

English Department Syllabus – World Literature Standard

WORLD LITERATURE

STANDARD LEVEL

½ CREDIT – ELECTIVE FOR JUNIOR OR SENIORS

TEXTBOOK: *World Literature*. Austin: Holt, Reinhart, and Winston, 1992

Prerequisites: Students must have passed LA 9 Literature and LA 10 to enroll in World Literature. In addition, students should be willing to read and discuss classical literature, including mythology. Since one goal of World Literature is to study the literature of diverse cultures, students should have an open mind about studying non-Western cultures. In addition, this course is not recommended for students who indicate that they “do not enjoy reading.”

**Course Description**

World Literature is a one semester elective course that includes the study of short stories, myths, poetry, plays, and novels that originate from countries other than the United States, Canada, or Great Britain. World Literature is a survey course concentrating on the diverse cultures of the world. Students will have the opportunity to develop an understanding of universal literary and cultural themes common to the human experience. Writing assignments include: book report, expository and descriptive essays, songs, poems, and research.

**Course Content:** units of study may be selected from the following topics:

- World Myths and Folktales
- Literature of the Ancient World
- The Classics and the Literary Canon
- The African Literary Tradition
- Greek and Roman Literature
- Indian Literature
- Chinese and Japanese Literature
- Persian and Arabic Literature
- The Middle Ages
- Renaissance to Enlightenment
- Romanticism to Realism
- Contemporary World Literature

**Course Format:** Lecture, mini-lecture, small-group collaboration, discussion, workshop, problem-based research, project based learning, technology-based learning

**Course Expectations:** Students will be expected to complete extensive reading, contribute to in-class activities and discussion, complete homework, and present projects.

**Grades:** Final grades may include the following forms of assessment: daily work, class participation, quizzes, exams, projects, essays/compositions, oral presentation, technology based presentations, semester final exam, and alternative assessments as determined by individual instructors.

## Course Objectives

### *Literature objectives*

- To compare and contrast the purposes and elements of myths and folktales
- To analyze origin myths and tales of heroic quests from different cultures
- To recognize common archetypes in the oral traditions of different cultures
- To interpret and respond to myths and folk talks both oral and in writing
- To gain an overview of the traditional literatures of the African continent, including ancient Egyptian literature, and to identify literary and cultural contributions of principal African civilizations.
- To recognize the function and importance of the oral tradition in African literature from antiquity through modern times
- To interpret and respond to African literature both orally and in writing
- To gain an overview of Mesopotamian culture, philosophy, and history
- To read excerpts from a Mesopotamian epic and to determine the epic's themes and characteristics of its hero
- To respond to Mesopotamian literature and culture both orally and in writing
- To analyze the literature of the ancient Hebrews, including Old Testament narratives and Psalms and New Testament parables
- To examine the influence of ancient Hebrew ideas and writings on Western civilization
- To respond orally and in writing to Hebrew literature
- To gain an overview of ancient Greek literature and thought
- To recognize the influence of ancient Greece on modern Western civilization
- To recognize and analyze the elements of Greek epic, lyric, and dramatic poetry and rhetorical prose
- To interpret and respond to Greek literature orally and in writing
- To gain an overview of ancient Roman literature and civilization
- To analyze a Roman epic, lyric poetry, and historical prose
- To gain an overview of Indian literature: dharma, karma, caste system, reincarnation, epics, and the epic hero
- To evaluate the contributions of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism to Chinese literature
- To analyze the structure, imagery, and themes of Chinese poetry and the main ideas of Chinese maxims
- To interpret Japanese literature and gain an understand the historical and cultural influences on its development
- To gain an introduction to Persian and Arabic literatures
- To recognize how Islam has shaped culture and literature in the Middle East

- To relate feudalism, the Christian Church, courtly love, and the rise of the middle class to medieval literature
- To distinguish the Icelandic, French, German, Italian, and English strands of medieval literature
- To gain an overview of major works of literature in Renaissance Europe and their authors
- To recognize the spirit of the Renaissance and the Reformation
- To recognize the rational spirit of the Enlightenment in science, philosophy, and literature
- To compare and contrast the nineteenth-century movements of Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, and Symbolism in France, Germany, England, Russia, and Norway

#### *Writing Objectives*

- To write original poems/songs/hymns based on a specific selection/idea
- To write an original fairy tale or folktale
- To write a research paper
- To write a thematic book report
- To write thematic essays
- To write an essay of literary analysis

#### *Oral objectives*

- To present research based projects
- To present original poems, songs, hymns, reports, and stories

#### *Other objectives*

- To use, explain, and identify literary elements

Link to common core standards