

INSTRUCTOR: Ms Keck  
PREP PERIODS: A4 & B4  
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**Course Name:** World Literature

**Course Description:** A rigorous course for motivated learners, World Literature examines a variety of literary genres by International authors from various time periods and backgrounds. Students analyze internal and external conflicts and resolutions or lack thereof. In addition, the course reaches across disciplines by incorporating technology, art, music, and film to enhance the understanding of the historical and cultural significance of the literature. The analytical and writing emphasis prepares students for future college courses.

**Student Proficiencies:**

- To understand and apply a wide range of vocabulary as it relates to elements of literature and critical theory
- To independently read difficult literary works with some clarity and understanding
- To analyze the relationship between historical context, authorial intent, and reader interpretation
- To create highly committed, focused, and collaborate discussions about literature
- To demonstrate competency in written analysis of a variety of texts through journal writing, reader responses, and essays.
- To logically develop and support ideas in interpretive and analytical writing
- To understand how various cultures influences beliefs, attitudes, and societal values of the individual and/or for the group
- To capably use MLA format, correct grammar and internal documentation.
- To write about literature in an artistic sense and in its historical and universal sense
- To incorporate college level word usage and develop skills to cope with unfamiliar language
- To listen to ideas of others and contribute to class discussion

**Text:**

*Dr. Faustus*, Christopher Marlowe  
*The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Oscar Wilde  
*Hamlet*, Shakespeare  
*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*  
*Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe  
*Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi  
*Metamorphoses*, Kafka  
*The Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer

**Assessment and Grading:** Students will be evaluated for a formal grade based on a point system and the timely completion and success of the following:

- Thoughtful daily responses in Response Journal
- Formal Essays using the 6 + 1 Writing Traits and class essay criteria
- Class discussion participation
- Class discussion etiquette
- Projects
- Quizzes
- Tests

**Class Participation (class participation will be assessed daily)**

Evaluation based on the following criteria:

Asking relevant questions

Completed reading assignments

Making relevant comments

Probing peer comments to advance discussion

Active listening (good eye contact, engaged in discussion, note taking)

Grades are assigned according to the following scale:

100-90	A
89-80	B
79-70	C
69-60	D
59 below	F

**Student Responsibility:** Attendance and discipline shall follow rules outlined in the school handbook. Students are expected to complete all assignments. Students who miss class will have two school days (not class periods) to make up work. If a student is in the building, but misses World Lit any assignment due must be turned in on that day or will be considered late. It is the student's responsibility to discuss missing assignments with the teacher. All written essay assignments must be uploaded to turnitin.com on due date.

**Contacting the Teacher:** I am available before school each day from 7:30am to 8am and after school until 3:45pm. You may schedule a meeting during A1 and B1.

**Expectations:**

- You will be on time, seated and prepared for class when the bell rings.
- A respectful atmosphere is mandatory in the classroom
- No cell phones, headsets and no backpacks
- No food
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarized work will be given a zero and consequences will be dealt with by administration.

**Course outline (may change as course progresses and/or due to book availability)**

***Unit I: Dr. Faustus and Picture of Dorian Gray (outline attached)***

***Unit II: Exploring the Tragic Hero (9 weeks)***

- Before reading "Things Fall Apart," examine pre and post colonization in Nigeria. Discuss the political and cultural aspects of the region and their quest for independence. Define civilization, culture (community, history and myths) and colonization. Discuss other cultures that have succumbed to unstoppable historical change and how they survived.
- Read and discuss W.B. Yeats poem "The Second Coming" from which the title of the book originated. Explain the meaning of the title.
- Discuss Aristotle's characteristics of the tragic man, Aristotle's elements of a classical tragedy and elements of a modern tragedy drawn from literary terms dictionaries.
- Begin reading "Things Fall Apart" by Chinua Achebe
- Examine the point of view of the narrator. Is he subjective or objective in his storytelling? Consider the historical time period in Nigeria as it relates to pre and post colonial America.

