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English III-American Literature Course Syllabus 2024-25

Instructor: M. Niggli

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Room: 263

Office Hours: Monday (3:25pm-4:10pm) & Tues-Fri (1:50pm-2:35 pm)

Course Content

This semester students will effectively participate in the domains of written composition, oral expression, reading comprehension, grammar in context, and vocabulary development.

Text

The textbooks for the course are as follows:

- The College Board's *Springboard: English Textual Power*
- Holt McDougal's *American Literature*, grade 11
- Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*

About the Teacher

Briefly, I was born and raised in California. After graduating from San Francisco State University in 1991 with a bachelor's degree in journalism, I spent five years playing professional basketball in four European countries. I came to Houston in 1996, gaining teacher certification at the University of Houston and advanced placement certification at Rice University. I am currently taking courses toward a master's degree in education administration through Grand Canyon University.

Ongoing Objectives

- By the end of this course, the student will have mastered the reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills as written in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for English 3.
- He/she will also have gained an understanding of the verbal section of the SAT examination used by evaluators across the United States for college admissions. Elements of the verbal section include sentence completion, essay writing, and critical reading. The student will increase his/her vocabulary base through the study of prefixes, suffixes, and words from the SAT high-frequency word list.
- The student will explore the modes of writing through a variety of essays, quick writes, and group work, in addition to reading a wide variety of literature, to enhance his/her knowledge of the literary world, heighten awareness of North American culture, and improve reading and writing skills.

Portfolio

You are required to maintain an organized portfolio for the course. It will be submitted as a grade during each grading cycle. Portfolio dividers, including electronic portfolios, will be discussed in class.

Grading Scale

Everything has a point value. If a vocabulary quiz has 11 questions, there are 11 possible points for you. If a section test has 20 questions, there are 20 possible points for you. If an exam has 72 questions, there are 72 points. Simply divide the points you receive by the number of possible points to get your percentage.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation are required; it is difficult to learn the content if you are not present in class. Your class participation and attendance can be a deciding factor if your class average straddles two grades. Be sure to see me about any missed work if you are absent.

Daily Required Materials

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| 1. laptop | 2. pen | 3. three-ring-binder | 4. paper |
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Unit Overviews**Unit One**

This unit explores the impact of family influence on the individual by examining past and present poetry and short fictional texts (excerpts and short stories). Students explore these genres by analyzing figurative language, sound devices, graphical elements, and theme. Students begin examining how literature has changed through the years, through the analysis of both classical and modern texts.

Unit Two

This unit establishes the theme of the American Dream by examining our preconceived notions and exposing students to the historical and literary foundations of that dream. The first half of the unit asks students to revisit and challenge their understanding by exposing them to a variety of authors in multiple genres, all of whom have a different and interesting take on what the American Dream means.

Unit Three

Central to any democracy is the way writers use language to influence public opinion. Consequently, it is important that we know how to discern between arguments that use careful reasoning based on sound evidence and those that rely instead on manipulation, biased language, and fallacious reasoning. This unit focuses on these issues, examining both editorial writing and satire as key genres through which writers make statements about issues of the day.

Unit Four

America's tradition of open debate and lively free speech was established in the early period of the fight for independence from British rule. Before that, the founding settlers had established the basis for a literate democratic society in its schools and system of justice. You have seen from the previous unit that persuasive, free speech is at the heart of our democracy's vitality. Through a study of historic American speeches, this unit provides an opportunity to analyze models of effective persuasive speech in preparation for writing and delivering original speeches.

Unit Five

This unit explores the individual's influence on humanity. Students continue analyzing expository texts and media in order to understand the various modes of delivery, particularly from two different authors with the same viewpoint. After participating in inquiry groups, students craft a rhetorical analysis essay, focusing on a clear thesis, effective transitions and organizational schema.

Unit Six

The pursuit of happiness is an integral part of the American Dream and part of the foundation of this country. Many people think that the fulfillment of the American Dream centers on financial success; however, riches are not the path to happiness for everyone. In this unit, you will examine how one person rejected wealth in favor of a different pathway to happiness; you will also look at how others have found enlightenment in everyday experiences. Next, you will research the American Dream and the pursuit of happiness and articulate what that dream means to you and your fellow Americans.