

**AMERICAN LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION
CURRICULUM GUIDE
NILES TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOLS
DISTRICT 219**

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District 219 ensures equal opportunities regardless of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, or handicap.

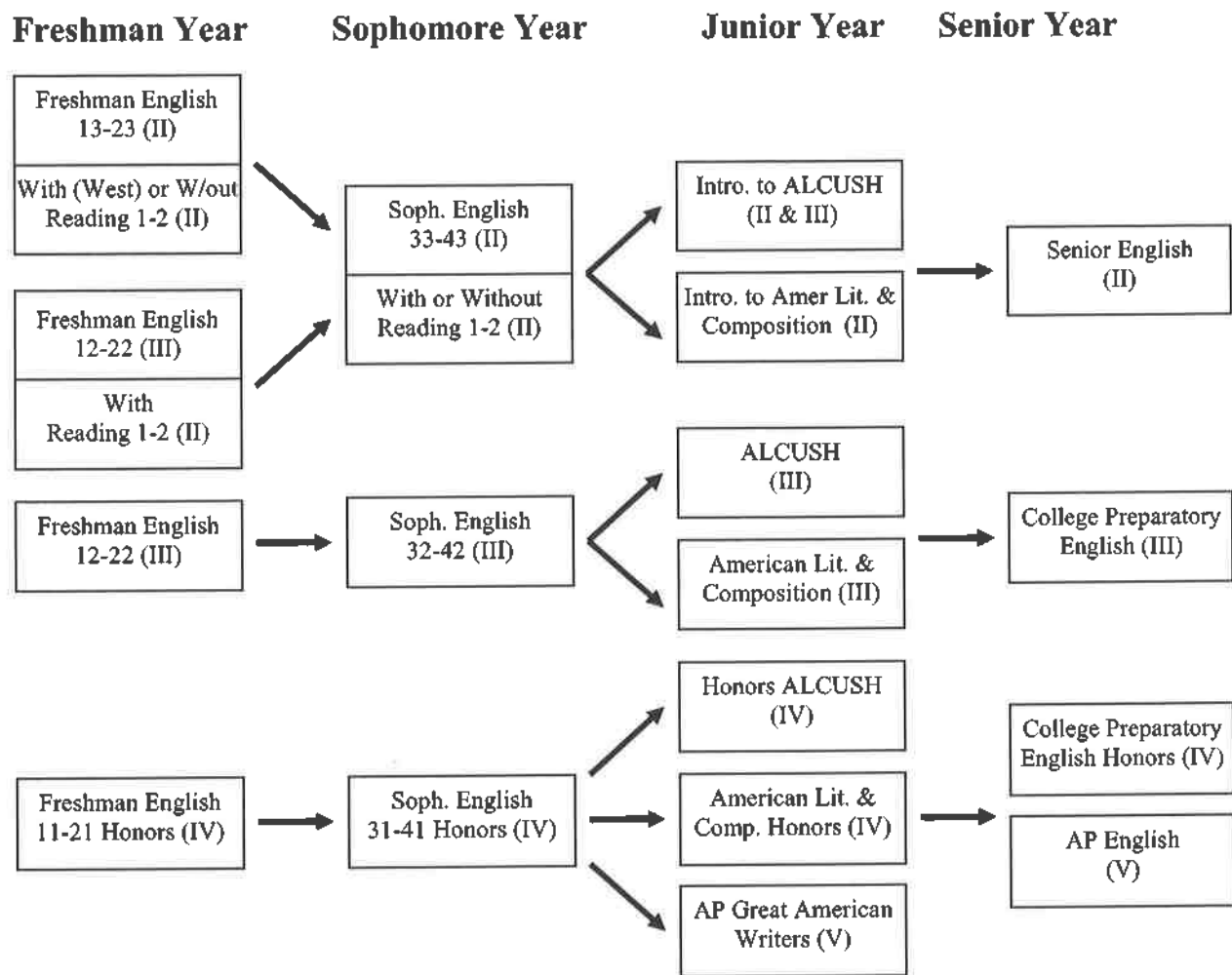
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ENGLISH PROGRAM SEQUENCES

Pathways illustrate **typical** movement within a sequence of courses; however, adjustments in sequence can be made to accommodate individual needs.

Grade Weight Level is indicated in parentheses.



Electives (semester courses)

Freshman – Senior Year

Journalism (III)
 Photojournalism & Publications* (III)
 Creative Writing (III)
 Public Speaking (III)
 Advanced Public Speaking (IV)
 Newspaper Production* (IV)
 Yearbook Production* (IV)

Sophomore – Senior Year

Images in Literature (III)
 Lit. of Sports & Amer. Culture (III)
 Lit. of Peace & Non-Violence (III)
 Bible & Mythology (IV)
 World Literature (III or IV)
 English Composition & Rhetoric (III)

Junior-Senior Year

Lit. of Moral Conflict (IV)
 Humanities 1* (III)
 Humanities 2* (III)

- These courses do not carry English elective credit but will count as a general elective credit.

Course Description
American Literature and Composition

American Literature and Composition
EN3J07

Grade Weight: 3

Two semesters, two credits

PREREQUISITE: Sophomore Regular English or
Sophomore Basic English and Teach Recommendation

This course consists of a thematic approach to studying American literature and culture. It emphasizes developing a variety of critical reading skills and a familiarity with significant American authors. Full works studied may include Death of a Salesman, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, or Catcher in the Rye. In addition to studying literature, students will write about literature and themes as well as personal experiences. Awareness of thesis, adequacy of supportive evidence, and consideration of audience are emphasized.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

AMERICAN LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

American Literature and Composition is the regular level third year course in the four-year English sequence. It is thematically arranged so as to cover the primary questions of American cultural history. The readings include many of the standard and most indicative works of our culture as well as several more contemporary pieces indicative of the country we have more recently become. Its composition element, which is to be considered the equivalent of the literature in intensity and attention, has critical, expository and personal writing intents.