- As students read “Things Fall Apart” examine essays from colonial American authors and discuss voice, purpose and point of view.
- Read and discuss essays and letters by Nelson Mandela.
- Read and discuss Persepolis.
- Begin discussion of Hamlet by examining (only) the opening 11 lines of the play. List information that each speaker provides us. What do we learn about the setting, characters, situation, etc?
- Review the history of the Renaissance - a period of “rebirth” where things are uncertain. Discuss the culture’s consideration of what they want to hold on to from the past. Is what was true in the past still true during this period? Consider how tragedy lends itself as a natural form for such uncertainty and unpredictability.
- Read Hamlet. Focus discussion on the psychology of each character, the topics of melancholy (examine Albrecht Durer’s etching “Melancholia” as well as readings on melancholy in 16th century England), and existentialism.
- Introduce Psychological Literary Criticism by reading from Sigmund Freud’s Interpretation of Dreams. Read various example critical essays.
- In particular, examine the many faces of Hamlet. In small groups, have students focus on exploring the particular persona, then selecting scenes that support that particular view of him. Students should also consider aspect of stage performance that might best enhance their understanding of the character.
- Time permitting, read and discuss Sophocles’s *Oedipus Rex*.
- Read and discuss Tom Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*.
- As a final project, students will write their own critical essay in response to a question and present their ideas in seminar form to the class. Students will lead the class in a 20-minute discussion of their topic.

Additional information:

Students will be expected to act out and read aloud passages from the plays in order to better understand tone of voice, characterization, interaction between characters, etc.

### ***Unit III: Exploring Existence (2 weeks)***

- Before reading Kafka’s “The Metamorphosis,” discuss and define existentialism.
- Discuss the use of symbols in literature. Discuss why authors use symbols, what they convey and if they are powerful literary devices.
- Read Kafka’s “Metamorphosis.” Pay close attention to Gregor’s transformation to large insect. What might this represent? How does the point of view in the story change? Where does it change?
- Students will analyze the text in terms of structure, diction, point of view and tone.
- Discuss the definitions of metamorphosis, alienation and symbol.
- From Kafka’s description, draw a picture of Gregor Samsa as a bug. What kind of bug is he, do you think? Why do you think Kafka chose a giant beetle as the creature Gregor changed into? Why did Gregor turn into a bug?
- In an essay, contrast the family’s circumstances at the end of the story with them at the beginning of the story and account for the difference. What has the family learned to do by the end of the story? Be specific.
- Discuss the author’s use of humor. What parts in the story are humorous?

- Students will experiment using symbols in a piece of writing. Students will think of a symbol that represents a big idea. Examples include increasing violence in our society, the threat of terrorism, how peer pressure affects behavior.
- As a final project, students will write an essay focusing on the author's use of imagery.

***Unit IV: Pilgrim's Progress (3 weeks)***

- Before reading Canterbury Tales, introduce the students to the life and death of Thomas Becket. Include his achievements and the importance of his shrine as a place of pilgrimage.
- Discuss what students currently know about pilgrimages of the past and present. Brainstorm sacred places that have attracted pilgrims for centuries. What are some of the reasons why people might undertake a pilgrimage? If you were about to go on a pilgrimage, what expectations would you have about it?
- Study the Prologue, *The Pardoner's Tale*, *The Knight's Tale*, *The Miller's Tale*, *The Reeve's Tale* and *Wife of Bath's Tale*.
- While reading these tales, focus on lyric and polyphonic structure, diction, symbolism and imagery
- Discuss background information of Chaucer and his times. What audience were these tales written for? What are the social relationships between the pilgrims? Who is of highest rank? Lowest rank? What were the new class people?
- All students memorize and recite the first 18 lines of the General Prologue in Middle English to understand a bit of what English used to be.
- Students will read one more tale independently and complete a short assignment.
- Discuss and analyze Chaucer's most vivid character, the Wife of Bath. Refer to earlier discussions about feminism. Explain the antifeminist authorities and the corrupting influence of women contained in a her fifth husband's "book of wykked wyves." How does she argue against these authorities? What is Chaucer's point of view?
- Read excerpts from "Paston Letters" for insights on medieval marriage, including an example of a marriage contract.
- For a final project select one of the following options:
  - Research the life of Thomas Becket and his shrine at Canterbury. Present findings in MLA formatted research paper and a 10-minute presentation with visuals.
  - Chaucer wrote for a courtly audience that was familiar with such traditions as the code of chivalry. Is chivalry dead? Research this tradition and its influence upon the literature of the Middle Ages.