



Pottsgrove High School

Course Syllabus

Course Information

English 10 Academic, English 10 Honors

Teacher Contact Information

Mrs. Katherine Richter, krichter@pgsd.org (best contact), 610-326-5105 (leave a message)

Course Description

Students develop critical thinking, speaking, and writing skills through reading, class discussion, writing, and engagement in activities requiring individual effort as well as group cooperation. A focus on strategies for learning allows each student to continue to develop his/her reading comprehension skills, regardless of the text complexity. Students will be asked to read, write, speak, listen, and respond appropriately to the works of others. Students study vocabulary according to the Shostak series (correlated with SAT vocabulary) while using these words and exercises to enhance their study skills and knowledge of word parts / sentence structures. Reading selections allow students to develop skills of analysis in literary fiction and nonfiction. Students will read, recognize, and comprehend written and verbal arguments that utilize common rhetorical devices. Students will develop their own arguments utilizing these tools. Writing to process, reflect, respond, organize, and analyze is a significant part of each unit, with select assignments moving through the revision and editing process to publication. Some papers and projects will require properly performed, integrated, and documented research from a variety of quality print and non-print sources. Ultimately, students will develop an ability to understand both the written and spoken word to discern the author's intended audience and purpose. He/she will be challenged to extend that knowledge to evaluate the author's choices to judge the medium, the message, and the skill with which each is utilized.

Overview of Units: Big Ideas and Essential Questions

Unit 1 – Foundations of Literary Analysis (Short Story, Literary Nonfiction, Poetry)

Materials may include “Open Window” by Saki; “An Astrologer’s Day” by R.K. Narayan; “Typhoid Fever” by Frank McCourt; “Living Well, Living Good” by Maya Angelou; “Kaffir Boy” by Mark Mathabane; and selected poems by Emily Dickinson, William Shakespeare, and Robert Burns.

Essential Questions	Big Ideas
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What are literary elements? How do authors use them?2. What learning strategies work best for me in understanding literary pieces, especially short stories, narrative nonfiction, and poetry?3. How do readers determine the author’s message?4. How does a reader determine the meaning of words?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Literary elements enhance and deepen the effect of the written word upon the reader.2. Effective readers use a variety of learning strategies depending upon their purpose for reading and the type of piece.3. Good readers determine the author’s message through analyzing details and making inferences.4. Good readers use strategies and resources to determine the meaning of words.

Unit 2 – Foundations of Nonfiction and the Novel

Materials may include articles, images, and interviews pertaining to American life in the 1930s, *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, clips of several movie versions of *Of Mice and Men*.



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central idea?	4. Authors select specific details and organize them according to certain patterns in order to develop and communicate their messages.
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Unit 3 – Rhetoric: Argument in Speech (Nonfiction Speeches)

Materials may include Dr. Martin Luther King’s *I’ve Been to the Mountaintop* speech, John F. Kennedy’s second inaugural speech, Susan B. Anthony’s “On Women’s Right to Vote”, as well as print and non-print advertisements.

Essential Questions <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How do speakers and writers use structure, development and transitions to craft their arguments?2. How can you recognize when an author is using trickery to influence you?	Big Ideas <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Speakers and writers use order, details, and connections to create an impact on their audience and advance their argument.2. Good readers recognize and evaluate the logic of an argument and the support given it to determine its validity.
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Unit 4 – Rhetoric: Argument in *Julius Caesar*

Essential Questions <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How do authors “play” you as a reader? How do they get you to feel, think, and act the way they want you to?2. How do good writers use language to make themselves clear?	Big Ideas <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Authors use specific techniques in argument and persuasion to influence their readers.2. Good writers can demonstrate command of Standard English grammar and usage.
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Unit 5 – Comparative Literature: Prejudice and Point of View (*To Kill a Mockingbird*, Nonfiction, Film, and Poetry)

Materials may include film clips from *Mississippi Burning*, *The Two Towns of Jasper*, *Four Little Girls*, and *To Kill a Mockingbird*; as well as newspaper articles, photos, interviews, poems, songs, speeches, and the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Essential Questions <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is prejudice? How can a person recognize bias or prejudice to discover truth?2. How do good readers view different characters in a piece of literature?3. How does the medium a storyteller uses affect the message?4. How can a writer’s or speaker’s choice of language affect the message?5. Why do we have to follow a research procedure?	Big Ideas <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Bias and prejudice must be recognized in order to discover the truth.2. Good readers analyze how an author uses characters and their development to enrich a piece of literature.3. Different mediums emphasize different details which affect the message.4. Depending on the context, meaning, and style, authors can use language for different functions.5. Following research procedures assures information is valid, relevant, and correctly attributed.
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Required Textbooks and Materials

Glencoe Literature 2009 (Course 5) – Class set in room; book copies can be signed out for use at home. PDF versions available in Schoology.

Sadlier-Oxford Vocabulary Workshop (Level E) – Class set in room; book copies may be signed out for home study.

To access online edition and resources:

- Official Site: vocabularyworkshop.com Level E (iWords audio, games, puzzles)
- Unofficial Site: vocabtest.com Level E (Test yourself)



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Suggested Course Materials

Students are required to bring their own charged laptop to class each day. Students are required to have a 3-ring binder (preferred) or a notebook and folder for handouts. In addition, students should bring a writing utensil to class.

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Writing skills, language conventions, and vocabulary are studied throughout the year. Literature units are listed beginning on page one of this syllabus.

The class agenda, with homework included, is always written on the board and also on the teacher webpage.

If a student is absent from class, it is his/her responsibility to find out what was missed. The student can check the webpage and/or ask a trustworthy classmate. The teacher is available for clarification of these sources.

Grading Guidelines

In accordance with Pottsgrove School District's grading policies

Demonstrating Knowledge

80% - Assessment (tests, quizzes, projects, written assignments, performance, etc.)

Building Knowledge

20% - Skills development and practice

Please refer to the student handbook for more detailed policies regarding late work, etc.

Classroom and School Policies

Consistent class attendance is crucial to success. If a student is absent, he/she must check what work was missed, turn in assignments that were collected, and schedule make-up tests immediately upon his/her return. For planned absences (field trips, appointments, athletic contests), the student should approach the teacher prior to the absence to obtain assigned work.

Technology

Technology is an integral part of communication, but not an end in itself. In this classroom, we will use technology as a tool to enhance teaching, learning, and communicating. I maintain a teacher webpage that is accessible from the Pottsgrove School District webpage (pgsd.org/krichter).

Because technology can be a distraction, students are REQUIRED to engage in the lesson during class. I will clearly communicate when devices are to be used. No texting or alternate Internet use is permitted.

Student Conduct & Discipline

1. Have and show respect for yourself, your classmates, your teacher, and the classroom.
2. Follow directions.
3. Be prepared for class.
4. Please make yourself familiar with the Student Handbook (available online) and be sure that your behavior



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is in accordance with it.

Failure to follow either school or classroom rules will result in proper consequences.

Unless otherwise directed, all electronics must be stored away during class time.

Academic Integrity

Unless specifically told otherwise, all assignments are to be completed individually. Failure to do so will be considered cheating and/or plagiarism depending upon the circumstance.

I believe students are here to learn, and that individual engagement and practice is necessary for that learning. Therefore, copying (including cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is unacceptable. Please see student handbook for specific disciplinary penalties.