

## **American Literature Syllabus**

Instructor: Mr. Tim Creighton

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### Course Description

American Literature focuses on the works and authors of American literature and their relationship to American history. Grammar studies include correct usage. Vocabulary study is emphasized beyond literary context through bi-weekly vocabulary units of fifteen words each. Writing exercises center on analytical essays, culminating with a research paper.

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### Course Goals

The American Literature portion of our class time is reading and response intensive. As the school year progresses, students will be sharpening their close reading and critical thinking skills. They will be able to identify characters and character development, plot, conflicts, themes, and the like by studying a variety of literary genres. This course aims to help students identify values and morals displayed in literature, and compare/contrast them to Biblical examples. We will have numerous class discussions where we will analyze a specific text from various characters' perspectives in light of our own personal experiences.

The Rhetoric portion of our class time is writing and grammar intensive. Students will be working on a variety of written assignments; such as personal narratives, persuasive essays, reflective essays and a substantial research paper at the close of the school year. For each writing assignment students will be strengthening our grammatical, organizational and descriptive skills in order to develop more compelling and effective papers. Students will also be strengthening their vocabulary and learning more about the editorial process through peer revisions and critiquing exercises.

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### Mission Connection

LCCS exists to glorify God as a community of faith and learning dedicated to forming disciples of Jesus Christ. This course supports the LCCS mission by giving students the opportunity to enjoy masterful writing, because communication is one of God's greatest blessings to mankind. But because written language can be used with good and evil intent, students must also be extremely aware of the ways in which language can be used to communicate meaning. Through a better understanding of literature, which reflects the human condition, students will become better equipped to distinguish truth from error and communicate God's truth more effectively.

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### Textbook and Required Materials

- Students must come to class prepared with their books, a writing instrument, and paper. Students will be expected to complete ALL reading assignments by their assigned due dates.
- Novels and textbooks will be distributed to students.
- Additional readings may be given as supplements.
- Students must have a dictionary and thesaurus.

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### Classroom Procedures

- Students will be in class and seated when the tardy bell rings, where they will remain for the duration of the period, unless instructed by the teacher.
  - Students are to keep their workspaces clean.
  - Students are to be dismissed when the teacher dismisses them and should not pack up in advance, unless the teacher permits.
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### Classroom Expectations (Student Learning Agreement)

God has created us each uniquely. He has also created us to worship Him with our efforts in everything that we do. Seeking to perform at the highest level of excellence is an act of worship to our Creator. As such, I agree to the following:

- I will be **ON TIME** for all classes every day.  
I understand that a total of three unexcused tardies to any and all of my classes will result in an immediate before or after-school detention.
  - I will be **PREPARED** for class every day.  
I will have a writing utensil, paper, my textbook, and any other necessary resources for success in the classroom. Not being prepared for class may result in a deduction of points from my class participation grade.
  - I will **COMPLETE** all assignments on time.  
I understand that late assignments will result in a deduction of 10% of the assignment grade *per day* that the assignment is late up to 50%. After 5 days, the grade becomes a zero for the assignment. Late work will not be accepted for credit but may still be required to be completed.
  - I will **RESPECT** my instructor(s), any LCCS staff member, volunteer(s), classmates, and other students in other grades.  
Profanity, rude gestures, cruel teasing or put downs will not be tolerated. Such behavior(s) will first be addressed and managed by the instructor. If such behavior(s) continue students may be referred to the Dean of Students.
  - I will keep my **CELL PHONE OFF** and away at all times during the school day (8 am-3:10 pm).  
I understand that if my cell phone is visible or on, the instructor will confiscate the device and the Student Handbook Cell Phone Policy will be followed.
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*Discipline:* To instruct and govern; to teach rules and practice, and accustom to order and subordination (Noah Webster 1828). Discipline is done in the classroom as necessary to maintain a safe, orderly and conducive-to-learning environment for all students. Students whose behavior is deemed by the teacher to be disrespectful and/or disruptive to the teaching and learning processes by any means will serve the following consequences:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense – verbal warning. (seating may be changed)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense – The student will have a meeting with Mr. Creighton and parents will be contacted.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense – The student will be given a detention and be referred to the Dean of Students.

Students removed from class due to disciplinary problems are responsible to acquire any missed work or notes.

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## Course Outline

Course selections could change, and we will read many selections from the textbook that are not listed, but this gives you an idea of what we will cover. Italics will be for the longer works that we read.

- I. Early American Literature (1650-1800)  
*The Crucible*
  - II. Romanticism (1800-1860)
  - III. Realism (1860-1914)
  - IV. Modern (1914-1940)  
*The Great Gatsby*
  - V. Contemporary Literature (1940-Present)
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## Major Assignments

TBD

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## Homework

- Students will place their homework in the bin by Mr. Creighton's door at the beginning of class. Any work not found in the bin at the beginning of the period will be considered late.
  - Each assignment should have, at the top right corner of the paper: student name, assignment due date, and question numbers (if applicable).
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## Assessments

Formal assessments include tests and essays. Informal assessments include homework, classwork, and conversation. Treat every assignment as though it is going to be graded, and you won't be surprised.

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## Field Trips

To imaginary worlds

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## Grading Overview

### Weighted Structure

- 40 % Tests/Projects
- 30 % Quizzes/Labs/Minor Projects
- 20 % Homework/Classwork
- 10% Class Participation

### Grading Scale

4.0 = A = 93-100	2.0 = C = 73-76
3.7 = A- = 90-92	1.7 = C- = 70-72
3.3 = B+ = 87-89	1.3 = D+ = 67-69
3.0 = B = 83-86	1.0 = D = 63-66
2.7 = B- = 80-82	0.7 = D- = 60-62

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### Class Participation and Attendance

Mr. Creighton's classes involve discussions, both verbally and in writing. So that they may participate as fully as possible, students are expected to come to class having done the readings and ready with ideas. Students should also be prepared to assist in answering the questions of other students.

Two pieces of general good advice:

1. **Ask questions!** The only "dumb" question is the one that you never asked! If you are confused about anything related to the class—the meaning of a word Mr. Creighton uses, something that happens in one of the texts we're reading, a particular rule of grammar, a comment on a paper, etc.—*please*, bring it to Mr. Creighton's attention. Remember: if you're confused about something, it's very likely that some of your peers share your confusion. Help everyone out by asking questions when they come up. It's been my experience that the best students often ask the most questions.
2. **Seek help when you need it.** Your class is very large and while Mr. Creighton will make every effort to regularly check in on each of you, it is your responsibility as a young adult to take charge of your education and seek him out with questions or concerns as they arise. The worst thing you can do for your own learning is to grow comfortable with feeling confused and keeping quiet about it.

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### Make-up Work

- Late work will be accepted, but ten points for each day late will be subtracted from the final grade.
- Students are responsible for making up all work missed, e.g. readings, notes, quizzes, and tests, in a timely manner.
- For each day a student is absent, two days will be given to make up any missing work, per school policy.

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STUDENT: I have read this syllabus and understand what is expected of me.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PARENTS: My child has discussed the syllabus with me. I understand it and will support it.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_