The course is available to students as a self-contained program or in direct conjunction with American History. The curriculum is the same in both alternatives. The CRT's for the course test direct, critical reading in first semester and writing and critical reading in second semester.

List of Instructional Materials

Required Texts

Appleby, <i>Responding to Literature</i>	ER42
Fitzgerald, <i>The Great Gatsby</i>	EP44
Salinger, <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>	EP32
Shostak, <i>Vocabulary Workshop-E</i>	EW06

Optional Texts

Cisneros, <i>The House on Mango Street</i>	ER49
Dove, <i>Multicultural Voices</i>	ER47
Hansberry, <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>	EY35
Hemingway, <i>The Old Man and the Sea</i>	EN92
Kingsolver, <i>The Bean Trees</i>	RE39
Krakauer, <i>Into the Wild</i>	ER97
Miller, <i>Death of a Salesman</i>	EP19
Miller, <i>The Crucible</i>	EP39
Morrison, <i>Beloved</i>	EP73
Morrison, <i>The Bluest Eye</i>	ER02
Muryama, <i>All I Asking for Is My Body</i>	RE48
O'Brien, <i>The Things They Carried</i>	ER65
Steinbeck, <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>	EP16
Twain, <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>	EP31
Vonnegut, <i>Slaughterhouse Five</i>	EB02/EN85
Walker, <i>The Color Purple</i>	EB01
Williams, <i>The Glass Menagerie</i>	EP22
Wright, <i>Black Boy</i>	ER 46

Course Outcomes
American Literature and Composition

READING:

Students will:

1. demonstrate understanding of literary themes.
2. demonstrate understanding of different cultural values apparent in various literature.
3. make predictions/speculations during reading.
4. identify and evaluate the use of various rhetorical strategies and structures in fiction and nonfiction writing.
5. correctly identify genre.
6. use contextual clues to read effectively.
7. identify basic stated information and key details in a variety of texts.
8. demonstrate the ability to integrate information from more than one source, including non-written texts (e.g., film, charts, photographs, etc).
9. comprehend implied relationships in a text.
10. understand how American literature reflects and engages American history and culture, specifically how works of American literature reflect the main ideas studied in the thematic units: cultural encounter; the individual and society; the search for justice and human dignity; the American Dream; and, contemporary issues in American society.

WRITING:

Students will:

1. engage in prewriting consistently during the writing process.
2. create multiple drafts of written works, significantly revising for style and content.
3. use the Writing Center/Point/Literacy Center during the writing process.
4. write in a variety of formal and informal modes, including the following:
 - a. a character sketch (optional);
 - b. an essay(s) emphasizing narration, description, and detail;
 - c. a comparison/contrast essay(s);
 - d. an extended definition essay (optional);
 - e. a persuasive essay(s);
 - f. a literary analysis essay(s).

DISCUSSION:

Students will:

1. participate orally in class discussions.
2. present an oral report, speech performance, or other oral performance.
3. effectively listen to teacher lecture and oral presentation.
4. listen and respond to peer contributions and presentations.
5. engage in evaluating audio/visual presentations
6. effectively listen to presentations for the purpose of taking notes of pertinent information

ACT/SAT PREP:

Students will:

1. practice and become more proficient at the skills required for the ACT English and Reading exams.

VOCABULARY STUDY

Students will:

1. improve reading comprehension, written and oral communication through vocabulary study.

Junior English Learning Targets

DRAFT 1.10.11

Over-arching Reading Target

I can critically read and derive meaning from a variety of texts *independently*.

Sub-targets

- I can locate supporting details in a passage.
- I can identify the main idea of a passage.
- I can determine the meaning of unfamiliar words through context.
- I can use textual evidence to determine the tone of a passage.
- I can use textual evidence to make accurate and appropriate inferences and conclusions.
- I can use examples of the following four themes to explain ideas specific to American Literature: Individualism, Justice, Cultural Interactions, and The American Dream. (See junior level curriculum guides for sub topics under each theme.)
- I can identify the author's purpose.
- Through close reading, I can determine how the author uses language (e.g. word choice, sentence structure, simile, metaphor) to convey meaning.
- I can identify and explain rhetorical strategies or choices an author uses to persuade the audience.
- I can identify the sequence of events in a passage, determine relationships between those events, and can place that sequence of events into contexts larger than the work (e.g. historical, social, political, and cultural events and ethical, rhetorical questions).
- I can trace a thematic/structural pattern that occurs throughout single or multiple works.

Over-arching Writing Target

I can write both process and timed pieces for a variety of purposes and audiences, conveying my intended message and meaning.

Sub-targets

- I can create thesis statements that connect what I have read to concepts that extend beyond the classroom (e.g. ethical, historical, social, political, cultural, rhetorical, or economic).
- I can synthesize effective and accurate evidence to support my argument.
- I can use warrants to analyze and to prove a claim/thesis statement.
- I can arrange claims and evidence logically and use transitions to create an effective and cohesive argument.
- I can make thoughtful choices about writing using knowledge of syntax, diction, conventions, figurative language, etc.
- I can produce and revise writing that reflects what I have learned about my own writing from teachers, peers, and myself; I can formulate writing goals based on this input.

Over-arching Research Target

I can find, evaluate, and incorporate research into argumentative writing.

Sub-targets

- I can evaluate sources for their reliability.
- I can synthesize multiple sources derived from research to develop a thesis.
- I can incorporate sources to support the argument of an essay.
- I can integrate a counterargument in support of the thesis.
- I can provide appropriate context for quotations used to support a claim.
- I can distinguish between the author and the sources the author cites.
- I can use sources in a way that reflects an understanding of the source's original context.
- I can recognize the components of a citation (title, author, publisher, etc.).
- I can identify and apply correct citations per MLA guidelines.
- I can quote a source directly and paraphrase a source appropriately to avoid plagiarism.

