

## Junior “Introduction to Short Fiction” Course Syllabus

1. Instructor: Mr. Gary Ryan
2. Textbook: Textbook: The American Tradition in Literature, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition, Perkins and Perkins, McGraw Hill. CBC 1818 Online Syllabus:

<http://www.umsl.edu/~gryan/amer.studies/amstudies.syllabus.html>

\* Outside readings on topics pertinent to the subject matter will be assigned from articles, books and periodicals available on the student's laptops and in the library.

### 3. General Course Objectives:

- A. To promote student understanding and appreciation of representative short fiction in the English language To provide a framework for the study of the literature and culture of the United States
- B. To promote individual inquiry and small and large group interaction in meeting the course objectives
- C. To nurture critical thinking skills
- D. To approach the American literature thematically and chronologically
- E. To focus on the analysis of events, movements, groups, and individuals who have shaped and continue to shape American culture, history, and literature.

### 4. Student Objectives:

- A. To interpret literature
- B. To use essays, prose, short fiction, poetry and literary criticism as an aid to historical study.
- C. To evaluate the "cause and effect" relationship between literary texts and the historical events that gave rise to those texts.
- D. To defend a personal interpretation of short fiction in classroom discussion.
- E. To identify the major periods and associated persons in the development of American literature.
- F. To demonstrate a mastery of effective oral, written and visual communication of ideas related to American literature and short fiction.
- G. To explore through inquiry and research, the interdisciplinary nature of a topic, as well as make a critical response to that inquiry

### 5. Significant Course Content and Approximate Dates

#### FIRST QUARTER

1800-1840 A GROWING NATION: FROM REASON TO ROMANCE/ FROM JEFFERSONIAN DEMOCRACY TO JACKSONIAN DEMOCRACY

Read pages 210-236 in Chapter Seven, The Americans. Students should answer questions 2-5 on pages 218, 223, 229, and 235.

A. Washington Irving  
*From The Sketch Book*  
Rip Van Winkle;  
Read pages 303-310; answer homework questions  
Concepts: Folk Tale

B. James Fenimore Cooper  
“The Prairie”  
Read pages 333-339; answer homework questions  
Concepts: Setting, heroic figures--Natty Bumppo as “Adam in the fiction of the New World.”

C. Webquest: Edgar Allen Poe  
“The Fall of the House of Usher”  
Read pages 563-575; answer homework questions  
Concepts: Short Story--Romanticism in Poe, Elements of the Short Story--setting, single effect and theme

D. Poetry  
“The Raven”  
Read pages 574; answer homework questions  
Concepts: Poetry--Alliteration, consonance and assonance, allusions, symbolism

## 1840-1855 THE NEW ENGLAND RENAISSANCE: TRANSCENDENTALISM AND UTOPIAN COMMUNITIES

### THE UTOPIAN ERA

A. Ralph Waldo Emerson  
From *Nature*; from *Self-Reliance*  
Read selected pages 367-446;  
Answer homework questions  
Concepts: Transcendentalism, analogies, conformity  
“The American Scholar”  
Read pages 395-408; answer homework questions  
“Concord Hymn”  
Read pages 446; answer homework questions

B. Henry David Thoreau  
From *Walden*  
Read selection pages 478-547; answer homework questions  
Concepts: essay, Historical Context  
Nathaniel Hawthorne—Anti-transcendentalism  
“The Minister’s Black Veil”  
Read pages 649-; answer homework questions

C. Long-term assignments for the second quarter:

D. Literary Journals: An independent investigation of the life and work of a particular American author (e.g., William Faulkner or Toni Morrison) with an emphasis on close interpretation of selected texts and personalizing the research by taking on the persona of that author..

### **Second Quarter**

A. The REAL WEST  
Students should read pages 406-432. Students should answer questions 2-5 on pages 417,424 and 429.  
Students should also answer questions 1-2 on page 431.

B. Mark Twain 1021

The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County 1024

Roughing It

[When the Buffalo Climbed a Tree] 1028

Life on the Mississippi

The Boy's Ambition 1039

Answer homework questions

Concepts: Point of View, Exaggeration, Dialect, Narration, Regional Dialects, and Tone

*Huckleberry Finn*--Novel

C. Brete Harte

The Outcasts of Poker Flat 1179 –answer homework questions

Concept: Regionalism

D. Ambrose Bierce

“An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” Film

Answer homework questions

Concepts: Point of View, Sequence of Events, Irony

E. Kate Chopin

“The Story of an Hour”--handout

Answer homework questions

F. Jack London 1401

“To Build a Fire” 1402

Answer homework questions

Concepts: Conflict, Theme, Realism

G. Stephen Crane 1367

A Man Said to the Universe 1370

The Open Boat 1371

Answer homework questions

Concepts: Realism and Naturalism, Symbols

### **Long-term assignments for the second quarter:**

A. Completion of the individual project on American Authors, called Literary Journals

B. Individual Research Paper – introduction, completion of a rough drafts, serious revision, and final copy.

C. Images of the American West—A collaborative multi-media research project and webquest that challenges students to create a historical timeline of the American frontier in the era of 1850 to 1890 as seen through the images created by American artists.

