

LITERATURE & COMPOSITION 8/9
 AIM ACADEMY ONLINE
Syllabus

Instructor: Mrs. Natania Cook

Email: Canvas email preferred or ncook@aimacademy.online

Cell: 972-742-5364 call/text

Office Hours: Fridays 9:00-11:00 AM (EST)

Class Description & Objectives:

*“Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge;
 it is thinking that makes what we read ours.”—John Locke*

In this foundational high school English course, students learn how to deeply, analytically, personally, and imaginatively think about and respond to literature. Students discover connections between literature and the world beyond their virtual classroom. Designed to develop the basic skills of students as mature readers and writers through the analysis of complex texts in the genres of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama, this course thoroughly prepares students to tackle the rigors of college-preparatory coursework in grades 10-12.

Students explore a variety of writing discourses such as persuasion, cause/effect, compare/contrast, and problem/solution, as well as research-based projects. Because of the interconnected nature of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking, students simultaneously strengthen and perfect all of those skills throughout the course. Special emphasis, however, is placed upon effective composition, analytical response to literature, collaboration, discussion, and vocabulary development.

Seven books are required for this course and should be purchased in advance and brought to class as needed. Internet links to short stories, poetry, articles, and speeches are provided by the teacher. Because an important component of this class is learning to provide textual evidence when writing about or discussing literature, it is helpful for all students to acquire the same editions of each book. It is important for the students to be “on the same page,” so please refer to the ISBN numbers below when ordering.

Required Supplies & Books:

Students read seven books this year as well as several short stories, articles, speeches, and poems. All of the **Internet links to the short stories and poems will be provided by the teacher.**

Books, however, need to be purchased in advance and brought to class as needed. It is important for all students to have the *same version* of the books as the instructor in order for class discussions to flow efficiently and effectively. The following titles can all be acquired on Amazon.

**“Some books are to be
 tasted, others to be
 swallowed, and some few
 to be chewed and
 digested.”
 –Sir Francis Bacon**

Please purchase:

- *Romeo and Juliet* by Shakespeare, ISBN 10: 0743477111
- *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck, ISBN 10: 014017737X
- *The Odyssey* by Homer, translation by Robert Fagles, ISBN 978-0140268867
- *The Time Machine* by H.G. Wells, ISBN 10: 1420952226
- *The Scarlet Pimpernel* by Baroness Orczy, ISBN 10: 0451527623
- *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams, ISBN 10: 9780811214049
- Students also choose a **contemporary novel** to read on their own, which they will critique. Teacher approval for this book is required.

“Book Talks” are required each quarter. Students have the opportunity to choose fiction books that interest them. After reading for pure enjoyment, students meet with Mrs. Cook one-on-one to discuss the book.

Other Basic Supplies:

- a 2-inch, three-ring binder
- set of dividers, preferably with pockets (5-6)
- lined notebook paper for binder
- 2 composition notebooks or spirals for vocabulary and journaling
- highlighters--yellow, green, blue, pink, orange
- Post-It Notes (various sizes, colors, shapes)
- pens and pencils, erasers
- white, unlined copy paper

Technology Requirements:

- High speed, broadband Internet
- Headset and microphone (for live sessions)
- Streaming video capabilities to watch online videos and recorded lectures
- Microsoft Word and PowerPoint are extremely helpful. *If using a different word processing program, the document should be saved or exported as a pdf in order to submit it on Canvas.
- Printer with ink and paper
- Tablet or cell phone for game review days

Grading Policy & Class Expectations:

Aim Academy General Policies:

Please be sure to review the Aim Academy's policies and handbook.

<https://debrabell.com/policies-faqs/>

Participation & Behavior

In order to receive the maximum benefit from this class, it is important for every student to participate; therefore, a **participation grade** will be given each week. Students are expected to come prepared to discuss the assigned literature and homework assignments. In addition, students are expected to treat their teacher and fellow classmates in a respectful and kind manner. Class disruptions will not be tolerated. A verbal warning will be given and an email or phone call home will then be the next course of action, when necessary.

Online Policies & Cell Phone Use:

Cell phones should be silenced and put away during class unless they are being used as part of class instruction.

Students are expected to:

- to log on to Zoom 5 minutes before class begins
- have their cameras turned on for the duration of each class period
- to be fully prepared with all supplies in front of them
- to be fully engaged throughout class

Attendance/ Tardiness & Late/Make-Up Work

Please plan to attend every class. Since this class only meets once a week, there is much to cover in the 1-hour period. Should it be necessary to miss class, please email Mrs. Cook and plan to watch the class recording. Links for recordings can be found on Canvas under the "Thursday Class Meeting Day" tabs. Missed assignments should be turned in no later than **one-week after the absence**. *Students are expected to be responsible for obtaining make-up assignments after their absences.* All assignments can easily be accessed via Canvas. A deduction of 10 points will be made for each week an assignment is late. All assignments, unless otherwise noted, are due via Canvas by 11:59 PM each Friday. Please note that missing assignments will automatically receive a 0 in Canvas *until* replaced with a makeup grade. Finally, please also be on time. Habitual tardiness will result in a lower participation grade.