(continued)

Rhetorical Terms Target

I can identify the following rhetorical terms in a literary passage, and explain how their use enhances meaning.

allusion	irony
connotation/denotation	thesis
counterargument	tone
metaphor/simile	symbolism
point of view	personification

Over-arching Usage/Editing Target

I can edit sentences (my writing) using Standard English conventions. (*Targets emphasized in the junior year are in bold italics.*)

Sub-targets

- I can apply comma rules from sophomore year:
 - Before *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so* when they connect two independent clauses.
 - **To separate three or more items in a series.**
 - **After an introductory expression (word, phrase or dependent clause) or before a comment or question tagged to the end.**
 - With direct quotations.
 - Around the name of a person spoken to.
 - Around expressions that interrupt the flow of a sentence (e.g. *however, moreover, therefore, of course, by the way, on the other hand*)
 - **Around additional information that is not needed in a sentence (appositive).**
 - **Between two adjectives. (new for junior year)**

- I can edit my writing using the following conventions also covered in sophomore year:
 - I can maintain tense consistency.
 - I can maintain indefinite pronoun/verb agreement.
 - I can maintain agreement between pronoun and antecedent.
 - I can correct punctuation of possessive words.
 - I can edit sentences to maintain parallelism.
 - I can punctuate sentences correctly using colons and semi-colons.
 - I can identify active voice as preferable to passive voice.
 - I can eliminate unnecessary words to maintain concise writing. (parsimony)
 - **I can differentiate between these commonly confused words: (your/you're; its/it's; their there/they're).**

Usage/Editing Sub-targets New to Junior Year

- I can place modifiers correctly to be certain they are modifying the correct word.
- I can use dashes correctly.
- I can use the comparative and superlative forms of adjective and adverbs correctly.
- I can use transitional words effectively in my writing.

The target document will end here.

Note: This chart will appear in each curriculum guide:

Individualism	Justice	Cultural Interactions	The American Dream
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self identity/self-awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • racism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • imperialism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • myth (promise & opportunity vs. reality (unfulfilled))
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transcendentalism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • slavery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expansionism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social & economic stratification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conformity vs. rebellion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assimilation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consumerism & consumption
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • civil disobedience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • illegal immigration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • immigration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • immigration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moral responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anti-racist & feminist theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • racism 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual freedom vs. the greater good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ideals of freedom and equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • native Americans & early conquerors 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Amendment rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syncretism & cultural imperialism 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • labor issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East vs. West 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the myth vs. the reality of American wars 		

American Literature and Composition

Course Guide

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Themes:

Organize instruction thematically, as shown

Reading:

At least one novel per semester

Chosen from among approved book lists for West and North (see attached).

At least one play per semester

Chosen from among approved book lists for West and North (see attached).

Poems, short stories, and nonfiction chosen from among selections listed at teacher discretion.

Writing:

Three revised essays every semester (or two revised essays with significant numbers of in-class essays) and other formal and informal writing in class.,

First semester:

- character sketch (optional)
- narration/description/detail
- comparison/contrast

Second semester:

- extended definition (optional)
- persuasion
- literary analysis

Vocabulary Study:

There will be discrete, yearlong vocabulary study which includes some learning of words in context and also mastery of word lists (either from list attached to this curriculum packet, or from books such as the American Heritage Dictionary's *100 Words Every High School Graduate Should Know* or *Vocabulary Workshop, Level E* (per departmental/director approval)).

THE CULTURAL ENCOUNTER

Summary of theme: The cultural encounter reflects the compromises and conflicts that emerge when two or more cultures come into contact. Understanding of this theme is essential to studying other units as all others deal either directly or indirectly with the perpetually changing American societal landscape.

Guiding questions:

What is the dominant American culture?

How has the dominant culture changed throughout American history?

What is "the melting pot"? Does American culture represent this notion?

How is a national culture formed?

Can people live together in a single society while maintaining their individual differences?

Suggested works

Novel:

Black Boy, Color Purple, The Bluest Eye, House on Mango Street, Freshwater Road

Play:

Raisin in the Sun; The Crucible

Short stories:

"A Worn Path" Welty (obstinate)

"Man and Daughter in the Cold" Updike.

"Young Goodman Brown" Melville.

"Adam" Vonnegut (cursory, incredulous)

"Seventeen Syllables" Yamamoto (vernacular, rapt, vacillating, glib, indiscretion)

Poems:

"I Went to Kill the Deer" and "I Have Killed the Deer" Taos Pueblo

"Song of the Sky Loom" Tewa

"I Yearn" Sanchez.

"Sun, My Relative" Havasupai

"We Wear the Mask" Dunbar (guile)

"Any Human to Another" Cullen

"To My Dear and Loving Husband" Bradstreet

"Lost Sister" Song

"My Mother Pieced Quilts" Acosta

"My Father's Song" Ortiz

Non-fiction:

"Plymouth Plantation" Bradford (desolate)

"To Be a Slave" Lester (susceptible, align, stupor)

"From the narrative of *The Life of Frederick Douglass*" (languished)

"How It Feels to be Colored Me" Hurston (extenuating, veneer)

"from *Notes of a Native Son*" Baldwin

"Hunger of Memory" Rodriguez (grandiose, appraisal, epigrams)

"from *American Hunger*" Wright

"A Note of Humility" Bontemps

"Nez Percé Surrender and Outcome" Chief Joseph

"High Horse's Courting" Black Elk

"Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" Edwards (loathsome, arbitrary)

"from *The Autobiography*" Franklin

"Champion of the World" Angelou*

"Black Men and Public Space" Brent Staples*

"Being a Chink" Christine Leong*

"Fish Cheeks" Amy Tan*

*selection can be found in *The Bedford Reader*. Eds. X.J. Kennedy et al. Bedford-St. Martin's, 2009.

Film/video:

I Will Fight No More Forever; The Immigrants; The Crucible; Little Big Man; El Norte

Literary concepts:

Enlightenment

Puritanism

Writing focus:

narration/description/detail. See next page.

