

English IV Syllabus

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12th Grade English Syllabus 2015-16

12th grade English uses the Pacesetter English program, a senior-level program developed by The College Board that gives both college-bound and non college-bound students the opportunity to study how language is used in modern America: in poetry, short stories, novels, plays, radio, film, newspapers, and the Internet. This course is different from traditional English courses because emphasis is placed not just on memorization and multiple-choice tests, but also on meaningful tasks such as researching, interviewing, analysis, discussion, and peer- and self-evaluation – and even writing newspaper articles and creating an ad campaign. In this class, participation does count, since many activities are group activities. For students of every level who want to learn meaningful, important things in English class, the Pacesetter program offers enormous opportunities to learn not just about the usual British Literature, but also about the way language is used to shape our perceptions of each other and the world around us.

Because effective communication is so critical, the course will also stress writing, grammar, and vocabulary instruction. To that end, weekly quizzes will alternate between cumulative grammar quizzes and cumulative roots quizzes.

The year-long course will be divided into a number of units:

Unit 1 (4 weeks) Many Selves, Many Voices: Poetry and Essay

This unit introduces the ideas and the methods used in the course. Students will recognize that everyone has a variety of "voices" that are used with different groups. The choice of which voice to use depends on audience, purpose, and form of expression. Students will study and create a variety of poems and essays to illustrate some of these voices.

- texts:** a variety of poems, prose passages, and essays
selections from McBride, *The Color of Water*, O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*
- tasks:** express orally and in writing different voices for different groups
conduct and present an interview to learn about others' voices
compare / contrast essay
persuasive essay

Unit 2 (4 weeks) "Stranger in the Village": Short Story

This unit examines how language and other aspects of culture are used to define the group one belongs to and separate the "strangers" that do not belong to the "village." Students will study essays and short stories about encounters with "the other" and learn about the risks and rewards of contact with people who are different.

- texts:** Marquez, "The Very Old Man with Enormous Wings," Walker, "Everyday Use"
essays by Staples, Rodriguez, Cisneros, Mairs
- tasks:** modeled essay on the "stranger in the village"
short story on an encounter between cultures
analytical essay on literary technique
persuasive essay

Unit 3 (8 weeks) A Medley of Voices: Novel

This unit examines the connection between language and character in a novel by analyzing two novels' different voices and dialects. Students will analyze the techniques the authors use to express those voices.

- texts:** Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
Kesey, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*
excerpts from O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*
- tasks:** essays on literary technique
imaginative piece locating character from novel in different time or place
persuasive essay

Unit 4 (6 weeks) Voices from the Past: Drama

This unit examines the theater and the role of the actor in interpreting the author's intent. We will study two major plays and students will analyze a scene in one play and develop a group interpretation and presentation of that scene.

- texts:** Sophocles, *Antigone*
Shakespeare, *Macbeth*
- tasks:** self and peer-assessment exercise
presentation of a scene from *Macbeth*
analytical essay on literary technique
persuasive essay on *Antigone*

Unit 5 (4 weeks) Visible Voices: Film

This unit examines how meaning is communicated in film through narrative, dramatic, and theatrical techniques. Students will become familiar with basic aspects of film technique and study several films, carefully analyzing a scene in one of them, before creating an original campaign commercial.

- texts:** Forman, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*
Hitchcock, *Psycho*
Wachowski, *The Matrix*
Ford, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*
- tasks:** create a storyboard / shot list for a film
create an original commercial using propaganda and persuasive film techniques
analytical essay on a film
essay comparing a novel and a film

Unit 6 (6 weeks) Multiple Perspectives: Journalism

This unit examines the techniques of modern journalism and analyzes how media representations shape the public's perception of people, products, and events. Students will research a topic from the past by identifying the wide range of perspectives on it provided by various media sources.

- texts:** newspaper accounts and essays on the Columbine killings
excerpt from Moore, *Bowling for Columbine*
- tasks:** "saturation report" on a modern cultural event
write short articles presenting multiple perspectives on the same event
analytical essay on journalistic "slant"