Syllabus

 2025-2026 School Year

**Course Title:** 9th Grade Literature

**Instructor:** Mr. Neill

Hours of availability for tutoring, remediation and conferences: Very flexible. Most days before or after school, with prior notification.

Contact: (706) 823-6924, Neilbr1@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us

**Materials provided by the student:**

* Laptop (school-assigned or brought from home) \* Spiral notebook \* Ballpoint pens Notebook paper \* A binder to keep graded assignments

**Assigned Text:** *HMH Into Literature.*

**Course Description and philosophy:**

Course gives students an overview of world literature, exposing them to a variety of viewpoints about our society today. Students read an assortment of short stories, poems, novels, and non-fiction selections as part of the course. Through exposure to these readings, students will make connections between the themes and ideas contained in historical and modern literature, and the world around them.

Course Outline (*All unit activities are abbreviated and include additional content. Reading selections may change):*

**Unit 1: Identity and Self-Discovery (Poetry Focus) –**

Novels: *Of Mice and Men*, John Steinbeck (summer work, continued in class); *The Joy Luck Club*, Amy Tan.

A variety of short stories and poems.

Activities: Character analysis essays, Poetry Analysis, Socratic Seminars, etc.

**Unit 2: War and Conflict (Argumentative Techniques Focus)**

Novel: *Night*, Elie Wiesel.

Short Stories: “On the Rainy River,” Tim O’Brien; “This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen,” Tadeusz Borowski; “Lather and Nothing Else,” Hernando Tellez.

Halloween Unit: “The Cask of Amontillado,” Edgar Allan Poe; “The Lottery,” Shirley Jackson; “The Handsomest Drowned Man In the World,” Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

Activities: Analytical and argumentative essays/presentations on the effects of war on humanity.

**Unit 3: Love and Relationships (Expository Techniques Focus)**

Big Read: *Romeo and Juliet,* William Shakespeare.

Short Stories: “The Gift of the Magi,” O. Henry; “The Necklace,” Guy de Maupassant.

Activities: Graphic organizers, creative writing prompts on themes of love and sacrifice.

**Unit 4: Society and Injustice**

Novel: *Animal Farm*, George Orwell.

Short Stories: Excerpts from “The McDonaldization of Society,” excerpts from “Nickel and Dimed,” by Barbara Ehrenrich.

Activities: Real world connections from media, debates on social issues, multimedia projects examining modern-day connections.

**Unit 5: Mythology and Ancient Texts (Research and Analysis Focus)**

Big Reads: *The Odyssey* and *Oedipus Rex*.

Short Stories: “Echo and Narcissus,” “Cupid and Psyche,” excerpts from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*.

Activities: Passage translations, Create Your Own God/Goddess project, God Battle.

**Unit 6: Technology, Humanity, and the Future (Review Focus)**

Novel: *The Road*

Short Stories: “The Last Question,” Isaac Asimov; “There will Come Soft Rains,” Ray Bradbury.

Activities: Philosophical discussions on the meaning of life. Creative projects exploring existential themes.

Canvas/HMH online: The majority of all assignments for the class will be turned in through Canvas, Richmond County’s online learning platform, or the HMH textbook online platform. Students MUST be able to access Canvas and have a laptop in order to access and turn in assignments. Cell phones MAY NOT be used in class. ***Students who choose to not check out or bring a laptop will have to bring their assigned textbook to class each day!***

Discipline Policy The following consequences will result for disruptive behavior: 1st incident- counsel student, 2nd incident-parental contact, 3rd incident-office referral. More serious infractions may go straight to referral.

**Consequences for Cheating and Plagiarism**

Plagiarism means copying someone else’s work and claiming it as your own. Plagiarism can be in the form of copying another student’s work, submitting your own previous work from another class, or taking information from another source and submitting it as your own (ex: copy and paste from the internet). All instances of plagiarism will be handled according to school/district policy, *including being given three (3) hours of detention.* Cheating/Plagiarism on any major or minor assignment will not be tolerated in this class.

 • This includes any AI (artificial intelligence) detected work. Any detection of ChatGPT work (or any other AI) will **not be tolerated.**The expectation across the board is for you to DO YOUR OWN WORK.

 • Additionally, any work found to be plagiarized will not be taken for a grade. You will be required to complete the reassessment procedure.

Class Rules

* Be in your assigned seat and ready to work immediately upon entering the classroom.
* No eating or drinking (water is fine).
* Do not talk while the teacher or a classmate is talking.
* No leaving seat without permission.

**\* Treat everyone with respect.**

**Cell Phones and Communication Devices:**

All cellular phones, smart phones, smart watches, iPads, tablets, any type of headphones, earbuds, and other devices or accessories used to electronically communicate are considered personal electronic communication devices. All devices are prohibited for all students during the instructional day, which is defined as the time a student arrives on campus until the end of the school day. Students are NOT allowed to use cell phones ANYWHERE during the school day! They MUST turn them off (not on silent or vibrate mode) and leave them out of sight. Earbuds & headphones are not permitted. Please see the acceptable use policy and the BYOT agreement for additional guidelines. If a student chooses to bring a cell phone or electronic communication device on school property, it is at their own risk and damage to their property will not be investigated. RCSS is not responsible in any way for lost or damaged devices and cell phones.

IF AN ELECTRONIC DEVICE IS USED INSIDE OR OUTSIDE OF THE AUTHORIZED CLASSROOM, OR WITHOUT THE PRESENCE OF A TEACHER, THE CONSEQUENCES ARE: 1st Offense---- Device confiscated and student can pick up at the end of the day. 2nd Offense--- Device confiscated and parent can pick up Friday of that week. 3rd Offense----Device confiscated and picked up by the parent the Friday of that week. One day of in-school suspension.

Noncompliance: If student refuses to give up their phone/device to a staff member, they will receive two days of suspension.

Methods of Evaluation/Distribution of Grades

Students will have numerous opportunities to demonstrate the skills necessary to successfully master the standards. Students will be given remediation for any standards not met. Assignments may include: daily class work and homework, quizzes (oral and written), tests (oral and written), writing assignments, class discussions, independent work using the computer, projects (individual and group), oral presentations, and reports (oral and written). Maintaining a neat, well-organized notebook is a must. Class participation will be monitored daily and is also mandatory.

There will be two assignment categories:

* Minor grades - 40 % Quizzes, labs, and other assignments assessing certain standards within a unit of study.
* Major grades - 60 % Tests, essays, research papers, and project-based assignments measuring mastery of unit standards.

**LATE GRADING POLICY**

Late assignments **must be turned in within five days of the due date**, and will be subject to 5-point reduction in the **earned grade** for each day they are late. **Assignments turned in after five days will not be accepted.**

**COMMUNICATING WITH ME:** The best way to reach me is through my email: Neilbr1@richmond.k12.ga.us.

**CLASS ANNOUNCEMENTS:** I will use Canvas Messenger for all class announcements.

**Non-negotiables to relearn/and be reassessed on major assignments:**

 1. Student **cannot** have missing assignments in current tested unit/module.

 2. Assessment **MUST** be different from initial assessment, and will be determined by teacher.

 3. Student **MUST** relearn/reassess within 7 days once the grade is posted to Canvas.

 4. The reassessment grade **MUST**replace the initial grade (*no averages*).