Mechanics focus: Concrete nouns; Active verbs

Suggested writing assignments for unit on The Cultural Encounter

During this unit, students are expected to write at least one revised, extended essay in the genre of narration/description/detail. These are some possible assignments.

1. **Journal**—As suggested on page 11, students keep a journal recording insights, conclusions, questions, descriptions of emotional responses, or speculations about meaning.
2. **Family portfolio**—Use a letter or interview that generates itself into a narration that spans many years of someone's life.
3. **Important place essay**—Describe a place in your life that is important your culture, ethnic background, or family using spatial or chronological organization.
4. **Autobiographical sketch**—As given on page 669, think about an incident in which you, like Baldwin in *Notes of a Native Son*, wanted to achieve a goal but had to resolve both internal and external conflicts to do so. Describe that incident in an autobiographical sketch to be shared with your friends.
5. **Perspective essay**—Have students read a story like "The Worn Path" (p. 592) and do Activity number one from the grandson's point of view (first person). Another possible story with which to use this assignment is activity number two from "Adam" on page 693.
6. **Physical journey essay**—Have students make a physical journey to some attraction or place in the greater Chicago metro area and describe in detail what they experienced on their journey appealing to the five senses. (Field-trip opportunity!)
7. **Autobiographical sketch**—As given on page 220, think about an incident from your life that you would describe as a turning point the way that Frederick Douglass's fight with Mr. Covey was a turning point for him in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. Write about the incident in an autobiographical sketch, explaining why it changed your life..

REGIONALISM/SENSE OF PLACE

Summary of theme: Regional writing in American literature focuses on the uniquely American cultural and geographic diversity through the use of realistic dialect, character, settings and themes. Literary works may investigate journeys and travels across the country, especially where a sense of "home" is the goal of the journey. This unit may also investigate and relate students' communities and surroundings. The focus on the diversity within the US and the desire to find that place which best fits the individual relates directly to the American ideal of maintaining individual spirit within a complexly diverse society.

Guiding questions:

How are different regions of the US represented in literature?

How does a regional voice differ from a national voice?

How is "home" defined?

How does the American landscape lend itself to the pursuit of homely comfort?

What is to be gained by traveling away from home?

Suggested works

Novel:

Member of the Wedding, The Grapes of Wrath, The Bean Trees, The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven

Play:

Our Town, Streetcar Named Desire

Short stories:

"The Outcasts of Poker Flat" Harte (subliminal, pallid, ominous, conjecture, notorious, contortion, frail)

"The Legend of Gregorio Cortez" Paredes

"The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky" Crane.

"The Chrysanthemums" Steinbeck.

"The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" Twain (finesse)

"Wagner Matinee" Cather (trepidation, reproach)

"Barn Burning" Faulkner (inscrutable)

"The Devil and Tom Walker" Irving (avarice)

"Rip Van Winkle" Ginn

"American History" Cofer

"The Day the Cisco Kid Shot John Wayne" Candelaria

"Who Said We All Have to Talk Alike" McDaniel

"Flight" Steinbeck

"Good Country People" O'Connor

Poems:

"Tropics in New York" McKay (laden, mystical)

"Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Eve" Frost

"Wind and Silver" Lowell

"The Red Wheelbarrow" and "Winter Trees" Williams

"Snowbound" Whittier

"November Cottonflower" Toomer

"Mannahatta" Whitman

"I Sit and Look Out" Whitman

"Chicago" Sandburg

"Prayer to the Pacific" Silko

"My City" Johnson

"Merritt Parkway" Levertov

Non-fiction:

"Arctic Dreams" Lopez (austerity)

"Once More to the Lake" White

"Chicago: Southside Summers" Hansberry

"The Struggle to Be an All-American Girl" Wong

Movies/videos:

Do the Right Thing (rated R-parent permission suggested), Barn Burning, Oklahoma, Paper Moon, Breaking Away

Literary terms:

Dialect

Local color

Realism

Gothic

Suggested assignments for unit on **Regionalism/Sense of Place**

During this unit, students are expected to write at least one revised, extended essay in the genre of comparison/contrast. The Littell text contains suggested strategies on pages 15-17. These are some possible assignments.

1. **School comparison**—Compare/contrast a high school (junior high) that you have attended with Niles North/West HS. Consider size, course offerings, clubs, activities, length of the school day, length of the school year, discipline, curriculum, teachers, and methods of instruction.
2. **Chicago History essay**—How has Chicago changed since Sandburg described the city in 1914? (p. 358)
3. **Sandburg vs. Whitman essay**—How does Carl Sandburg's view of Chicago in "Chicago" compare with Walt Whitman's view of Manhattan in "Mannahatta"? (p. 351 #5)
4. **Friends/Enemies essay**—Compare/contrast two of your friends/enemies.
5. **Urban/rural life essay**—Compare/contrast urban and rural living.
6. **Women in America**—Compare/contrast the role of women in America with that of another country.
7. **Characters comparison**—Compare/contrast characters from at least two different works studied this semester. For a twist, have the student write the paper from the perspective of a third character studied.

THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

Summary of theme: The Individual and Society unit examines literature which explores the tensions between liberty and "justice for all" in American democracy, as well as America's historical emphasis on communitarian ideals in the face of strong currents of individualism. This theme directly relates to all others studied within this curriculum.

Guiding questions:

Why is the American ideal for the integrity of the individual spirit one of our core American values?

How are American heroes defined?

Why do we idolize rebels and mavericks in America?

Can an individual remain "true to himself/herself" in the midst of a society?

How does the dominant culture operate to quell the individual spirit?

Suggested works

Novel:

Huck Finn; Slaughterhouse Five; The Great Gatsby; Catcher in the Rye; The Old Man and the Sea; Into the Wild; Freshwater Road

Play:

The Crucible; The Sandbox (is not full-length play); The Glass Menagerie; Death of a Salesman

Short stories:

"Bartleby" Melville

"Roman Fever" Wharton (retrospect, irreproachable, exemplary, conjugal)

"Flight" Steinbeck

"Sophistication" Anderson (pedantic, cosmopolitan, sophistication)

"A Vision Beyond Time and Place" Momaday.

