

# **Syllabus: English 11—American Literature**

**Rancho Christian School**

**Ms. Gorham**

A. A. English at Cuyamaca College

B.A. English at San Diego State University

M.A. English (American Literature) at San Diego State University

## **Contact Info:**

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(951) 303-1408

## **Office Hours:**

Mondays 3:00-4:00 (unless otherwise stated)

or by appointment

Welcome to our survey of American Literature. I look forward to a fantastic year exploring the amazing writings of our fellow countrymen. I am fascinated by the gifts of creativity, language, and writing that God blesses us with, and we will endeavor to discuss the fruition of these gifts in famous American authors, while also cultivating those gifts in ourselves. To that end, here are the basic plans for this class, as well as my expectations of you:

## **Text and Supplementary Materials:**

The following texts will be required in paper copies:

- *The Scarlet Letter*
- *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
- *The Age of Innocence*
- *The Grapes of Wrath*
- Various Poetry Collections
- Various Short Stories
- Various Essays

## **Supplies:**

Device (iPad/Laptop)—charged and ready EVERY DAY

Blue or Black Ink Pens

Binder Paper & spiral notebook

Class novels (print version)

Any provided handouts or additional text materials

## **Required Websites to have bookmarked to your favorites, created a log in (where required):**

[mrsgorhamsliterarylifeweebly.com](http://mrsgorhamsliterarylifeweebly.com)

[renweb.com](http://renweb.com)

[socrative.com](http://socrative.com)

[blendspace.com](http://blendspace.com)

[turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com)

Rancho Google email account and proficiency in Google docs

## **Course Description:**

American Literature is a true survey course covering many of our country's major literary works from Colonialism to Present Day. Students will study the origins of this literature beginning with Colonial/NeoClassical poetry from Bradstreet, Taylor and Wheatley. This will be followed by a study of Romanticism and Transcendentalism, including such authors as Hawthorne, Emerson, and Thoreau. Our studies will continue through Realism, Naturalism, and Modernism with selections from Twain, Wharton, Hemingway, Steinbeck and others to foster our discussions. By closely aligning the study of American Literature with the study of American History, students will be encouraged to look at all forces acting upon an author, both societal and personal, in order to more fully engage with the texts and form compelling analyses of the works studied. A substantial joint English/History research project will offer the students an opportunity to delve deeply into a topic of their choosing, thereby further cementing their understanding of the relationship between history, society, and literature

### **Course Objectives:**

Throughout the year, students will:

- Read critically from a variety of poetry, short stories, and novels and respond to them both orally and in writing. They will form and deliver convincing arguments about these texts.
- Understand that cultural and historical influences impact literary works, and be able to form coherent *commentary and argument* about this impact.
- Analyze the author's use of style and literary devices, such as irony, metaphor and simile, in terms of the impact on the reader. They will identify the speaker, tone, point of view, and other literary characteristics and analyze literary works in these terms.
- Respond to relevant research questions, as they read from both primary and secondary sources (written and oral). Make *cross-disciplinary connections* using literature as a resource to frame their understanding of history, and vice versa. Create *thought-provoking arguments* and present these in both oral and written form.
- They will continue to develop written and oral vocabulary while expanding their knowledge of word roots.
- They will understand and practice the stages of the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and final draft presentation and publishing. They will generate and express their own ideas with clarity, coherence, conciseness, precision, and fluency in both written and oral communication.
- Respond to literature in written form. They will use appropriate citations in MLA style and support their ideas through detailed *quotation and analysis* of the source text(s).
- Develop a theme in an essay and *relate it to their own lives*, using correct sentence structure and demonstrating an understanding of paragraph and essay formats. They will use standard English conventions in writing and speech.
- Structure ideas and arguments both *orally* and in writing in a logical, coherent, and persuasive way, and support ideas with precise and relevant examples

### **Class Requirements:**

#### **Follow Calendar of "Days":**

This class is organized by the number of days we meet in a semester and the number of days we meet on any given week will vary due to our block schedule. The system is fairly simple: the first day the class meets is DAY 1, the second day the class meets is DAY 2, and so on. It is your responsibility to know what "Day" of class assignments are due on or when tests will take place. The Calendar of Days is posted to my Weebly website ([mrsgorhamsliterarylfe.weebly.com](http://mrsgorhamsliterarylfe.weebly.com)) and is a clear reference for you to follow. Please make use of

this. Saying you weren't prepared because you didn't know what "Day" it was will not be considered a suitable reason for being unprepared.

**Absent Work:**

If a student is absent from school, it is the student's responsibility to consult with the teacher regarding missed assignments. We will follow RCHS absent work policies as listed in the parent-student handbook.

**Late Work:\***

The late work policy for RCHS will be strictly enforced in this class: Late work that is turned in to the teacher by the next class period will earn 50% of the original score. Any work turned in after this time will receive a 0 in the grade book. In addition, in this class students will receive one "Grace Card" per semester that will allow a late or missing daily type of assignment to be excused. Please use this wisely. Also, please note that grace cards cannot be used on quizzes, tests, or longer written assignments, so please keep that in mind. Occasionally there may be extenuating circumstances that impact your academic life. Please email or see me in person, preferably before the assignment is due, to discuss such issues. As the teacher, I alone reserve the right to allow additional grace in extreme circumstances. That being said, one goal of being University Ready and Life Ready is to learn to execute our responsibilities in the midst of our circumstances.

**\*Electronic Assignment Submission:**

Students will submit most of their homework/classwork electronically through Turnitin.com. If the student runs into any technical difficulties when submitting an assignment (this will happen at least once, be prepared), the student is expected to work out another means of turning in the assignment. E-mailing the assignment, printing it off, or at the least, communicating the issue with the teacher **in advance** would be acceptable solutions to the problem.

