**American Literature and Composition**

2018-2019 Course Syllabus

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**Course Description:** In one sense, anything written in America is American. But in a deeper way, literature is “American” because it says something fundamental about our identity as Americans. In fact, literature may be the most powerful creative expression of our national and cultural identity. This course approaches American literature chronologically beginning with the 17th century and ending with modern works. It addresses the development of a uniquely American body of literature through novels, short stories, dramas, poetry and historical documents; works are examined in the cultural, philosophical, and political climates in which they were created. Students perform literary analysis as they expand upon previously acquired skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language.

**Curriculum Schedule:** For the 201-2019 school year, the state English curriculum, the Georgia Standards of Excellence, is fully implemented. The following syllabus contains an outline of all major units of study for the class. At the start of each unit, you will receive a detailed timeline that includes content information and major assessments.

**Essential Questions:**

* How does American literature create conceptions of the American experience and identity?
	+ What shapes American identity?
		- How is identity constructed? What does it mean to be free? How do dreams and disillusionment affect identity?
	+ What is the “American dream”?
		- Has it remained the same over the decades or changed in some way? Is the “American dream” attainable by all? How do these particular pieces of literature discuss and describe the “American dream”?

**Unit One: America: New Land, New Beginning –** The focus of this unit will be on literary texts and argumentative writing. This unit covers literature from the beginning of America up to the Revolutionary War. We will cover major foundational texts of America (fiction and nonfiction). The major work studied is *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller.

**Unit Two: The Individual vs. Society: Exploring a New Identity –** The focus of this unit will be on informational texts and informative/explanatory writing.This unit covers literature from the end of the Revolutionary War up to the Civil War. The major work studied is *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau.

**Unit Three: The Aftermath of Destruction: Reconstructing the American Dream –** Thefocus of this unit will be on literary texts and informative/explanatory writing. This unit covers literature from the Civil War to the 20th century. The major work studied is *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

**Unit Four: Modern Times, Modern Issues –** The focus of this unit will be on informational texts and argumentative writing. It covers literature from the 20th century to present day. The major work studied is *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck.

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**Texts:** Glencoe American Literature (classroom set)

**Extended Texts (for the entire year):**

1. *The Crucible* – Arthur Miller
2. *Walden* – Henry David Thoreau
3. *The Great Gatsby* – F. Scott Fitzgerald
4. *Of Mice and Men* – John Steinbeck (if time permits)

\*These are books that will be read in class during the school year. Copies will be provided for students during class time and when related homework is assigned. Because some students prefer to highlight, mark, make notes, etc. as they read, the list is provided should you choose to purchase a personal copy of any of the text for your student. It is not required that parents purchase or provide the texts.

**Grading Policies:**

Summative Grades 71% A = 100-90

Formative Grades 29% B = 89-80

Informal Grades 0% C = 79-70

Final Exam/GMAS 20% F = 69 and below

**Online Grades:** Student grades and attendance can be accessed through the Paulding School System website at www.paulding.k12.ga.us. Complete directions for the use of the Infinite Campus grade system will be available on the site. Attendance is up to date and may be viewed at any time while current grades are available on Friday afternoon.

**Make-Up/late Work Policies:** Students will receive **1 day** for each absence that they are gone from class to complete and turn in make up work. Any late work at that time will not be accepted. It is up to the student to schedule any make up exams, quizzes, etc. that they miss during class instruction. Just because you decided to sit in class and not do the assignments that day, doesn’t mean you can wait till the end of the year and just pile them all on me. I will also not accept any work from a unit once we move on to the next one, for example once we are done with the Crucible summative, I will not take any work relating to the Crucible, except under certain cirsumstances. I will give you plenty of notice for when those deadlines are.

**2018-19 Tardy Policy:** There is a new tardy policy in place this year school wide. If you are not in the room by the time the late bell rings, you will be locked out and told to go to ISS to check in. If you are late to 1st period, you must check in at the front office. This is a school wide policy, not just my own. There are consequences, including ISS and Saturday School.

**Materials:** Every day you are expected to bring the following to class:

1. Paper and a blue or black ink pen
2. Yourself! Obviously

**Class Expectations:**

1. To treat me and the others in the class with respect and care
2. To attend class regularly, on time, and be prepared to learn
3. To be cooperative and not disruptive
4. To study and do your work (Success = Effort)
5. To learn and master the required content