"Beautiful Stranger" Jackson (intimation, cringe)

"The Life You Save May Be Your Own" O'Connor (rue)

"The Lottery" Jackson

Poems:

Emily Dickinson poetry (fickle, discern)

"Because I Could Not Stop" Dickinson

Walt Whitman poetry

"Musée des Beaux Arts" Auden

"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" Eliot

"The Road Not Taken" and "Mending Wall" Frost (diverged)

"Choices" Giovanni

"Constantly Risking Absurdity" Ferlinghetti (absurdity, taut)

"Shine, Parishing Republic" Jeffers

"Old Florist" Roethke

"O Captain, My Captain" Whitman

"One Art" Bishop

Non-fiction:

"A Salem Court"

"We Aren't Superstitious" Benžt (deluded)

"from *Self-Reliance*" Emerson

"from *The Writing Life*" Dillard (subside)

"from *Walden*" Thoreau

"A Vision Beyond Time And Place" Momaday.

"from *Civil Disobedience*" Thoreau (expedient)

"Homeless" Anna Quindlen*

"The Ways We Lie" Stephanie Ericsson*

"Dumpster Diving" Lars Eighner*

*selection can be found in *The Bedford Reader*. Eds. X.J. Kennedy et al. Bedford-St. Martin's, 2009.

Movies/videos:

On the Waterfront; Paul's Case; Three Sovereigns for Sarah; Cool Hand Luke; The Shawshank Redemption;

Literary terms:

Picaresque

Dialect

Writing focus:

character sketch. See next page.

Mechanics:

Agreement (subject/verb, pronoun)

Suggested assignments for unit on The Individual and Society

During this unit, students are expected to write at least one revised, extended essay in the genre of character sketch. These are some possible assignments.

1. **Characters studied**—Sketch any one of the individuals that we have studied this semester.
2. **Eulogy**—Write a eulogy for a dead person.
3. **Self-reliant person essay**—Sketch a self-reliant person.
4. **Perspective character sketch**—Sketch a person close to you/far from you from the perspective of something representative of that person.
5. **Picture prompt essay**—Given a prompt of some photo, have students write a character sketch of the person shown.
6. **Song prompt essay**—Given a prompt of some song, have students write a character sketch of the persona in the song.
7. **Family member essay**—Students bring in a picture of a notable family member and sketch him or her.
8. **Professional perspective essay**—Taking the role of a psychiatrist, doctor, lawyer, social worker, teacher, and foster parent, write a profile of a character studied this semester.

SEARCH FOR JUSTICE AND HUMAN DIGNITY

Summary of theme: The Search for Justice and Dignity contains literature which examines the classless society that was the experiment of America. It also examines the effort to maintain human dignity in the face of opposition. Building on the notion of the individual's need to maintain his/her identity within the framework of a diverse society, this unit looks at the effects of discrimination and personal humiliation.

Guiding questions:

What is meant by "justice for all"? Who determines what is just?

How has the notion of "justice for all" been limited by and reevaluated through time?

How does an individual assert his or her voice to demand equality?

Suggested works

Novel:

The Color Purple, The Old Man and the Sea, The Bluest Eye

Plays:

Crimes of the Heart, The Glass Menagerie

Short stories:

"Recitatif" Morrison

"Young, Gifted and Black" Hansberry (affinity)

"An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" Bierce

"In Another Country" Hemingway

"The Pit and the Pendulum" Poe (cognizant)

"Story of an Hour" Chopin (repression, elusive)

"The Jilting of Granny Weatherall" Porter

"The Open Boat" Crane (formidable, acquiesce)

"Girl" Kincaid

"Revelation" O'Connor

"Harrison Bergeron" Vonnegut

"The Man Who Was Almost a Man" Wright

Poems:

"Stanzas on Freedom" JR Lowell

"Life for My Child" Brooks

"Old Ironsides" Holmes (vanquished)

"I Hear America Singing" Whitman

"The Leaden-Eyed" Lindsay (quaint, flaunt)

"The Lioness" Rich (compliance, innate)

"This is my letter to the world" Dickinson

"Success is counted sweetest" Dickinson

"We Wear the Mask" Dunbar

Non-fiction:

"Letter to Her Husband" Adams

"The Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech" Faulkner (prevail)

"Gettysburg Address" and "Letter to Mrs. Bixby" Lincoln (bereavement, anguish)

"Defining Liberty" Lincoln (denounce)

"Letter from a Birmingham Jail" King (moratorium)

"The Myth of the Latin Woman: I Just Met a Girl Named Maria" Cofer

"My Name is Margaret" Angelou

"Beauty" Sontag

"Carrie Buck's Daughter" Gould

Movies/videos:

Dances with Wolves

The Color Purple

A Long Walk Home

Circle in the Sun

An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge

Imitation of Life

Literary terms:

Gothic

Mechanics:

Punctuation (semi-colon, colon)

Writing focus for this unit: extended definition. See next page.

Suggested assignments for unit on **Search for Justice and Human Dignity**

During this unit, students are expected to write at least one revised, extended essay in the genre of extended definition. These are some possible topics.

1. Freedom
2. Justice
3. Dignity
4. Liberty
5. American Culture
6. Melting pot
7. Responsibility
8. Citizenship
9. American
10. Patriotism
11. Respect
12. Individuality
13. Success

For an explanation of extended definition, see Appendix C.

THE AMERICAN DREAM

Summary of theme: The American Dream examines the unfulfilled desire and assumption that progress and change bring about unlimited opportunities for freedom and success. So many individuals have come to America in search of a better life. This unit investigates the possibility of dreams achieved through work and drive and the necessary sacrifices to pursue it.

Guiding questions:

What is the American Dream? Why do people refer to it so often?

