Formative - 30%	Classwork	10
	Homework	10
	Participation	10
	Exit Ticket	10
Benchmark - 10%	Quarterly Benchmark	100

Grading Scale:

Grade Scale	
Letter Grade	Numeric Value in Percentages
A	93-100
B	85-92
C	75-84
D	70-74



F	50-69
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Late Work Policy: Missing work will be indicated in the gradebook through the following signs: MS (missing Summative) and MF (missing formative). All late homework and summative assignments should be turned in on Google Classroom on the deadlines outlined below.

- *Classwork:* classwork not finished during class cannot be made up unless the teacher extends the deadline for the assignment to all students. For example, an exit ticket is not finished and the teacher assigns it as homework.
- *Homework:* Homework should almost always be done before the next class period in order to be able to perform well on classwork and discussion-based assignments. However, homework can be turned in no later than one week after the due date for a maximum of 7/10 points.
- *Summative Assignments (tests, quizzes, essays):* a deduction of 10% of points is taken off each day past the deadline until a low score of 50% is reached.

Make-Up Work due to Absence: Any student who has missed class is responsible for emailing the teacher to inquire about makeup work and ensure that they have all of the materials.

- *Assessments:* Missed assessments due to absence should be made up within one week of the test's administration.
- *Classwork:* Missed classwork due to absence will be exempted by the teacher unless it is taken up as a summative grade (ex: an exit ticket). If the classwork is a summative grade, absent students will have one week from the original date to turn it in.
- *Homework:* Missed Homework due to absences should be made up within five days of the assignment date for full credit. Homework will not be accepted after the five-day window and will be scored as a zero.

Redemption Policy: Any assignment entered into the summative category of the gradebook can be redeemed by attending office hours and sufficiently completing test corrections or rewrites to redeem half of the original points.

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism, cheating or copying the work of another, using technology for illicit purposes, or any unauthorized communication between students for the purpose of gaining advantage during an examination—is strictly prohibited. Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be issued a 50 for the assignment, which is the lowest score that can be issued in the gradebook.

Homework Policy: In English III, students can expect to be assigned approximately 30 minutes of homework nightly. Homework will often consist of pre-reading portions of the Core Texts so that students are prepared to talk about them in the next class. Failure to complete homework on time may inhibit class participation and mastery.



Below you will find a brief summary of each of our units of study this year. We work to honor your role as informed parents by providing a brief overview of our year with the hope that you will discuss these themes and support our curriculum at home. Within each unit, you will find our essential questions that guide our study of the novel and its themes. These questions are introduced at the beginning of each unit with the goal of scholars having a complete, sophisticated answer by the end of the unit. You will also find a list of the core and supplemental texts with a brief description about why we have chosen to read a particular text. Finally, in the left-hand column you will find the anticipated start and end dates of each text along with any sensitive content warnings. As informed parents and families, we want you to be aware of sensitive topics that arise throughout each of these units. You may choose to discuss these themes at home prior to our reading of each text. We may draw on this subject matter in class discussions or in writing.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

<p>Unit 1: Short Stories</p> <p>Anticipated Dates: August 11 - September 2</p> <p>Sensitive Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Implied Suicide (Red Convertible)	<p>Unit Essential Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">How do literary elements interact to develop central ideas in a work of literature?What is the role of the reader? What is the role of the writer? <p>Core Text(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>On The Rainy River</i> by Tim O' Brien<i>The Red Convertible</i> by Louise Erdrich <p>Why this unit? This short unit focuses on two masterful examples of the short story genre: Tim O'Brien's "On the Rainy River" from <i>The Things They Carried</i> and Louise Erdrich's "The Red Convertible" from <i>The Red Convertible</i>. Both short stories serve as rich mentor texts for our emerging narrative writers, as they develop complex characters who, in times of war, demonstrate conflicts between social conventions and the human psyche. The texts take up the ideas of freedom and boundaries, bravery and cowardice, and sense of self and societal expectations.</p>
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Unit 2:

Sula

Anticipated Dates:

September 7 - November 4

Sensitive Content:

- Explicit language, (including racial slurs)
- Sexual Content (including several references to sex, prostitution, sexual anatomy)
- Brief mention of rape
- Violence (Severe) including war violence, graphic descriptions of death, violence toward children
- References to sexual violence
- References to alcohol and tobacco

Unit Essential Questions

1. How does an author's use of stylistic elements (craft) contribute to a work's meaning and effect?
2. How does context shape content?
3. How do we analyze a text through the lens of social theory or criticisms?

