

**English 103 & 104: Intro. to Literature & Language
2015-2016
Hilliard Bradley High School
Instructor: Julie Rickert**

Introduction

This is a college-level class that will engage in you in the careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature. Through the close reading of selected texts, students deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure for their readers. As they read, students consider a work's structure, style and themes, as well as such smaller-scale elements as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism and tone.

Course Objectives and Philosophy

This class is designed to be rigorous, just as any college-level course would be. The reading is challenging; the writing is frequent and requires an independent mind willing to take risks. The course includes intensive study of representative works from various genres and periods, concentrating on works of recognized literary merit.

Reading in English 103 & 104

Reading in this course is both wide and deep. This reading necessarily builds upon and complements the reading done in previous English courses so that by the time you complete your senior year, you will have read works from several genres and periods — from the 16th to the 21st century. In the class you read deliberately and thoroughly, in both instance to appreciate the quality and ideas of the work as well as the aesthetic value of the work — how it was conceived and constructed. In addition to considering a work's literary artistry, you reflect on the social and historical values it reflects and embodies.

In short, students in this course read actively. The works taught in the course require careful, deliberative reading. And the approach to analyzing and interpreting the material involves you learning how to make careful observations of textual detail, establish connections among their observations, and draw from those connections a series of inferences leading to an interpretive conclusion about the meaning and value of a piece of writing. Simply put, *you will get out of these works what you put into them*. If we were interested in merely learning ABOUT these stories, we could read the plot summaries of the books online and be done with it. While it is important to know about the books that we read, it is much more important to experience the books and be able to apply them critically to our own experiences.

Over the past few years the concept of a book has changed considerably — electronic resources have allowed us to carry multiple books around on one device or read an entire book online. *The use of Kindles or iPads or other similar devices is encouraged — keep in mind that you can annotate on those as well (although perhaps not as quickly or thoroughly as a paper copy)*.

Texts

The following texts will be covered in class. You will be required to obtain copies of these books on your own. You will need an actual copy of the book for class — hard copy or electronic is fine.

You must have a copy of the books in class with you EVERY DAY while we are working them unless told otherwise. This list, while fairly definite, is subject to change.

Summer Work

- ◆ *The Curious Incident of the Dog in Nighttime*-Mark Haddon

1st Quarter

- ◆ *Pride and Prejudice*-Jane Austen
- ◆ *Their Eyes were Watching God*-Zora Neal Hurston
- ◆ poetry of Emily Dickinson (does not require a purchase.)

2nd Quarter

- ◆ *Macbeth*-William Shakespeare*
- ◆ poetry of Mary Oliver (does not require a purchase)

3rd Quarter

- ◆ *Remains of the Day*- Kazuo Ishiguro
- ◆ *The Help*-Kathryn Stockett
- ◆ poetry of Walt Whitman (does not require a purchase)

4th Quarter

- ◆ *The Handmaid's Tale*-Margaret Atwood
- ◆ *Complete Stories* - Flannery O'Connor (does not require a purchase)
- ◆ Film as a genre (TBA)

*Shakespeare can be tricky because there are some poorly annotated versions out there. This one is good and the one you should purchase: 978-0-7434-7710-9. If you get one on a device, do so at your peril. None of the free ones are good and you don't really get to preview them. NO NO FEAR and NO ONLINE VERSIONS.

Writing

Writing is an integral part of English 103 & 104. Writing assignments focus on the critical analysis of literature and include expository, analytical and argumentative essays. Although critical analysis makes up the bulk of student writing for the course, well-constructed creative writing assignments may help students see from the inside how literature is written. Such experiences sharpen their understanding of what writers have accomplished and deepen their appreciation of literary artistry. The goal of both types of writing assignments is to increase students' ability to explain clearly, cogently, even elegantly, what they understand about literary works and why they interpret them as they do.

To that end, writing in this class includes attention to developing and organizing ideas in clear, coherent and persuasive language. It includes study of the elements of style. And it attends to matters of precision and correctness as necessary. Throughout the course, emphasis is placed on helping students develop stylistic maturity, which, for this course, is characterized by the following:

- * a wide-ranging vocabulary;
- * a variety of sentence structures;
- * a logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques of coherence such as repetition, transitions and emphasis;
- * a balance of generalization with specific illustrative detail; and an effective use of rhetoric, including controlling tone, maintaining a consistent voice, and achieving emphasis through parallelism and antithesis.

All students will be required to keep a portfolio of their work this year. Throughout the year several assignments will be designated as “portfolio pieces.” These pieces must be typed and graded in order to be included.

Expectations

- * **Turn your work in on time.** Of course there will be situations where you will not be able to turn in assignments due to unforeseen circumstances. I will do my best to work with you should these occur. *Any abuse of my tolerance will not be accepted.*
 - The above does not include computer policies. With all of the technology that you have at your disposal, there should be no reason to hand work in late.
- * **Do your reading.** You are an honors student and to choose not to read because you can is a disgrace to your standing.
- * If you are absent, I expect you to take responsibility for your make-up work. I will certainly help you catch up if you need it, but
 - I will not take extra class time to do so. **Use your resources-** Canvas app, classmates, and before- and after- class time with me to help yourself in making up missed work and assignments.
- * As a general rule, **be on time to class, come prepared, and come every day.**