Course Overview: English II
Welcome to English II! In this class, you will explore how writing and literature have shaped America’s cultural identity, and how writing, language, literature, and communication can shape your identity, too. You’ll investigate deep and perplexing questions, such as: can there ever be a perfect society? Are there certain stories that only some people can tell? What literary texts had the most profound impacts upon America as we know it? And, of course, what is literature, anyway? You’ll read and experience diverse perspectives from varied time periods in America’s history, and you’ll practice rhetorical analysis, creative writing, informative writing, and more. Along the way, you’ll reflect upon yourself as a learner, as a member of America’s cultural legacy, and as a human. You’ll share your perspective and use your voice, and you’ll listen to other voices and perspectives as well.

Units and Activities: Please note: units and activities are subject to change.

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<th>In A Perfect World: The Utopia/Dystopia Unit</th>
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<td>Can there ever be a perfect society, and if so, what might it look like? In what ways can literature shed light on the problems that America has faced in the past, is facing currently, or will face in the future? In this unit, you’ll consider these questions while reading a sampling of American utopian and dystopian fiction.</td>
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<th>Five Works of Literature that Changed America</th>
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<td>In this unit, I will take you on a tour of four works of American literature that I think have had the most profound impact on America. Your mission at the end of the unit will be to pitch the missing fifth literary work that you think changed America. If you’re convincing, maybe your selection for the fifth literary work will make my list next year!</td>
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<th>The Perks of Being a Wallflower Unit</th>
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<td>How can works of art connect people to each other? What does it mean to “participate” in life? We’ll explore these questions and more as we read the novel, The Perks of Being a Wallflower. You’ll even create a customized playlist with album artwork for another English II student!</td>
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<th>Beauty, Binaries, and Identity</th>
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<td>How has the concept of beauty fluctuated in American society over time? In what ways do issues of gender and race impact a person’s perceived beauty and identity? Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye and Britt Bennet’s The Vanishing Half will help us analyze those questions in this unit.</td>
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<th>Transcendentalism</th>
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<td>Great American authors have drawn inspiration and enlightenment from the natural world. In this unit, we’ll investigate concepts such as civil disobedience, nature, self reliance, and solitude, and we’ll consider the following questions: Why do people go into the wild? To what extent are humans able to completely remove themselves from society? In what ways is the human spirit linked to nature?</td>
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Standards: What knowledge and skills will I gain by the end of this course?

This course will assess the knowledge and skills students build in key Anchor Standards and Content Standards.

**Anchor Standards:**

- **Reading:** Students will read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently. They will also closely read and analyze theme, character, structure, and figurative language in literary and informational texts.

- **Writing:** Students will produce clear and coherent writing for a range of tasks, purposes and audiences. They will also conduct short and sustained research projects.

- **Speaking and Listening:** Students will prepare for and participate in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners. They will also present information such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, and so that the organization, development, and style are appropriate.

- **Language:** Students will demonstrate a command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. They will also determine the meaning of unknown words and phrases.

**Content Standards:** This course builds student knowledge using the English Language Arts Common Core standards. The content standards for English II can be found at this link.

**How Do I Access Work from Home, and What Should I Expect?**

- All work will be posted in Google Classroom.
- The work will be explained during our in-person meetings and/or by video posted to Google Classroom.
- The work will also be explained in our Class Planner posted to Google Classroom.
- If you have any questions, email your teacher.

**How Do I Know What My Grades Are?**

- On Summative Assessments, teachers will provide both a 4-point grade and a letter grade.
- You can monitor your progress in the following ways:
  - By reading feedback and scoring returned to students on summative assessments.
  - By monitoring the scores and Overall Course Mastery Grade in the Parent/Student portal on JumpRope. Reminders to check grades will be sent from the school.
  - Communicating with your teacher if you are unclear.

**Where Can I Find This Syllabus during the School Year?**

- This syllabus will be available on the school website in each subject’s department tab once the school year is up and running. It will also be available in our Google Classroom.

**How Do I See What’s Due?**

- Assignment and summative assessment due dates with handouts are posted in Google Classroom, with connection to Google Calendar, for student access.

**How Do I See What’s Past Due?**

- If a student is missing a grade on an assessment, it will be listed in the red “Missing Assessment” section of the JumpRope Parent/Student Portal along with any attachments. Please contact your teacher if you have any questions.

**Materials:**
Books and readings will be provided by your instructor throughout the school year. Please be sure to bring required reading materials to class. Please bring a folder or a notebook dedicated to English II to class with you each day, as you will be expected to keep provided readings and materials organized throughout the school year. Please also bring a writing utensil and a chromebook or other computer to class each day. Multicolored highlighters and/or markers are also recommended.

Schoolwide Procedures:
Please see the Student Handbook for Procedures and Policies related to: Due dates and deadlines, extra credit, retaking assessments, and turnaround time for grade entry.

Personal Mobile Devices: This class will follow the procedures outlined in the student handbook.

Classroom Expectations for You:
Times are obviously wicked weird right now, and there is a lot that we don’t know about the school year ahead of us. With that being said, there are some things we do know. We know that we are going to need to be flexible, and we know that we are going to need to support each other, even more than we usually would.

What’s Expected of You:
● Communicate with me regularly, not just to appease academic requirements of the course, but also to let me know how you are doing and what you might need. You can communicate with me in-person, via email, during office hours, through surveys, and in your writing. You are expected to be in contact with me if you are absent so that you can remain current with your assigned work.
● Practice “self direction.” Self-direction means not only being responsible for your own learning, but also knowing when to reach out for help from your teachers, peers, families, etc.
● Come to class prepared both by bringing required materials to class and by completing assignments.
● Show respect toward your fellow classmates and toward your teachers. In order to foster open dialogue in our classroom (both in school and online), please refrain from engaging in speech which marginalizes or disenfranchises any specific group of people.
● Follow the personal mobile devices policy and procedures as outlined in the student handbook
● Use your academic time well and allow your classmates to do the same by staying on task and avoiding potentially distracting behaviors.
● Be academically honest, which means doing your own work and being careful to cite your sources and put quotations around another author’s words.

What You Can Expect From Me:
As your instructor, I will do my best to promote an open and inviting classroom centered around respectful discussion and collaboration. I intend for each and every student to feel comfortable and “seen” in my classrooms, and I will do what I can to make mine a space of belonging. I also will:
● Welcome your feedback, opinions, and ideas for how to improve the course. I will provide multiple opportunities for student feedback throughout the course, and I will adjust our instruction (both online and in person) accordingly.
● Be patient and understanding as you navigate this strange school year.
● Be transparent and forthcoming in my grading policies and criteria.
● Engage with student perspectives respectfully.
● Select texts that showcase varied perspectives and provide an appropriate level of academic challenge.
● Show respect toward you when I provide feedback on your writing and when I engage with you in class discussions.