Core Text:

- *Sula* by Toni Morrison

Supplemental Texts:

- Excerpt from "The Mother's Gardens" by Alice Walker
- "The Flowers" by Alice Walker
- "Ain't I a Woman?" by Sojourner Truth
- "Girl" by Jamaica Kinkaid
- "Ain't I a Woman?" By Bell Hooks
- "The Power of Self Definition" By Patricia Hill Collins

Why this unit?

Sula is written by Toni Morrison, one of the most famous and celebrated American authors in history. The novel explores Black womanhood in the context of familial, peer, or larger social relations, including the extent to which (and ways in which) Black women define and are defined by their own femininity and willingness to conform to societal assumptions surrounding race and gender. Unit 2 will continue to strengthen Unit 1's analysis of literary elements, and it will introduce deeper engagement with stylistic (craft) and structural elements that contribute to a work's effects and meaning. In this unit, we also introduce reading a work of literature through the lens of social theory.

Common Sense Media says to talk to your student about:

- Families can talk about the feminist themes in *Sula*. Are they the same as or different from feminist and girl-power issues of today?
- What do you think of the level of violence in *Sula*? Is it important to the storytelling, and for historical accuracy, or does it seem like too much?
- How is Sula and Nel's friendship when they were children different from their adult friendship? What's positive about their behavior as friends, and how does it mirror the frenemies/mean-girl attitudes we see portrayed in today's media?

Unit 3:

Death of a Salesman + Fences

Anticipated Dates:

November 8 - January 25

Sensitive Content:

- Sexual Content (Death of a Salesman + Fences)

Unit Essential Questions:

1. How do the literary devices an author uses reveal a deeper theme?
2. How do we synthesize common themes or dualities across texts?

Core Text:

- *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller
- *Fences* by August Wilson

Supplemental Texts:

- "The Worker" by Walter Wykes
- "The Fallacy of Success" by G.K. Chesterton

Why this unit?



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit Language - including racial slurs /n-word (Fences) • References to alcohol and tobacco (both plays) 	<p>America was established as a new “Eden,” a place where one could transform the wilderness into a paradise of riches, which perpetuated an American myth of the pioneer hero who moved with ease to greener pastures. More effectively than almost any other American drama, <i>Death of a Salesman</i> probes the nature of the American Dream and its promise of success. Willy Loman stars as the protagonist—an ordinary white middle-class man who tries to hide his averageness behind his hallucinations as he pretends to be a “success.” The play is a critique of the American Dream and of the materialistic American culture of the 1940s. Written ten years later, in response to <i>Death of a Salesman</i>, <i>Fences</i> by August Wilson (a drama offering the African American experience) similarly probes the concepts of individual and societal barriers to the American Dream. In <i>Fences</i>, the complicated and tragic character of Troy Maxson, an African American man in the 1950’s, encounters head-on the limits of black men’s ability to achieve this American ideal.</p>
<p>Unit 4: <i>The Handmaid’s Tale</i></p> <p>Anticipated Dates: January 26 - April 4</p> <p>Sensitive Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence (including corporal punishment and public beatings) • Mentions of suicide • Explicit Language • 2-3 graphic sex scenes • Alcohol and tobacco references 	<p>Unit Essential Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do authors use figurative language or rhetoric to advance a point of view or purpose? 2. How does the interaction of rhetorical features contribute to the theme of a literary work? <p>Core Text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Handmaid’s Tale</i> by Margaret Atwood <p>Supplemental Texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various historical documents • “Why Intersectionality Can’t Wait” - Kimberle Crenshaw <p>Why this unit?</p> <p>Students will develop and hone the AP skills surrounding rhetorical analysis and argumentation. Scholars will read a variety of texts and will explore, analyze, and develop arguments about gender, religion, and power. Students will practice these skills over the course of approximately 5 weeks, which will examine some of the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do sex and gender influence power and control? - How can religion be used or manipulated to gain or maintain power? - Are women’s rights progressing or regressing? Are claims that Atwood’s novel is “more relevant than ever” hysterical and unfounded or justified and reasonable? <p>Common Sense Media says to talk to your student about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families can talk about why dystopian novels like <i>The Handmaid’s Tale</i> (1985) and <i>The Hunger Games</i> (2008) continue to be such a popular genre. • Why do you think Atwood appends “Historical Notes” to the main narrative of the novel? • Do you think women’s rights are in jeopardy today? Where and how?

By signing below, I signify that I have read the course information and parent letter.



Parent signature

date

Student signature

date