

11<sup>th</sup> Grade Syllabus  
Spring 2016  
American Literature

American Literature at HTHI:

This course will be a project-based survey of American Literature, focusing on the literature of perspective. While the reading, analysis and interpretation of literature is the primary focus for our semester, students will also work on improving their own academic and creative writing skills. Each student will study poetry, short stories, novels, drama and expository texts from various periods of American Literature, will practice writing in several of these genres, and will study the ideas and forces that shaped the perspective of the authors and of the audience – then and now.

Deeper Learning Outcomes/Learning Goals & Expectations

Mastery of core academic content

*Reading, Writing, Speaking*

Critical thinking and problem solving

*Reflection and Connections*

Productive collaboration

*Respect and Tolerance*

Effective communication

*Organization and Responsibility*

An ability to direct their own learning and exhibit a strong academic mindset

*Self Advocacy, Ownership*

CLASS MATERIALS

Please bring the following materials to class EVERY DAY:

1. 3 ring binder with dividers OR a notebook and a folder to keep your documents and notes organized.
2. A stack/package of Sticky Notes – the small kind are perfect, and multi-colored.
3. Loose leaf lined paper and/or notebook
4. Text/Materials we are reading (*when notes, be sure you have a photocopy, print-out, library copy or copy for personal use*)
5. Book of student's choice (grade-level appropriate – if you need suggestions, see me).
6. Pencils AND Pens
7. Highlighter or colored pens for marking texts
8. Daily Planner (see me if you'd like me to print you calendar pages)
9. **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:** flash drive
10. Allowed and Encouraged: Audio Recorder, Laptop Computer

A Note on School Supplies:

According to the California Education Code, the Constitution of the State of California requires that we provide a public education to you free of charge. Subject to certain exceptions, your right to a free public education means that we cannot require you or your family to purchase materials, supplies, equipment or uniforms for any school activity.

Many families ask what supplies their child may need during this school year. Above, is a list of supplies that your child will need for classes. **Please note that if your child does not bring the required/necessary supplies, the teachers will provide the supplies for him/her.** If you have any questions/comments about this, please contact us.

### Things to Take Care of BEFORE class begins:

1. Printing or preparing your assignments – this should be done BEFORE class begins (I am always at school early)
2. Sharpening pencils, finding/borrowing a pen (come to class prepared, every day)
3. Finding a book to read (you should always have a book with you for any free reading time)
4. Taking care of any bathroom or water breaks/needs
5. Eating. Simply put, this gets in our way of thinking/interacting/focusing...you MAY have things to drink in class but you will NOT be able to eat anything (*no matter how 'quiet' you think it will be or if you ran out of time for lunch*) during class time.

### WHEN ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE:

All assignments are due at the beginning of class, unless otherwise noted. Do not ask to print an assignment after class has started because the answer will be no; plan on arriving early (even for first period) if you need to print something off – I am always at school early! Assignments not turned in at the beginning of class are considered late (see Late Work policy below). Plan ahead to print, save your work in multiple places (flash drive, Google docs, email, etc.), and leave plenty of time to finish and print assignments prior to the start of a class.

### Attendance/Assignments:

If you are absent from school, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to make up any missed work. Generally, you are extended the number of days you were absent for an EXCUSED absence, to make up missed work. Long term projects do not get an extension, except in extraordinary circumstances and at the discretion of the teacher. Revised work is always welcome at any time, though keep in mind that late work may not receive credit. **Due to the nature of project based learning, it is essential that you and your family plan to take long vacations or traveling opportunities during our many scheduled breaks throughout the year. Also, for similar reasons, please schedule doctor/dental appointments during after school hours which almost every dentist and doctor provide.**

Only the following are considered EXCUSED absences:

- Illness or medical appointment
- Family emergency
- Funeral
- Legal Matter
- Religious holiday

Please Note:

Absences do occur, but it is YOUR responsibility to get the work done even if you are absent. I will keep the daily recap section of our course updated for this reason and if you are going to be absent IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO LOOK AT THIS PAGE, GET THE NECESSARY WORK, AND TURN IT IN ON THE DAY YOU RETURN. If you are absent the day of a test or quiz, you can make that up within one day of your return. If you are absent the day a writing assignment is due, you must

email me a digital copy THE DAY IT IS DUE and then bring a hard copy to class when you return to school. \*If, for any reason, you are unable to return to school fully prepared, you must email or call in advance.\*

### **TARDY POLICY – Important, Please Read Carefully**

Being on time to class is as important now as it will be for you in college, whether we are starting the class with reading time, quizzes, directions or project work time, being on time is essential. When you are not on time, and this happens regularly, you regularly miss out on significant learning and class time. As such, our Tardy Policy will keep this in mind – all class time is important. Therefore, you may be tardy for THREE class periods per quarter without consequence. From that point on, any Tardy will count as ½ point off of your final grade (so, for example, let's say you are Tardy 6 times. Your final grade will be lowered 1.5 total points. So, let's say you have a 91% overall, this would drop you to a 89.5%, dropping you from an A to a B in the course). If these are excused tardies (for a doctor's appoint WITH a note, for example) they will NOT count against your overall tardy tally. ALSO, the 11<sup>th</sup> grade policy is that we will take your cell phone if you are late to class and you may pick it up from your teacher at the end of the school day. This is a grade-wide policy. Parents who need to reach their child during the school day are encouraged, as always, to call the FRONT DESK. Students MAY “check” their cell phone during breaks, but it will stay in the teachers' class until end of day.

