

Honors English 10 Syllabus: Critical Thinking through Literature

Instructor: Ms. Victoria Dryden

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Tuesdays and Thursdays: 8:00-9:30am

Room 304

Fridays: 8:45-9:25am

Room 307

Thematic Through Lines: Power and Conflict in Society.

- What Does it Mean to Be Human?
- How does the individual interact with society?
- How does the individual interact with the environment?
- How does the individual respond to conflict?
- How does power impact the individual, society, the environment?

“History is storytelling...This is the problem of history. We cannot know that which we were not there to see and hear and experience for ourselves. We must rely upon the words of others. Those who were there in the olden days, they told stories to the children so that the children would know, so that the children could tell stories to their children. And so on, and so on. But now we come upon the problem of conflicting stories...Whose stories do we believe, then? We believe the storyteller who has the power. He is the one who gets to write the story. So when you study history, you must always ask yourself, *Whose story am I missing? Whose voice was suppressed so that this voice could come forth?* Once you have figured that out, you must find that story too. From there, you begin to get a clearer, yet still imperfect, picture” (Yaa Gyasi, *Homegoing*).

Literature is another form of storytelling and when we listen only to the dominant narrative, we do not get the whole picture. World Literature/English 10 is an exploration of voices that speak from diverse backgrounds. We will explore themes of linguistic and cultural diversity by comparing, contrasting, analyzing and critiquing writing styles and universal themes such as power, justice, conflict and identity. The texts, both nonfiction and fiction, will expose us to diverse cultures and social realities of society both past and present. You will become better readers, writers and researchers and build academic curiosity towards the perspectives of multiple cultural ideas and identities.

An emphasis will be placed on critical analysis of fiction and nonfiction reading, advanced grammar and convention work, vocabulary acquisition, research, poetic expression and analysis. Students will write literary analysis, creative nonfiction, research papers, original poetry, persuasive essays and a variety of creative writing forms.

Class Expectations and Guidelines

ATTENDANCE If you miss a class, contact me the same day to get the classwork. Regardless of being in class or not, you must check homework postings every day. These can be found on the “Weekly Calendar” and on JUPITER.

WEIGHTED CATEGORIES:

Writing/Essay/: 35%

Quizzes: 20%

Tests: 25%

Homework/Classwork: 20%

LATE WORK All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class to receive full credit. Late work will have 10% deducted for every day it is late in a one week grace period (including weekends and holidays). This does not mean that you will only lose points from late penalties, the assignment will be graded and then late penalties applied. After one week, work will no longer be accepted. You have one week to revise work after you receive it back. Work can only be revised if full effort is seen on the first submission and the submission is turned in on time. Incomplete work cannot be revised. You cannot revise tests or quizzes. Late work and revisions may not be turned in the last week of the quarter. Email me if you have extenuating circumstances that prevent you from completing the work on time at least a day before the work is due.

School policy states that students who are absent on the day of a test are required to take the test the day they return to school, unless previous arrangements have been made with the instructor. Make-up quizzes are at the teacher's discretion. Assignments must be made up within a week of return to campus.

HONESTY Cheating and plagiarism are serious academic offenses AND they don't serve you in any way, shape or form. If you are struggling, please see me for help. Any infractions of the school's academic honesty policies will be handled according to the procedures in the student handbook. **In addition any use of AI (which is detected on turnitin) will result in a zero for the assignment.**

TECHNOLOGY Students should have their laptops charged and in class every day.

MASTERY My primary objective is for you to learn the course content and skills to a level that meets or exceeds expectations. Along the way, I am hoping you will be exposed to stimulating ideas, different ways of thinking, and thought-provoking arguments about humanity and life.

INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT STATEMENT

The best learning environment is one in which all members feel respected while being productively challenged. In this class, we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive atmosphere where all can contribute, explore, and challenge ideas. Everyone will have an active responsibility to foster a climate of intellectual stimulation, openness, and respect for diverse perspectives, questions, personal backgrounds, abilities, and experiences, although I will bear primary responsibility for its maintenance.

GRAMMARLY Be sure to create an account with Grammarly, if you haven't already! [How to Sign up for Grammarly](#)

Texts: The 10th Grade Honors English curriculum explores the concept of justice across historical eras, tracking how societal law, moral responsibility, and individual conscience intersect. Through a rigorous textual analysis of literature, students examine the evolution of legal and ethical frameworks from antiquity to the modern era.

Core Units and Conceptual Framework

- **The Ancient World & Pre-Classical Foundations:** Students begin by analyzing the Code of Hammurabi alongside ancient near east narrative studies, exploring the origins of codified law, proportionality, and the foundational dignity of human life.
- **The Classical Era:** Utilizing Sophocles' *Antigone*, the curriculum investigates the complex tensions between divine moral law, personal conscience, and the decrees of state authority.
- **The Medieval Period:** Exploration of personal integrity, communal duty, and spiritual honor within early narrative traditions.
- **The Renaissance:** Analysis of institutional justice versus personal vengeance, focusing on themes of repentance, innocence, and moral accountability.
- **The Nineteenth Century:** Examination of societal structures, confronting issues of class injustice, systemic law, and the development of radical empathy.
- **The Twentieth Century:** Investigation of modern conflict, focusing on the ethics of conscience, accountability, and the weight of moral complicity.