How does the dream differ for individuals who have been negatively affected through the cultural encounter or inequality?

Is the dream reality or myth?

Suggested works

Novel:

The Great Gatsby

All I Asking For Is My Body

Play:

Death of a Salesman

"Where the Crosses are Made" O'Neill (short play) (formidable)

Short stories:

"Winter Dreams" Fitzgerald (indiscretion)

"Indian Education" Alexie

"Two Kinds" Tan

Poems:

"Dreaming America" Oates.

"Richard Cory" Robinson

"As I Grew Older" Hughes

"Becoming American" Rutsala

"Success is counted sweetest" Dickinson

"This is my letter to the World" Dickinson

Non-fiction:

"Letters from an American Farmer" Crèvecoeur

Selections from Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave

Movies/videos:

American Graffiti

The Grapes of Wrath

Field of Dreams

Death of a Salesman

Breaking Away

There Will Be Blood

Mechanics:

Verb tense shifts

Mood shift

Writing focus for this unit: literary analysis. See next page.

Suggested assignments for unit on The American Dream

During this unit, students are expected to write at least one revised, extended essay in the genre of literary analysis. These are some possible assignments.

1. **Quote response**—For which character would the following quote from Emerson be most appropriate? Explain why in detail. "I must be myself. I cannot berate myself any longer for you, for you. If you can love me for who I am, we shall be the happier. If you cannot, I will still seek to deserve that you should. I will not hide my tastes or aversions... I will do strongly before the sun and moon whatever inly rejoices me and my heart appoints."
2. **Streetcar and Gatsby essay**—In many ways Blanche ("Streetcar") seems to be the feminine counterpart to Tom Buchanan (*The Great Gatsby*). Both are concerned with their own sexuality as the main facet of their lives, both seem to despise yet need the opposite sex, and both live by a sexual-double standard. However, Blanche is also like Jay Gatsby in that she prefers to live in a world of "magic" and fantasy which she has created. Is Blanche more of a "female Tom Buchanan" or a "female Jay Gatsby"? Be sure to give specific evidence to prove your point.
3. **DuBois' "Meaning of Progress"**—In W.E.B. DuBois' essay "Of the Meaning of Progress" he describes three different views that black people had toward their own power self-determination (Hint: He refers to the three different views as "various languages.")
 - 1) What are those three views?
 - 2) Why are they so different from each other?

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN AMERICAN CULTURE

Summary of theme: This unit examines some significant issues in contemporary American society, looking at how those issues are reflected in our literature and history, past and present. Issues studied might include: shifting economics—the squeeze of the middle class and globalization pressures on labor and the economy; immigration issues; the war in Iraq and Afghanistan; the environment and global warming.

Guiding questions:

What are current conflicts in American society?

How are these problems depicted in current literature?

What are the possible effects of this conflict on American culture?

Suggested works

Novel:

Catcher in the Rye; *The Great Gatsby*; *Freshwater Road*; *Slaughterhouse Five*; *The Things They Carried*; *Into the Wild*; *All I Asking for Is My Body*; *The Grapes of Wrath*

Play:

The Glass Menagerie; *You Can't Take It with You*; *Lord Byron's Love Letter* Williams p. 569 (This is not a full-length play.) (ambiguous)

Short stories:

"SQ" Le Guin

"Out of Place" Oates

"Everyday Use" Walker

"A Summer's Reading" Malamud

Poems:

"Death of a Hired Man" Frost

"Acquainted with the Night" Frost

"Poetry" Moore (insolence)

"Ars Poetica" MacLeish (palpable)

"Thanatopsis" Bryant (pensive)

"The Heaven of Animals" Dickey

"Rhythms" Chang

"Tide Rises, Tide Falls" Longfellow

"Nature" Longfellow

"A Psalm of Life" Longfellow (sublime)

"Upon the Burning of Our House" Bradstreet

"God's World" Millay (gaunt)

"Jonathan Houghton" Masters

Non-fiction:

"Taps over Pearl Harbor" Didion

"Letters Home from Vietnam" Olsen

"Grade A: The Market for a Yale Woman's Eggs" Jessica Cohen*

"The Legacy of Antigay Discrimination" George Chauncey*

"Television: The Plug-In Drug" Marie Winn (in *50 Essays*. Ed. Samuel Cohen. Bedford-St. Martin's, 2007.)

The following readings come from units in The Bedford Reader

"Generation Me"

"Won't You Be My Friendster" Audie Werster

"But Enough About You" Brian Williams

"Immigration/Racial Profiling"

"Not Your Homeland" Edwidge Danticat

"Safely Through Immigration Control" Mark Krikorian

"Close Encounters with US Immigration" Adnan R. Khan

"Everything Isn't Racial Profiling" Linda Chavez

"The Environment"

"Some Convenient Truths: Stopping Global Warming" Gregg Easterbrook. The Atlantic. Sept. 2006.

"While Washington Slept." Mark Hertsgaard. Vanity Fair. May 2006.

"War" and other contemporary issues

excellent teaching resources can be found online at www.teachablemoment.org

Film/video:

Being There; Born on the Fourth of July; Taxi to the Dark Side; An Inconvenient Truth; The Namesake

Writing focus: persuasion. See next page.

Mechanics:

Fragments and run-ons

Suggested assignments for unit on **Contemporary Issues in American Culture**

During this unit, students are expected to write at least one revised, extended essay in the genre of persuasion. These are some ideas.

1. **President letter**—Write a letter to the President of the United States arguing that he is a fool for some policy decision he has made recently.
2. **Political cartoon essay**—Students write an argumentative response to a political cartoon that explains the cartoon and defends or rejects that point of the cartoon.
3. **Emotionally-laden language essay**—Choose a long passage from "Sinners at the Hands of an Angry God" that you think is particularly persuasive. List words and phrases from the passage that might arouse strong feelings in the audience and use this list to help you prepare an oral presentation of the passage. You might use such props as a podium; a long black gown; and a Bible. In keeping with the Puritan tradition, you might also divide the class into two sections, with boys on one side and girls on the other. See if you can drive your classmates in to "paroxysms of terror." (p. 69)
4. **AIDS essay**—Take the point of view of an object related to the AIDS issue and write an essay attempting to persuade a specific audience (like peers) to change their behaviors, lobby for increased funding of AIDS research, or call a politician.
5. **Civil disobedience essay**—Is civil disobedience a just means of expressing a complaint against the law? Use examples from Thoreau's life and contemporary issues to support your claim.

