

Honors American Literature Syllabus

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2014-2015
Bishop Montgomery High School

Course Description

This year-long honors course presents the literary and historical development of American literature from its roots in British literature through the 21st century. All genres are covered including poetry, novels, short stories, and essays of major American authors. As accelerated students in a college-preparatory class, students are expected to write several critical essays as well as a five-page research paper on a prominent American author.

Classroom Rules

Failing to adhere to classroom rules will result in a violation

1. Show respect for me, your fellow students, and yourself at all times
2. Be sitting in your seat when the bell rings and remain in your seat until the closing bell rings
3. Bring necessary texts and supplies to class every day
4. Use your time in class wisely and productively
5. Do not turn in work that is not entirely your own
6. Follow all rules outlined in the BMHS handbook

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to do their own work. Any student caught copying from another student, allowing another student to copy from him/her, or appearing to do either will face the consequences outlined in the BMHS handbook.

The *BMHS Student Handbook* defines plagiarism as: “The copying of three or more words in succession from any source other than yourself.”¹ It goes on to include paraphrasing in its description. Plagiarism—the act of passing someone else’s work, words, or even *ideas* off as your own—is cheating and will be punished as such. To avoid plagiarism, always cite where you found your information, even if you put it into your own words. All major assignments will be checked for plagiarism by turnitin.com. The class password for turnitin.com is _____.

Required Materials

You must bring your notebook, writing utensils, vocabulary book, and the book we are currently studying to class each day.

Books

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| ➤ <i>Literature and Language Arts: The American Tradition</i> | ➤ <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> , Nathaniel Hawthorne |
| ➤ <i>Vocabulary for the College Bound</i> | ➤ <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> , Mark Twain |
| ➤ <i>Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close</i> , Jonathan Safran Foer | ➤ <i>A Farewell to Arms</i> , Ernest Hemingway |
| ➤ <i>The Mysterious Stranger</i> , Mark Twain | ➤ <i>The House of Mirth</i> , Edith Wharton |
| | ➤ <i>Our Town</i> , Thornton Wilder |

¹ *BMHS Student Handbook: 2011-2012*. (Bellingham, WA: CPSIA: Premier Agendas Inc., 2011.) 13.

Other Materials

- Single subject notebook or one-inch binder
 - Notebook checks will occur at random throughout the year. The first notebook check, worth fifteen points, will occur **Tuesday, September 2nd**.
- Several black or blue pens, red pens, #2 pencils (preferably mechanical), and a highlighter
- Post-its (if you are unable to write in your books)

Grading Policies

Within the first few weeks of school, grades for all courses will be available on Aeries. Students and parents will receive information regarding access to grades as soon as possible.

- Writing will be graded according to rubrics (see attached example) that consider content, structure, style, and grammar.
- **Any assignments turned in without its author's name will be docked five points.**

Homework

- The weekly homework schedule will be posted in class and online.
- All written homework should be typed, double-spaced, with 12-point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins.

Participation

- At the beginning of the semester, all students begin with 40 out of 50 possible participation points (an 80% or a "B-" in participation).

Assignment Type	Worth
Homework, Class Work, and Reading Quizzes	25%
Projects, Papers, and Presentations	30%
Tests (Vocabulary and Unit Exams)	20%
Semester Final	15%
Participation	10%

Earn participation points by:

- Participating in group and class discussions
- Staying on task
- Taking good notes

Lose participation points by:

- Coming to class without your required materials
- Disrupting class

Late Work Policy

- Homework is due *at the beginning of class*.
- **Computer and/or printer problems are not an acceptable excuse for late work.** Email homework to a friend and have him/her print it for you. Use the school computer lab. Be sure to frequently save your work. If some sort of traumatic and unavoidable computer emergency occurs, contact me **as soon as possible** and **not** the day the assignment is due.
- You are responsible for making up late work. I will not remind you.
- If you turn homework in a day late, it will automatically be docked 20% of its total worth.
 - A small 10 point assignment will earn, at most, 8 points
 - A 50 point essay will earn, at most, 40 points.
- If you turn in homework two days after it is due, it will be docked 50% of its total worth.
 - The 10 point assignment will earn, at most, 5 points
 - The 50 point essay will earn, at most, 25 points.
- Assignments turned in over two days after their due date will not be scored and will earn no points.
- **Due to this generous late work policy, there will be no excused late work.**

Highest Possible
Scores for Late Work:

1 Day Late: 80%
2 Days Late: 50%
3 Days Late: 0%

Absences and Late Work

- If your absence is unexcused, you may **not** make up your work.
- If you have an excused absence, it is your responsibility to find out from me or your classmates what you missed and to make up your work.
 - If, due to an extracurricular activity, you anticipate missing my class, you must discuss making up your work with me **before** your absence.
 - **If you are absent, you must contact a classmate and be caught up with reading assignments prior to your return.**
- Allowances may be made for extraordinary circumstances.

Fall Outline and Project Due Dates

8/21-8/23	Introductions, Syllabus, Summer Reading Exam (Scantron) 8
8/26-8/30	Summer Reading In-Class Essay 8/26, Literary Terms Review (Unit 1), Snippets Assessments Introduced
9/2-9/5	Origins of the American Tradition (Unit 2), Author Research sign ups
9/8-9/12	The American Revolution (Unit 3),
9/15-9/19	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i> , Snippets, Governor Letter
9/21-9/26	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i> , Snippets, Author Research Book Check: Biography & Works 9/26
9/29-10/3	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i> , Snippets
10/6-10/10	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i> Exam, <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> Literary Analysis Essay
10/13-10/17	New England Renaissance (Unit 4), Transcendentalism, <i>Walden</i> ,
10/20-10/24	New England Renaissance Cont.
10/27-10/31	New England Renaissance Cont., Transcendentalism Essay
11/3-11/7	Slavery and the Civil War (Unit 5), Mark Twain Short Stories, <i>Mysterious Stranger</i>
11/10-11/14	Frontiers (Unit 6), <i>Huck Finn</i> , Snippets, Author Research Paper Thesis Due 11/14
11/17-11/21	<i>Huck Finn</i>
11/24-11/26	<i>Huck Finn</i> , Mark Twain Short Stories Group Presentations Prep
12/1-12/5	Mark Twain Short Stories Presentations
12/8-12/12	Twain Presentations, Study for Final
12/15-12/17	Finals

Contacting Me

- Please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns.
- The best way for students and parents to contact me is through my email address, **tmcdorman@bmhs-la.org**.
 - Please include a descriptive subject (ie: “Our H Brit Lit Assignment” or “A question about Browning”) so that I do not mistakenly delete your email.
 - Sign your full name at the end of your email.
- Parents may also contact me through Bishop Montgomery: 310-540-2021

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus. If I do make policy changes, I will immediately inform my students.