

FOLSOM CORDOVA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Epic Journeys

Date: December 2007

Subject Area: Language Arts

Grade Levels: 11-12

Course Length: 1 Year

Grading: A-F

Number of Credits: 5 per Quarter

Prerequisites: Completed English 10 or 11 with a grade of C or better or 10th grade with approval by instructor.

Course Description:

This class, Epic Journeys, will explore major literary works in chronological sequence starting with The Epic of Gilgamesh and continuing into the twentieth century. The course will focus on moral values of main characters and tragic heroes, on the dilemmas they face, and the decisions they make. By riding on the shoulders of literary giants, we will see the world as they did so as to understand ours even better.

General Goals/Purposes:

- The purpose of this college preparation class will be to enable students to gauge their world and the choices they make by examining and interpreting major landmarks in literature. The class will:
- Develop an enjoyment and appreciation for major literary works
- Encourage critical thinking by analyzing the motives of characters and of authors
- Develop collaborative skills by participating in group projects and presentations
- Improve their writing skills
- Enhance their vocabulary while focusing on etymology

Students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the language (for example, Middle English) of the literary samples as we move from 1100 AD to the present
- Compare various literary works
- Write essays including their personal views on the moral and ethical dilemmas faced by the protagonists
- Demonstrate their knowledge of detailed content of select literary works
- Demonstrate their ability to interpret passages, quotes, etc

Student Reading Component:

Students will read at least four novels, a selection of short stories, substantial excerpts from four major epics, at least three complete plays and three works of non-fiction. The course will also include units on poetry.

Student Writing Component:

Through essays and other written projects, students will express their feelings, assessment, and conclusions regarding various works. Their written work should reflect the degree of understanding that they have regarding the universal as well as personal significance of the specific piece of literature.

Student Oral Component:

In addition to oral classroom presentations, students will read to each other in order to enhance yet another aspect of a literary work.

Detailed Units of Instruction: Teacher will be aware of copyright issues.

It is the responsibility of the instructor to minimize/overlap curriculum with the English instructor.

The literary works for the course will include the following:

At Least Four Complete Novels from the following:

- Les Miserables, Victor Hugo
- Crime and Punishment, Fyodor Dostoevski
- Jane Eyre, Charlotte Bronte
- The Old Man and the Sea, Ernest Hemingway (provided that it is not being taught)
- The Plague, Albert Camus
- Lust for Life, Irving Stone
- Cannery Row, John Steinbeck

Excerpts from:

- Don Quixote
- The Canterbury Tales

Excerpts from the following Epics:

- *The Epic of Gilgamesh*
- *The Iliad*
- *The Inferno*

Short Stories, Myths, and Legends by:

- Aristophanes
- Aesop
- Boccaccio
- Gogol
- Oscar Wilde
- Tolstoy
- Ovid

Complete Plays:

- *Medea*
- *The Doll's House*

Non-Fiction:

- *The Art Of Love*, Ovid
- *The Apology*, Plato
- *The Prince*, Machiavelli

Poetry from:

- Blake
- Coleridge
- Wordsworth
- Byron
- Keats
- Frost

- Browning
- Shakespeare
- Poe
- Kipling
- Omar Khayyám

Quarter One:

Students will begin with The Epic of Gilgamesh (2000 BC) and proceed chronologically through The Inferno (1300). Students will be required to demonstrate knowledge of the terms, geographical sites, plots and themes related to the literary works in question. Testing techniques will include filling in the blanks and identifying characters by their dialogue. As we proceed through the literary masterpieces by in-class discussions, students will be assigned pages from a novel. Throughout the course there will be an emphasis on etymology and figurative language.

If the need arises, there will be a unit on grammar.

Quarter Two:

Students will continue their studies, progressing from the 14th century to the present. Students will be encouraged to examine the changing attitudes toward women as portrayed by these works. Novels will continue to be assigned.

Instructional Methods:

- Student participation in active reading/role-playing
- Class discussions
- Socratic method
- Hands-on activities (working with clay and parchment)

Assessment Methods:

- In-class essays revealing why the chosen work has universal significance
- Tests in the form of fill-in-the-blanks and free response
- Group presentations

THIS COURSE WILL PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE CAHSEE AND/OR THE FCUSD EXIT EXAM:

This course will be taken after the administration of the High School Exit Exam and will have no direct bearing upon that test unless a student has not already passed it. In that event, the reading that will be required will help both the Language Arts and the Social Science components of the High School Exit Exam.

LAB FEE:

None

SUBJECT AREA CONTENT STANDARDS TO BE ADDRESSED:

The following standards will be used for both semesters: 2.2, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6 through 3.9

Plot

Organization, Syntax

Tone, Mood, Style, Irony

Imagery

Figurative Language

Rhetorical Strategies

Theme

Literary Analysis

DISTRICT ESLRs TO BE ADDRESSED:

Students will be:

Self-Directed Learners: Demonstrate critical thinking through discussions and analysis of moral issues of the time, relating these issues with contemporary problems.

Effective Communicators: Become effective communicators by expressing their opinions and conclusions verbally and in writing.

Quality Producers and Performers: Set high standards for their individual and group work

Constructive Thinkers: Analyze the views and attitudes over the past 4,000 years, and relate these to their own lives

Collaborative Workers: Work together on assignments, projects, and group activities such as the Greek festival, while respecting the opinions and right of others.

Responsible Citizens: Become more responsible citizens by analyzing strengths and weaknesses of heroes encountered in the literary masterpieces