## **SECOND SEMESTER**

Third Quarter-- The Twentieth Century: Hope, Dissolution, Despair, an American Phoenix

A. **THE GREAT GATSBY WEB-BASED MAGAZINE PROJECT:** Students are expected as a class to produce a Time/ Newsweek style web-magazine on one year of the 1920s which reflects accurately The Great Gatsby. Students take on the role of writers, editors, graphic artists, and advertisers. Students submit their drafts to an online discussion board for review by teachers and peers. Finally, the students assemble and help to create a website for the magazine.

B. **New York Road Trip:** A collaborative, multi-media research project on the development of New York from 1880-present.

C. Read pages 510-666 in *The Americans*. Answer questions 2-5 in the sections included. Students will be dealing with Progressivism, World War I, and the Roaring 20s.

D. Read *The Great Gatsby*, or *The Sun Also Rises*, or *The Big Sleep*

### **Modernism in American Short Stories: Anderson to Faulkner**

A. Sherwood Anderson

“Sophistication” (See online anthology)

Concepts: Modernism, a different look at small town life, understanding a character’s motivation

Answer homework questions

B. Ernest Hemingway

“In Another Country”

*The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber*

Answer homework questions

Concepts: Modernism, style, symbolism, theme

C. JOHN DOS PASSOS 1701

*From The 42nd Parallel*

Big Bill 1703

*From 1919*

*The House of Morgan* 1707

*From The Big Money*

Newsreel LXVI 1714

*The Camera Eye* (50) 1715

Answer homework questions

Concepts: experimental modern narratives; documentary style

D. William Faulkner

“The Bear”

“A Rose for Emily”

Answer homework questions

Concepts: point-of-view, allusions, symbolism, style

E. Thomas Wolfe

“The Far and the Near”

### **MODERN POETRY**

A. Ezra Pound 1497

*In a Station of the Metro* 1499

Concept: Imagism

B. T.S. Elliot 1516

*The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock* 1524

Answer homework questions

Concepts: Stream of consciousness, Allusions

C. Wallace Stevens 1563

*Disillusionment of Ten O’Clock* 1566

*The Snow Man* 1570

Concepts: Interpreting Symbolism

Answer homework questions

D. William Carlos Williams 1577

*The Young Housewife* 1580

*The Red Wheelbarrow* 1585

*This Is Just to Say* 1586

Answer homework questions

Concepts: Rhythm, Imagism

E. Robert Frost 1448

*Mending Wall* 1452

*The Road Not Taken* 1458

*Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* 1469

Answer homework questions

Concepts: Symbols, Narrative Poetry, Dramatic Poetry, Rhythm

## **The Harlem Renaissance**

### A. CLAUDE MCKAY 1652

The Harlem Dancer 1653

Harlem Shadows 1653

America 1654

Outcast 1654

Concepts: Writing a poem about a special place

### B. LANGSTON HUGHES

The Negro Speaks of Rivers 1680

The Weary Blues 1681

Harlem 1683

Feet Live Their Own Life 1684

Concepts: a comparison between rivers and black people

### **C. Long-term assignments for the third quarter:**

D. Multimedia, collaborative research project on the Harlem Renaissance

E. Microtheme: Individual literary analysis of an individual short story.

F. New York Road Trip: A collaborative, multi-media research project on the development of New York from 1880-present.

G. Multimedia Movie Trailers

## FOURTH QUARTER—Post Modernism and Existentialism

A. Read Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughter-House Five*

B. Read Tim O'Brien's short story collection on the Vietnam War: *The Things They Carried*

C. FLANNERY O'CONNOR' 1955

Good Country People 1956

Answer homework questions

D. JOYCE CAROL OATES 2017

Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been? 2018

Answer homework questions

Concepts: Point of View, Style, Irony

*From Sula*

E. RAYMOND CARVER

A Small, Good Thing : Answer homework questions

What We Talk About, When We Talk About Love

Answer homework questions

F. BOBBIE ANN MASON

Shiloh : answer homework questions

G. John Cheever

The Swimmer; answer homework questions

H. TIM O'BRIEN ' *The Things They Carried*, novel/short story collection

**Long-term assignments for the fourth quarter:**

- A. Individual Research Paper completion of a 10 page paper.
- B. Microtheme: literary analysis of short story.
- C. Second Semester Research Paper Due: May 15, 2007

**Possible Plays, Novels and Short Story Collections:**

*The Sun Also Rises*, Ernest Hemingway

*The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald

*Catcher in the Rye*, J.D. Salinger

*Slaughterhouse-Five*, by Kurt Vonnegut

*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Ken Kesey

*The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien

*A Good Man is Hard to Find*, Flannery O'Connor

*The Big Sleep*, Raymond Chandler

*The Long Goodbye*, Raymond Chandler

**MAJOR ASSESSMENT/ EVALUATION STRATEGIES:**

Unit Tests

Research Papers

Webquests

Multimedia Collaborative Research Projects: using PowerPoint, Flash, Movie Maker, and

Website design tools

Internet Research

**KEY INFORMATION ESSENTIAL TO STUDENT SUCCESS IN COURSE:**

Instructor:

Gary Ryan, Department of Language Arts, Christian Brothers College High School