Appendix A
Optional vocabulary list

Semester one

Semester two

absurdity
align
austerity
avarice
cognizant
conjecture
conjugal
contortion
cosmopolitan
cursory
deluded
desolate
discern
diverge
exemplary
expedient
extenuating
fickle
frail
glib
grandiose
guile
incredulous
indiscretion
inscrutable
irreproachable
laden
languished
mystical
notorious
obstinate
ominous
pallid
pedantic
prevail
rapt
reproach
retrospect
rue
sophistication
stupor
sublime
subside
susceptible
taut
trepidation
vacillating
veneer
vernacular

indiscretion
stigma
cringe
dirge
affinity
sublime
innate
legion
arbitrary
contriving
bereavement
acute
flaunt
prevail
compliance
insolence
chide
quaint
ponder
expedient
furtive
obtuse
cynicism
nonchalance
formidable
elusive
melancholy
slovenly
intimation
austere
alacrity
ambiguous
gaunt
acquiesce
palpable
finesse
grim
repression
denounce
vanquished
strident
pensive
anguish
pompous
moratorium
decorum

Appendix B

Extended definition writing guide

On the following pages are three prewriting activities for the extended definition essay. "Equality Between the Sexes," "Freedom of Speech," and "What is Stealing?" are group activities designed to help students learn to develop *criteria* for an extended definition. These activities also familiarize students with the practice of using scenarios to illustrate the criteria involved in a definition. A simple explanation of criteria is "rules for defining a term."

Also attached is a prewriting worksheet designed to help students develop an extended definition by creating sound **criteria** and **good scenarios** to illustrate the term being defined.

Explanation of worksheet (attached):

Item #2 helps students develop introductions for their essays by asking them to explain why an extended definition of a term is useful.

Item #3 asks students to describe other terms similar to the term chosen ("place within a class"), and explain how their term is slightly different ("differentiate"). For example, "The nouns 'love' and 'affection' have many similar connotations, but 'love' is more serious and implies a greater degree of commitment". (Not a perfect example, but you get the idea.)

Item #6 helps students clarify their extended definitions by developing contrasting examples and explaining them.

The "Models of Differing Levels.." (attached) is a handout for students (or an overhead) to illustrate good and bad examples of extended definitions. Students should use the "Scale for Extended Definition" to tell you at what level each model works.

Students can use the extended definition check sheet (also attached) for peer evaluation after having completed their rough drafts.

What is Stealing?

Answer the question at the end of each scenario, then explain why you answered as you did. Explain all the reasons supporting your point of view.

1. Nancy Ruel has been working for an insurance company for ten years. The company provides its employees with ball point pens for use in completing business transactions. Over the years Nancy has taken home dozens of pens which her family has used for a variety of purposes: to write grocery lists, to complete letters, to work crossword puzzles, to do homework, etc. Is Nancy guilty of stealing?
2. A husband hastily tries to complete some grocery shopping, picking up some items necessary for preparing an important dinner for his wife's boss. He decides he will not need a shopping cart for his few items; but as he selects the products he finds it difficult to hold everything. He places a can of artichoke hearts worth \$2.39 in his coat pocket until he can get to the check-out counter. After he leaves the store, he realizes that he neglected to pay for the artichoke hearts. He decides he doesn't have time to go back and pay for the item, and he is too embarrassed to return later to pay. Is this stealing?
3. A child of four visits the home of her neighbor. She is fascinated by a small china figurine that she sees on a bookshelf. The child decides that she simply must have the figurine for her own. Before she leaves the neighbor's home, the child places the figurine in the pocket of her jeans. She hides the figurine in her bedroom and takes it out to admire when she is alone. Did she steal?
4. Aunt Eudora is shopping at her local supermarket. As she passes through the produce department, she samples some grapes and a few cherries. The produce clerk cautions Aunt Eudora that the store considers her actions shoplifting. Do you agree with the produce clerk?
5. Bob Dobbin has lost his job and has found it difficult to provide for his family. His seven children are ill-fed, and he fears that their health will be adversely affected by poor nourishment. Unable to endure watching his family go hungry any longer, Bob begins taking coins from the poor box at St. Anselm's to buy food. Is Bob a thief?
6. During their recent visit to Peoria, Sam and Meeghan Sabine stayed at the Peoria Holiday Inn. Meeghan returned home with an ashtray and two towels from the hotel. Meeghan explains to her husband that the hotel expects guests to take souvenirs, and they charge guests in the cost of the room. Has Meeghan been stealing?

Equality Between the Sexes: What is it?

In your group, read and discuss each instance, and decide whether or not the men and women involved are being treated equally, according to their actual situation and abilities, not according to their gender.