**Attendance/Tardies:**

We will follow all RCHS procedures.

**Phones:**

Students will be asked to place their cell phone in their designated pocket in the cell phone caddy hanging on the filing cabinet in the classroom at the beginning of class, and may take it back at the end of class. Students failing to do so or using their phones in class without permission will have their phones dealt with in accordance with the policies in the parent student handbook.

**Translators/Language:**

Students will not use translation devices during quizzes or tests. Further, during class time, only English is to be spoken so that everyone can benefit from and understand the ideas being expressed.

**Food/Drinks:**

No food or drinks other than water will be allowed in class. If your water is in an opaque container, I reserve the right at any time to look at and/or smell your beverage to see if it is something other than water. Sodas/coffee/food, etc. can spill and stain desks and carpets and leave messes in general, as well as attracting ants. Please reserve your snacks and beverages for break and lunch.

**Leaving During Class:**

Students must first ask permission to leave class, and then, if given permission, sign out and take the appropriate hall pass. Restroom breaks will be short. If I feel you are abusing the privilege, either in frequency or duration, I will no longer allow you to leave for the restroom. If you are sent to the office, assume that I am calling to make sure you arrived in a timely fashion.

**Behavior:**

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.” Eph. 4:2

*Proper behavior is expected in class. For a disruption, I will give you a verbal warning. After a second warning, you will be expected to see me after class. If the problem persists, I will contact home to speak with your parents. Disrespect will NOT be tolerated; those who choose to be disrespectful will be sent to the high school office immediately. I will not disrespect you or your opinions. If you feel that I have done so, please speak to me individually outside of class.*

**Class Participation:** Because students demonstrate their learning through participation, this will be an important part of the class. It is an expectation that students will participate to their fullest potential every day, through discussions and answering questions when called upon. If students do not attempt to participate, the following process will be implemented. First, a homework assignment will be given that night in lieu of their participation. If the student does not complete this extra assignment by the next class period, they will have 5% taken off their next in-class quiz, as the questions/discussions in class and quizzes are serving a similar function in class – helping students learn and providing valuable feedback.

**Assessment:** Throughout the year, students will be assessed on the following:

- Reading and class/group discussion about the reading
- Written assignments (homework)
- Formal essays (either in class or outside of class)
- Quizzes (reading, vocabulary)
- Socratic Discussions
- Tests
- Projects

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Cheating or plagiarism will result in an automatic zero and my contacting home and/or consulting with the Principal. Any repeated offenses could also result in a meeting with Ms. Gorham and an administrator, as well as disciplinary action in accordance with the specific offense.

**Extra Help:**

Office Hours Mondays 3:00pm- 4:00pm

After school until 3:30pm most days (schedule an appointment)

By email at [wendy.gorham@ranchochristian.org](mailto:wendy.gorham@ranchochristian.org)

**Teacher Work Standard:**

- 1) Arrive on time, come prepared (with all materials and devices charged) & be respectful (of your teacher, your fellow students, and the subject matter)
- 2) Be prepared to grow, be challenged, and change (don't be satisfied with the status quo)
- 3) Integrity is paramount (We will make mistakes; however, I expect for you to be honest and ask for help when it happens and I will do the same!)

4) Lying in any form is unacceptable and the is fastest way to undermine relationships and diminish your own character. Deceit of any kind will not be tolerated.

### **Grading:**

#### *Grading Periods*

Student Work	25%
Quizzes	25%
Essays/Tests/Projects	50%

#### *Semester Grades*

1<sup>st</sup> Grading Period – 42.5%

2<sup>nd</sup> Grading Period – 42.5%

Cumulative Final - 15%

### **Grading Scale:**

97.0% - 100% = A+

93.0% - 96.9% = A

90.0% - 92.9% = A-

87.0% - 89.9% = B+

83.0% - 86.9% = B

80.0% - 82.9% = B-

77.0% - 79.9% = C+

73.0% - 76.9% = C

70.0% - 72.9% = C-

67.0% - 69.9% = D+

63.0% - 66.9% = D

60.0% - 62.9% = D-

Below 60% = F

### **Personal Statement from the Teacher:**

It is my prayer that you will grow through your experience here at Rancho Christian. I would love to be as much a part of that as you will allow; however, as a high school student, it is also now considered your responsibility to *ask for help*.

You will face many difficult choices as you begin to seriously contemplate the future that God has planned for you. Please remember that He has blessed you with people to love, support, and forgive you along the way. I hope to help you with this over the coming year.

This course offers you a glimpse into the lives and hearts of generations of Americans. Through them we can see the fallen nature of humanity as well as the redemptive story God is telling. Whether you love literature, or whether reading is your least favorite activity, I expect each of you to strive for excellence at all times. We will struggle, we are bound to make mistakes, but I pray that in those mistakes we find forgiveness and growth...God bless you in this coming year!

## **Signatures & Commitment**

**Instructions:** Please read over the syllabus carefully with your student and return the signature page below to Ms. Gorham. The syllabus itself should be kept saved to the student's favorites in their browser, or better yet be printed out and kept in the student's English binder.

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### ***For Parents***

I have read the class syllabus and understand the expectations for my child in English class and I agree to support my child in his or her studies with encouragement and continual prayer.

Parent's Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***For Students***

I have read the class syllabus understand what is expected of me in English class this year. I intend to take advantage of the opportunities for help and agree to challenge myself without complaint. I will complete all assignments faithfully and individually. I agree to support my fellow classmates in their studies with encouragement. I am prepared to ask for help when I am overwhelmed.

Student's Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_