### **Late Work**

Unless proposed, agreed upon and signed off on, late work will not be graded. Assignments and homework are due at the beginning of class on the date they are due. Late work is not accepted for credit unless the student has an EXCUSED absence and even then this is at the teacher's discretion – you should see the above notes on absences to help clarify. If you communicate with me at least one day prior to an assignment being due that you will not have the assignment and that you need an extension, we *MAY* work out something where you will be able to turn in the assignment for credit though this is not a guarantee of full credit (this will depend largely on your history of work in class). If you do not communicate in this time and way, you will not get credit for the late work; keep in mind that sometimes even without getting credit, the work will still be due (as part of the larger work you are doing in the class). These extensions may NOT be granted for major assignments deadlines (final papers, final products, exhibitions).

### **Academic Honesty/Integrity**

Without any question, this is one area that I take most seriously and stress most often in all of my course. It is IMPERATIVE that a student's work should always be their own original work. It is important to learn early on how to avoid plagiarism and to understand the rules and consequences regarding plagiarism. As a class, we will learn how to attribute the ideas and thoughts of others using citation styles such as MLA formatting. According to most institutions of high education (taken here from Mt. SAC's policy) “plagiarism is a direct violation of intellectual and academic honesty. Although it exists in many forms, all plagiarism refers to the same act: *“representing somebody else's words or ideas as one's own”*. This can take the form of taking material from other sources, including the Internet, and deliberately or inadvertently failing to give credit in your paper to the original source. It can also involve improper use of citation and documentation in a way that constitutes plagiarism, even though unintended.” ([www.mtsac.edu/instruction/humanities](http://www.mtsac.edu/instruction/humanities)). We will learn enough about plagiarism and how to avoid it and there will be no excuses for “unintended” cases of plagiarism or copying of work. Consequences for plagiarism include, but are not limited to: a failing grade on an assignment, a failing

grade for a project, a failing grade for the course, suspension or expulsion from High Tech High International. When in doubt, ask. When in doubt, cite your sources.

### ROUGH DRAFT POLICY in Humanities\*:

With major writing assignments and essays, I will spend a great deal of time giving feedback on your writing throughout your writing process this year. However, I have found that this feedback is not helpful if students do not put serious effort into the draft that I receive for feedback purposes. With this in mind, I have created the following list of minimum standards you must meet to receive feedback on your rough drafts:

#### **Minimum Standards for Feedback:**

1. The writing must have a title, 12 point font, and 1-inch margins.
2. The writing must be at least the minimum page limit.
3. The writing must be double-spaced.
4. At least 2 different sources of information are quoted or paraphrased (for essays/research papers).
5. The author has attempted to set-up every quotation, where necessary.
6. The author has cited each piece of evidence in the correct format, where necessary.
7. The writing must be spellchecked and free of typos (If I find more than 3 typos I stop giving feedback).
8. The writing must be free of slang and IM speak (Spell 'you' as 'u' even once and you get no feedback) – in academic writing; in creative writing this may be appropriate.
9. Significant changes must have been made after peer review (attach the peer reviewed draft to the draft you submit to me).

### UNIVERSAL SCHOOL RULES

HTHI has established the following to ensure a respectful and safe learning environment for everyone.

1. No Swearing/Cursing.
2. Not following the dress code while at school or school-sponsored events (field trips, college day, etc).
3. Using technology inappropriately.

### The "Fun" RULES

1. Cell phone use is forbidden in class without teacher permission. If you ask, I may permit you to use the phone in my presence. Texting is considered a violation of this rule at any time without prior consent. Please be thoughtful of this rule, and turn your cell phone ringer off during school hours. If you are caught talking or texting during class when the time is not appropriate, I will give you one warning (not one warning per day, one warning - period) and then take away your cell phone for the ENTIRE day. On a second offense, a parent and/or guardian will have to pick your phone up at the end of the day. Third offense – don't think of it.
2. iPods or other such music devices are allowed only during designated work time AND when OK'd by the teacher. Don't assume that during all work time you may listen – ask first. The volume must be at a level that ONLY you can hear...If I walk by and can hear it (I have bat-like hearing) then I'll ask you to turn it down. Sharing headphones is not allowed.

3. You don't have to "ask permission" to leave the classroom for a restroom break or a water break but you DO have to let me know you are going and only ONE person can be gone at a time. Please self-monitor this so that I do not have to.

