

Course Outline, Fall 2010

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Department Objective Focus: Fostering inquiry and helping students develop strong questioning skills and annotating skills when reading and responding to texts

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Literature is concerned with our conceptions, interpretations, and experiences of the world. The study of literature, therefore, can be seen as a study of all the complex pursuits, anxieties, joys, and fears that human beings are exposed to in the daily business of living. It allows for an exploration of one of the more enduring fields of human creativity and artistic ingenuity, and provides immense opportunities for encouraging independent, original, and critical thinking. One overall objective of IB English is to foster inquiry and conversation between student and text and/or author. The French philosopher Voltaire once claimed, "Liberty of thought is the life of the soul." Such a claim implies that the freedom to think creatively nurtures the independent intellectual curiosity in each of us. IB English 11 encourages you to discover a personal appreciation for the art of language and literature, and to recognize that scholarly pursuits both exercise and free the intellect.

During the year, you will read a variety of texts that reveal differing cultural viewpoints and influences. These texts, while coming from seemingly different worlds, demonstrate the universality of the human condition shared all over the globe; we will endeavor to find the commonalities and the contrasts between them. Using the idea of "Old and New Worlds," our study of literature focuses on an exploration of how this idea is represented *within* a text – through characterization, plot, or theme -- and *within the context* of a text – that is, the world in which a particular text was written.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

World Literature is one of the four components that make up the IB Language A1 program. The goal for first semester includes completing the World Literature portion of the program and writing the corresponding papers. In keeping with this goal we will study and apply the techniques required to successfully complete these papers. A variety of activities will provide you with background on the content and practical opportunities to exercise and improve writing skill and technique. Because IB Language A1 is a two year program, the assignments you complete for this course have been modeled from different parts of the program in an effort to assist you in becoming more familiar with the IB format and requirements overall.

APPROACH

First semester focuses on the World Literature texts selected for your program. This content will drive the life force of the class. Without question, complete mastery of each text is imperative. You must devote time to reading these works or you will not be prepared to complete the assignments associated with each one. A demanding reading load is not impossible – it merely takes planning. To aid in this planning, each Monday we will provide a weekly schedule. This schedule gives your reading assignments for the week, weekly focus/objectives, seminar topics, homework, and other information. Course announcements and assignments will also be posted on Blackboard.

CONTENT

In addition to the following, we will study short prose pieces, poetry, and critical essays.

Anchor texts for First semester include:

All the Pretty Horses, Cormac McCarthy (summer reading)

The House of the Spirits, Isabel Allende (WL#1)

Siddhartha, Herman Hesse (WL#2)

God's Bits of Wood, Ousmane Sembene (WL#3)

SUPPLIES

Please obtain the following materials for this course:

- Composition notebook. This is for your class journal.
- A 3 – ring notebook or section of your binder for English materials; I pass out a great deal of material and we will refer to it frequently. Stay organized!
- Writing instruments ... pen or pencil is fine for daily class assignments.
- 2 or 3 colored pencils or thin markers and a highlighter. These will be used during editing sessions, color marking for analysis, and a variety of activities.
- Paper.
- Glue Stick – you are frequently asked to paste or tape material into your journal, so this is a handy item.

GRADING

- You will receive points on all evaluated activities – keep in mind some assignments might require work that is not evaluated by the instructor directly. A portion of your homework or class work (up to 10% of the grade) will be assessed for completion only. Such work provides the practice necessary to achieving mastery of a given skill or body of knowledge.
- In the event of an absence, students will be given the same number of days absent to make up an assignment before it is considered late.
- The above policy DOES NOT apply to major writing assignments that were assigned in advance. In such cases, **if you are absent, sick or otherwise, the assignment is due the day the student returns to class.**
- Late work will be accepted within one week of the original due date. Late assignments are penalized with as much as a one-letter grade deduction off the initial score. Final deadlines will be established for each assignment. Work submitted after this deadline will receive an E.
- Students who miss class due to an unexcused absence will receive 50% credit for work and assessments completed from the class missed.
- All work is subject to the academic honor code of the IBO. Students will be asked to adhere to the policies for academic honesty outlined in the B-CC handbook. Plagiarism or cheating will result in loss of credit for that assignment (0%).

Final marking period grades will be determined on a straight percentage basis

90-100%--A

80-89%---B

70-79%---C

60-69%---D

50-59%--E

Reteaching/Reassessing Policy:

Students will be allowed to be reassessed on assignments as determined by the IB English 11 team. Students will be informed ahead of time when an assignment may be reassessed. Only students who meet the deadline may be reassessed on an assignment. They must show evidence as determined by the teacher and team that they have made an attempt to relearn the material before taking the reassessment. Examples of that evidence include, but are not limited to:

- Coming to the teacher for extra help
- Attending TAP
- Completing practice assignments
- Making corrections on the original assessment/assignment.

Reassessment must be done in a timely fashion according to a schedule determined by the teacher and team. The reassessed grade will replace the original grade.

FINAL WORDS

The IB Language A1 program is, in many ways, a university level course in literature; its rigorous nature should not be underestimated. The program aims to encourage students to see literary works as products of art and their authors as craftsmen whose methods of production can be analyzed in a variety of ways and on a number of levels. This is achieved through the emphasis placed on exploring the means used by different authors to convey their subjects in the works studied.*

Embrace the idea that meaningful effort returns meaningful results. With such effort, you should come away from the IB Language A1 program recognizing that the discussion of literature itself is an art form; art which requires the clear expression of ideas in conversation and in writing. We will pursue modes of such artistic expression over the course of the semester.

* Text taken in part from the IBO Language A1 guide, April 1999