

# *American Literature and Composition*

9<sup>th</sup> period Mondays, 2<sup>nd</sup> period Tuesdays, 5<sup>th</sup> period Wednesdays and Thursdays, 8<sup>th</sup> period Fridays

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## **Course Overview:**

This literature course will help students continue to build critical thinking, interpretation, and communication skills that will carry over into many aspects of their life. Students will study literature, grammar and writing daily in order to maintain proficiency throughout the year.

This course will focus very much on individual student needs. Each student will work with the teacher to find the tools that will help her to be successful. Assessments, assignments and goals will be modified to meet individual student needs.

In the end, students should develop the skills they need to communicate clearly and correctly in both written and oral language. They should also be able to understand and interpret information in various settings.

Students will read classic American literature as well as modern American literature. Over the semester, students will be encouraged to make connections between this course and their American History course. They will complete a research paper at the end of the semester that will bridge both courses.

## **Course objectives:**

- Demonstrate knowledge of grammar rules and utilize them in writing
- Compose persuasive and expository multi-paragraph essays
- Understand the research process and use it to write successful papers
- Demonstrate a mastery of the ability to clarify and organize thoughts in all types of writing – both formal and informal
- Interpret various types of reading materials and genres
- Recognize literary devices and use them to increase understanding of literary works
- Recognize elements of particular genres and be able to identify the types of stories in order to interpret reading more effectively
- Improve vocabulary by recognizing context clues, looking up unfamiliar words, and using prefixes and suffixes to infer meanings
- Demonstrate listening skills during lectures and group discussions
- Use the library, computer lab, and other technological sources successfully

## **Supplies:**

- A three-ring binder (at least 1-inch)
- A pack 5 of notebook dividers
- Loose-leaf notebook paper
- Pencils and blue or black ink
- One pack of sticky notes
- A pack of 3x5 index cards
- Book flags
- A composition book
- A willingness and excitement to learn!

**Grading and Assignments:**

Students will participate in a variety of activities that will determine their grade. The grade will be determined based on a total points system. Students will be responsible for keeping track of their grades on a given grade sheet (see attached for example) and should be able to determine their grade at any time during the semester. The teacher may change the points possible on certain assignments during the year to help accommodate individual student needs.

**Assessments:**

An assessment will be given every Friday that we have a full week of school. The assessment will include grammar, writing and literature covered in that week, as well as a few questions covering previously learned knowledge. Students will receive information on what the assessment will cover each week. The assessment will often be different than written tests, though some may include a written portion. The intent will be to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the topics through a variety of methods.

**Journal entries:**

Each day, students will have a journal entry to copy from the board. If there is time at the end of class to answer the question, these can be completed in class. If not they will be considered homework. These should be treated as formal essay answers, but they do not need to be more than a page in length. Spelling and grammar errors should be avoided and correct paragraph structure should be used. Students will have time to “free write” after assessments on Fridays. The journals will be collected every Friday for grading.

**Daily Grammar Practice:**

Each day when students arrive at class they will have a Daily Grammar Practice (DGP) activity to complete. This program helps focus on grammar. Students should record their answers in the DGP section of their notebook. Students will receive credit for completing their DGP each day (correct or not). Weekly assessments will include DGP information.

**Reading log:**

Besides in class reading, students will be required to read for a minimum of 30 minutes outside of school each week. They will log these hours on their reading log. Students who exceed an hour a week will receive rewards based on the number of minutes they log.

**Bonus/ Extra credit:**

Bonus and extra credit opportunities will be given throughout the year. These will be worth different amount of points depending on the assignment; however, these points will be added to the student's total points earned without being added to the total points possible.

**Retakes:**

I want students to be successful. Depending on the effort put in by the student retakes or different forms of assessment for material will be given if the student is struggling to demonstrate their knowledge due to the type of assessment. Please speak to your teacher privately if this is a problem.