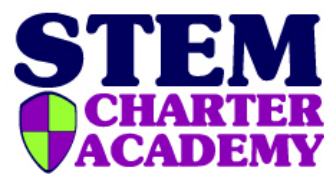


Contemporary Literature

Course Syllabus

Instructor: Mrs. Betsy Sims or Mr. Luke Fraga

Email: bsims@northidahostem.org or lfraga@northidahostem.org



Course Description: Students will read contemporary texts, including fiction, informational texts, speeches, and poetry. Students will research and write on contemporary topics/events in relation to the unit in focus, as well as study within the following writing forms: problem/solution, persuasion, informative, literary analysis, compare/contrast, and narrative. The primary goal of this class is to prepare students for college level reading/annotating and analytical writing. Oral communication skills are taught through various presentations and speeches, both formal and informal, that students will be assigned to present throughout the year.

Curricular Information

Required Reading: *Book Thief* (Markus Zusak), *Grit* (Angela Duckworth), *Life of Pi* (Yann Martel), and *Tuesdays with Morrie* (Mitch Albom); various short stories, poetry, and nonfiction

Standards: **Idaho Content Standards for English;** out of those standards, students in this course will be covering: 9/10.RC-L-5a.-e., 9/10.RC-NF-6a.-e., 9/10.VD-WB-1a.-d., 9/10.VD-WB-2a.-d., 9/10.VD-AV-3, 9/10.RS-IP-1, 9/10.RS-DR-2, 9/10.W-RW-1-6, 9/10.W-HWK-7, 9/10.ODC-OC-1-4, 9/10.ODC-DC-5-8, 9/10.GC-GU-1a.-j., 9/10.GC-GU-2a.-c., 3

Additional Resources: Google Classroom; Khan Academy

Supplies Required for this Course: College-ruled lined spiral notebook, plenty of pencils/lead, 2-3 red, blue, OR black pens, 2-3 highlighters, 1 package of lined notecards

Daily Time and Effort Expectations: Discussion and writing assignments are graded heavily. Students must be able express comprehension through verbal and written language. Students must learn to use class work time efficiently and turn in assignments on time. **Students should expect nightly reading, writing, or preparation for the next class each night.**

Notebook Checks: Students will submit their notebooks **at least** once per month to check that all notes have been taken in a neat manner to allow for most efficient studying. Students **must** create a table of contents (page 1) and keep it updated as notes are taken. **If absent**, students are responsible for communicating with a peer or teacher to update their notebooks.

Google Classroom: Google Classroom is where students will sometimes turn in assignments, find readings, and see upcoming deadlines or quiz dates. Students should see Google Classroom if absent for makeup work (and email with questions as needed). **Google Classroom is a tool. It does not take the place of instruction.**

Course Schedule

Topics	Major Assignments	Timeframe
Unit 1	<i>The Book Thief</i> (Markus Zusak): Analysis of author's purpose and the	7 weeks

	effects of textual structure; thematic discussions, symbolism, point of view, parallel structure, syntax; inclusion of nonfiction speeches, diary entries, and government documents; poetry by W.H. Auden, Elie Wiesel, and Carl Sandburg; documentary: “The U.S. and the Holocaust” published by United States Holocaust Memorial Museum	
Unit 2	<i>Narrative Writing</i> : Use of the Common Application prompts; an introduction to narrative writing: effective hooks, use of strong vocabulary, and showing v. telling	4 weeks
Unit 3	1. <i>Contemporary Short Stories and Poetry</i>: Analysis of text structure, types of conflict, character and plot development, contrasting author styles and themes. 2. Introduction of Fall Semester Final Exam	3 weeks
Unit 4	Fall Semester Final Exam: writing, prep work, presentations, and reflections	4 weeks
Unit 5	<i>GRIT</i> by Angela Duckworth: “ <i>Our potential is one thing. What we do with it is quite another</i> ”: defining Grit, addressing what happens when “talent runs out,” the role of true and consistent effort (practice), the Grit Scale, creating a hierarchy of goals, and how to grow Grit (interest, passion, purpose, hope)	5 weeks
Unit 6	<i>Life of Pi</i> (Yann Martel) and <i>Tuesdays with Morrie</i> (Mitch Albom): a literary analysis around philosophy and what one stands for; text-to-self connections throughout the readings and component of the final exam; discussions on personal growth, values, morals; allegory and symbolism; introduction to spring final exam	5-6 weeks
Unit 7	Spring Semester Final Exam: writing, prep work, presentations, and reflections	4-5 weeks

Course Evaluation:

The percentage breakdown for semester grade calculation will be as follows:

Skills Practice 35%

- Khan Academy SAT practice, Bell ringers/exit tickets, class discussion, drafting process assignments, mini-lesson practice work/activities

Assessments 50%

- Mini-lesson assessments, final writing assignments, formal presentations

Final Exam or Project 15%

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage	Proficiency descriptors
A+	97-100	<i>Assignments are fully completed in a timely manner and of excellent quality; the student shows superior level of initiative and seeks to <u>go beyond the</u></i>
A	93-96	

A-	90-92	<i><u>minimum requirements.</u> Errors are rare or nonexistent.</i>
B+	87-89	<i>Assignments are fully completed in a timely manner and typically of above average quality; the student is conscientious and meets all requirements with few errors.</i>
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	
C+	77-79	<i>Assignments are generally complete (met minimum requirements) and of good quality; assigned tasks have occasional errors.</i>
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	
D+	67-69	<i>Assignments are generally incomplete or of poor quality; the student makes frequent errors in work.</i>
D	63-66	
D-	60-62	
F	0-59	<i>Work is poorly done, if at all. Overall performance is inadequate to pass the course. Note: No name = No credit Illegible = No credit Late = No credit (*will <u>STILL</u> complete and submit the assignment)</i>

Classroom Policies and Expectations: Students are expected to adhere to the classroom rules set by the teacher in their assigned classroom, and in accordance with expectations found in the North Idaho STEM Charter Academy Student Handbook and Technology Policy.

Academic Honesty Code of Conduct:

“On my honor, I will maintain the highest possible standards of honesty, integrity, and personal responsibility. This means I will not lie, cheat, or steal, and as a member of this academic community, I am committed to creating an environment of respect and mutual trust.”

Violations of this code include, but are not limited to:

- Copying another person’s work or allowing your work to be copied (plagiarism)
- Allowing someone other than yourself to complete work in your name
- Using unauthorized assistance on an assessment or assignment
- Falsifying or manipulating data
- Submitting the same work for multiple courses without instructor’s permission
- Giving answers to other students
- Lying to an instructor
- Tampering with or destroying the work of another student
- Using responses found on the internet, or created with the use of technological means (ex artificial intelligence, etc)

*****Any outside sources used on an assignment should be referenced and cited appropriately. *****

Consequences for Academic Dishonesty: At the instructor's discretion, the student **will** lose partial or full credit for the assignment. The student will be on notice that the incident will be recorded in the gradebook and his/her parent(s) will be informed. Future academic dishonesty incidents will result in a grade of zero for the assignment, a meeting with the principal, and possible loss of credit, suspension, or expulsion. Direct copying is plagiarism. Only original work may be submitted for this (and any other) academic course. If you have any questions about avoiding plagiarism, please visit the [OWL at Purdue's "Avoiding Plagiarism" web page.](#)