High Tech High International is a school of choice and disruptive and offensive behavior is simply not tolerated. In the case of a major offense, consequences may be as severe as a failing grade, suspension, or expulsion

#### Grading Scale and Grade Description

100% - 90% : A

High Honors, Excellent, above average work

89% - 80% : B

Honors caliber, good work that is complete with minor errors C Satisfactory –

79% - 70% : C

Satisfactory work, needs improvement

69% - 60% : D

Unsatisfactory work, incomplete and/or missing portions of work

59% and Below : F

Failing (may need to repeat course)

### IMPORTANT EVENTS AND TERMS

#### Student-Led Conferences

Students will have an opportunity to communicate and share with their family their learning and growth over time. You will be taught and expected to lead this "conference" and provide evidence of your learning and personal growth. In addition, you should utilize vocabulary and concepts of the "Habits of Heart and Mind" in communicating throughout the student-led conference.

#### Digital Portfolio

You will create a Digital Portfolio (DP) that will focus on your internship preparation and experience. You will have limited time in class to set this up, so when you do have time, use it wisely. As we get closer to internship, expectations for the DP will be shared.

#### tPoLs

Students give presentations of their learning at the end of both semesters of ninth grade. For these presentations, you are expected to dress professionally. The tPoL is your chance to reflect on the Habits of the Heart and Mind, your work in your classes and your growth as a student and a person. More details about your tPOL will follow throughout the year.

#### Exhibitions

One of the major values of this school is the presentation of student work for the public. You will participate in several exhibitions throughout the year. Parents will be given notice of the date of these exhibitions. **Students are expected to stay at school the entire day of exhibitions to help set up, tear down, and get projects ready to present.** You are also expected to dress professionally on the date of exhibitions.

## Field Trips

Because of our value of creating adult world connections, students at HTHI have the unique opportunity to participate in a variety of field trips. Because you will be representing the school and the team, we have higher expectations for students' good behavior and attitude. Your enthusiastic and respectful participation in field trip programs is absolutely essential. If there is any doubt that students will not be able to meet these expectations, they may be asked not to attend the field trip.

## A Note on our Reading this Semester

My goal for all of the students this semester is to develop depth and stamina in your reading abilities. Most college freshman report that they are asked to read anywhere from 300 – 600 pages a night for ONE class; most college freshman are taking 4 – 6 classes each semester. I want to you move you closer to being able to handle that reading load over the course of this year.

Our first step is reading together the podcast Serial. It's not a book, per se, but it is a story that we are asking you to follow along with, keep track of, think critically about, and recognize the perspective shifts that occur. And it asks you to do this all over a set period of time.

Our second step is the full class novel we are reading together, Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*. Beyond being an example of a nonfiction novel, it also asks you to consider perspectives – yours, the authors, the individuals being written about. Further, we will be looking critically at this novel through a variety of Critical Literary Lenses, and you will be taking your knowledge gained and writing about it (see Project Sheet and future assignment sheet for details). Further, while we will be doing much of the reading for this novel IN class, there will be times when you are asked to read outside of class for homework. This will be important too.

Third, we are spending week two of class together doing a large in-class novel reading experience, called The Sticky Note Book Report. You will be choosing a book to read in class and we will use this book to gauge where you are going to aim for your semester reading goals. We will spend the majority of our two hour blocks in the second week reading and annotating (on sticky notes) our critical response to this text.

Finally, while I will not give a lot of outside homework for this class (there will be some) there is one standing homework assignment that I will expect and it has to do with your reading goals. I will ask EVERY student to be reading 2 hours outside of class (yes, I said TWO hours) each week. Over the course of the whole week. Yes, you may have jobs, and sports, and other homework, but you CAN make time to read for two hours over the course of seven days. This is 10% of your grade and you and I will both keep a log of your progress. Keeping this time goal in mind, we will work together to figure out, based on your reading, how many books you will read for the semester. I will NOT ask you to write papers for these, but we will keep track and hold book talks to discuss your progress. These are included in the 10% of your grade.

My hope is that with these four things in place, we can raise your interest, excitement, passion, comfort level and STAMINA with reading and set you up for success in college and also create a platform for you to become life-long readers.



Please sign and return this portion of the syllabus to Colleen no later than Monday, February 8, 2016

High Tech High International Parent/Student Syllabus Agreement

I have read and I have discussed with my parent/guardian the syllabus of and I understand what is expected of me/my student during the upcoming school year. Please initial in the first two spaces and sign below acknowledging understanding of the entire syllabus.



Student Initial Here: \_\_\_\_\_ to acknowledge you have carefully read the Tardy policy, LateWork/Absence policy, the Cell Phone policy AND the Reading Goals for this class.



Parent Initial Here: \_\_\_\_\_ to acknowledge you have carefully read the Tardy policy, LateWork/Absence policy, the Cell Phone policy AND the Reading Goals for this class.

Overall Syllabus Acknowledgment:

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_