Honesty

Plagiarism & academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students are encouraged to think about possible answers on their own before seeking assistance from other sources. Answers in literature are generally not incorrect if they can be proven through quotes and examples.

**"Honest people don't hide
their deeds."
-Emily Bronte
Wuthering Heights**

Grading Scale

98–100 = A+

93–97 = A

90–92 = A-

88–89 = B+

83–87 = B

80–82 = B-

78–79 = C+

73–77 = C

70–72 = C-

60–69 = D No credit from Aim on official transcripts

Below 60 = Failing. No credit.

Students will be graded as follows:

- 20% Writing Assignments
- 20% Homework, In-Class Assignments
- 15% Weekly Quizzes
- 20% Tests
- 5% Class participation
- 20% Projects

Canvas

An account and dedicated login link in for Canvas has been set up for each student. Students are encouraged to change their password after logging into the Canvas the first time. Students need to keep up with their username and password. Grades are recorded in Canvas. Please be sure to keep up with assignments and grades using this program.

Communication

Communication is an essential component of any educational endeavor. With that in mind, I encourage all of my students to contact me whenever they need assistance with an assignment, and I make it a priority to promptly respond to student inquiries. I also send a weekly “wrap-up” email outlining the learning objectives accomplished in class as well as reminders about upcoming assignments.

Beyond email correspondence, I have set aside an additional hour each week to assist students with writing and grammar. To participate in this additional learning opportunity, students need to register separately. See *Language Arts Lab 8/9* for details and to register.

Parental inquiries are also welcomed and encouraged as parental involvement is essential to student success. To best serve parents, I have established “**office hours**” **on Friday mornings from 9:00–11:00 AM (EST)** for responding to emails and phone calls. I consider it a great privilege to be able to walk alongside parents and assist them in educating their children.

Providing consistent feedback is imperative for student growth and success especially with writing. For this reason, I provide a detailed critique of each major writing assignment as well as general comments on all other assignments. In addition, I schedule individual writing conferences periodically throughout the year where students and I meet one-on-one to address their specific writing needs.

Use of Technology and Apps

A variety of apps and online resources are utilized in this class to enhance learning, engage students, and communicate effectively with students and parents. Below is a list of the most frequented resources:

- Khan Academy and YouTube videos
- Kahoot!
- Glogster (digital posters)
- Flipgrid
- Pixton (comic strip maker)
- Quizlet
- Word Art (word cloud generator)
- MS Word and PowerPoint
- Audible, Kindle

Homework:

Homework is assigned every week through Canvas. Assignments are broken down into daily, manageable tasks. All assignments, unless otherwise noted, are due on Fridays by 11:59 PM. Students are expected to complete homework assignments and turn them in **on time**. Because this class meets only once a week and entails several subjects, a great deal of work needs to be accomplished at home. With this in mind, plan for homework to consist of **approximately 1½-2 hours of study time per day, five days a week**. Plan ahead and work diligently throughout the week. Please see Canvas for a suggested schedule.

“Continuous effort—not strength or intelligence—is the key to unlocking our potential.” -Winston Churchill

Weekly homework includes practice in vocabulary, grammar mechanics and punctuation, literary analysis, and writing. Weekly quizzes and tests are also assigned each Friday. In addition, students are expected to annotate and journal while reading assigned novels, short stories, poems, and articles. Students must prepare for class and be ready to *participate actively* during discussions. Homework assignments also include responding to the literature through a variety of methods such as comprehension and thought-provoking questions, story summary charts, essay-writing, group assignments, online discussion boards, and journaling. Special projects and oral presentations/debates are also assigned throughout the year.

Listening to Literature Recommendation:

Purchasing a subscription to audible.com (<https://www.audible.com/>) is recommended because listening while annotating simultaneously significantly improves comprehension as well as increases an appreciation for literature, especially challenging literature. For many students, involving multiple senses while reading also reduces their distractibility, especially when wearing noise-cancelling headphones. This is merely a suggestion and is not a required purchase for this course. Many of the novels and short stories for this class can also be found on the internet free of charge.

Thank you for being involved and active in your student’s educational experience and for allowing me the privilege of walking alongside you to teach your teen. My desire is for each student to have a successful and enjoyable year!