**Honors American Literature 2022-2023**

**Mr. Frederick**

**Course Objectives**

Welcome to Honors American Literature, a seminar-based survey of American literary periods. The course is designed for students whose language-arts skills are significantly above average, and the assignments are correspondingly challenging and intended to develop sophisticated reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. More specifically, the course is designed primarily to help you to accomplish the following:

1) Identify and explain connections between American literary periods and works.

2) Verbally articulate sophisticated responses to challenging American literary fiction and nonfiction.

3) Write developed compositions in response to course texts and topics.

4) Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar.

5) Master vocabulary found in course texts.

**Major Texts**

*Prentice-Hall Literature: The American Experience*

*Walden*, Henry David Thoreau

*Our Town*, Thornton Wilder

*The Crucible*, Arthur Miller

*The Chosen,* Chaim Potok

*Winesburg, Ohio,* Sherwood Anderson

*Travels with Charley in Search of America,* John Steinbeck

*The House on Mango Street*, Sandra Cisneros

**Seminar**

This course is seminar based, which means that discussion is crucial to our objectives. In fact, you will be scored on your ability to verbally express reactions to literature. You will soon be given supplemental information on seminars; it would be prudent to carefully digest the information and ask questions about matters which remain unclear to you.

**Cooperative Learning**

You must have the flexibility to work with different kinds of people. The world certainly demands this, and this class will be no different. But cooperative learning is more than just an exercise in socialization; teamwork enhances productivity, facilitates the sharing of talents, fosters friendships, leads to greater self-knowledge, and can even yield the profound experience of belonging to something greater than the sum of its parts. Please enter the process with an open mind, especially when you are teamed with someone(s) you think you have little in common with, don’t know, or might not even like. Again, remember: the world is full of all of these kinds of people. I boldly suggest to you as our class begins that your ability to work with diverse people will have a tremendous effect on your quality of life—certainly greater than your language arts skills will.

**Writing Assignments**

In addition to shorter, informal writings, we will write several major compositions. Information is forthcoming regarding the nature of these writings and how they will be assessed. Due dates will be announced.

The major compositions serve as summative assessments in this course; thus, they are eligible for second attempts—“retakes”—consistent with school policy. (A new topic must be selected for a “retake.”) Again, details are forthcoming, and the process will be clearer to you as we become familiar with turnitin.com. In the meantime, please know that I want you always to write to an audience of your classmates and your teacher, and that you may be asked to share aloud significant portions of your writing.

**Absences**

If you are absent on the day of a *quiz*, you should generally be ready to make it up upon your return.

A missed *seminar* will be scored as having no effect on your grade.

If you are absent on a day when a group of which you are a member is scheduled to give a *presentation*, you will instead write a response to the reading that your group presented.

**Late Work**

It is important that you complete all readings, compositions, and assignments by the given due dates so that you can participate thoughtfully in class activities and receive descriptive feedback that will grow your reading, writing and speaking skills. A course of this magnitude will become even more difficult if you fall behind. Therefore, per school policy, I will subtract 10% from the grade for the first day a major assignment or composition is late, 10% for the second day, and 10% for the third day. After three days, the assignment will be scored as a zero.

**Assessment**

Here is the quarterly grading formula:

Class Activities 10%

Seminars 20%

Quizzes 30%

Compositions 40%

Keeping in mind that a perfect grading system remains elusive despite teachers’ best efforts, I reserve the right to exercise professional judgment as necessary in determining your final grade.

**Academic Integrity**

Intellectual honesty is paramount in academic endeavors, and this course is no exception. If an idea is yours, you may of course present it as such. If it is not, you must cite the source. Misrepresenting someone else’s words or ideas as your own is plagiarism, and will result in no credit for the work submitted.

**Conclusion**

The texts that we read are generally challenging; they require *focus*. Additionally, you need to express yourself with clarity and insight, both in speaking and writing. However, I think you’ll find this course interesting and even *fun*. It is my sincere hope that you learn much—not only about American Literature, but about yourself as well. Again—welcome! Let’s learn.