1. Leonora has been working as a waitress for 12 years in a fine restaurant. She is regarded as one of the best on the staff. She's weary of the style of her current position, and when she hears of an opening on the wait staff of an exclusive French restaurant, she applies. The manager, impressed with her credentials, calls her in for an interview, in spite of the fact that he's never hired a woman for his wait staff before (all waiters, all in tuxedos). During the interview the manager, taken aback by Leonora's grey hair, asks her how old she is. When she tells him that she's forty-eight the manager smiles and apologizes, saying that the job requires the energy of a much younger person. Leonora knows of at least three men on the wait staff who are in their fifties. Why did the man interview Leonora in the first place? Why did her age make a difference? Was she treated equally with regard to her situation and abilities? Why or why not?
2. After only three days at her new executive-secretary job Therese found out that she was pregnant. She was glad, but she didn't tell her boss right away, because she knew that the company made no allowances for "pregnancy leave," and she was afraid that she'd lose her job. When she was five months along she finally mentioned it to her boss. Her boss, vexed, told her that just now they were embarking on a major project which would last at least a year, and that she needed a personal secretary who would be able to work through the whole project, since the secretarial tasks involved required cumulative knowledge. Her boss said that if Therese had told her sooner she could have helped Therese find a temporary staff position, and then hired her back as exec.-secretary when she was ready to work again, after the baby's birth. Instead, the boss said that she was forced to lay Therese off immediately. Therese said that this was sexual discrimination and that she should be able to work as long as she could. Was Therese treated fairly? Why or why not? What would sexual equality mean in this case?
3. Sophia has been the only woman on an all-male warehouse crew for about six months. She got the job because she had had experience driving lift trucks, using heavy-weight dollies, and doing loading and unloading chores in general. She's a good worker, and had never had any problems with her job until now. Now, suddenly, the new supervisor assigned her all of the heavy, clumsy lifting jobs which had to be done without a dolly. Sophia is very strong for a 5'4", 125 lb. person, but the jobs that she is now being assigned require a larger person, or two people, to do them. When she began asking her co-workers for help the supervisor warned her that if she couldn't "cut it" she'd be laid off. Was Sophia treated with equality in regard to her abilities? Why or why not?
4. Faye Dunlap had been writing Mystery novels for a paperback book company for about five years. She produced a novel per month, and all of them had been published, except for one. This mystery was different from the others because the main protagonist was a suburban housewife, whose only cousin, her neighbor, had mysteriously died. Ms. Dunlap thought that the novel was superior to most that she had written, and far better than one which had been published, about a traveling salesman who was kidnapped en route to a Tupperware convention. The excuse that the company gave for rejecting her housewife mystery was that the subject matter was not appropriate. Assume that the novel is well written. Is this a case of sexual discrimination? Why or why not?
5. Dan and Dina are getting a divorce. They have an eight year old son, David. Because David is under the age of thirteen, the judge gave Dina full custody of him citing the tradition of not separating mother from child. Dan wanted custody of David, but the judge says that the decision is not debatable. A child under the age of thirteen is not allowed to choose her/his guardian, and where the mother is competent, the mother gets the child. Dan owns his own business, sets his own work hours, and has always spent a large part of his free time with David. Now his time will be limited to one visit per week, and one overnight visit per month. Dina teaches private piano lessons at home, so her schedule is also flexible to David's needs. She is glad to have received full custody of David, both because she loves him and wants to be near him, and because she knows that it will make Dan miserable. Were Dan and Dina treated equally before the law? Is this a case of sexual discrimination? Why or why not?
6. Create a situation where it is difficult to determine whether women and men are being treated equally, with respect for their true abilities. Find criteria to help you decide. Each member of your group should write down the scenario for the situation, and the criteria that help you to define "sexual equality" within it.

Freedom of Speech

How often have you heard the remark, "It's a free country: I can say whatever I want"? Is this really what is meant by freedom of speech? Each of the following cases involves the issue of freedom of speech. For each situation, decide whether or not the action goes beyond the limits of a guaranteed freedom.

1. Which actions go beyond the limits of freedom of speech?
 2. Explain why.
 3. Develop a set of criteria by which one can evaluate whether an action is or is not protected by freedom of speech.
- A. A high school newspaper contains an editorial criticizing a recent administrative decision and claims that the administration does not know how to run a school.
 - B. A girl shouts "fire!" in a crowded theater and triggers panic that results in many injuries. No evidence was found to indicate any fire in the building.
 - C. A man stands in the center of a large shopping mall and yells obscenities about Iraq.
 - D. The Nazi Party claims it has the right to hold a rally in a park which happens to be adjacent to a Jewish synagogue. The Jewish residents of the area claim that the Nazis do not have this right.
 - E. A candidate for Congress states in public that his opponent for the office is a member of the Klu Klux Klan. The accused candidate denies this charge and obtains a letter from the leader of the K.K.K. The letter states that he is not a member. The opponent continues publicly to call him a member of the K.K.K.
 - F. A twelve year old girl stands in the hallway of her Junior High school distributing pamphlets which show graphic photographs of abortions and aborted fetuses, and describe the conditions a fetus endures during an abortion.
 - G. A group of demonstrators from "ACT-UP!" stand up in the audience during a speech by President Bush and chant "A.I.D.S. kills and you don't care!". (They are arrested and escorted from the auditorium.)

Worksheet for Extended Definition

1. Term (topic) chosen for extended definition: _____
2. In what situations (in real life) might there be a problem involving defining this term? For whom would you need to define the term? Explain.
3. Give a dictionary-type definition (place within a class and differentiate).
4. Criteria to clarify the definition: Are there different kind of your term (for example, two kinds of child abuse: mental and physical)? If so, list each kind of then give criteria separately for each.
5. Give five to six examples like those in "Freedom of Speech" or "Sexuality Equality". Be sure to include mostly borderline situations. These examples may be actual or hypothetical events.
6. Taking two or three examples from number five above, change one or two important factors or facts that would redefine the whole situation. Make sure that your definition limits the meaning of your term to its proper boundaries.

Models of Differing Levels of Extended Definition

Western hero:

(first two paragraphs omitted)...A Western always had entertainment for everyone, suspense, action, and romance. And in every Western, there was always a hero, someone whom everyone like and could only dream of being. Western heroes are rather unique compared to every other hero, yet they all seem to have similar characteristics that captivate the audiences. The most important aspect of a Western hero would have to be mystery, whether the mystery evolved from his name, past, or motives. He would be in the center stage, yet he still would not reveal his true self to anyone.

The other aspect that was needed was courage. Whether it was courage to fight outlaws, Indians, or even stand up for his rights, courage was essential.

All in all, the Western hero was a very interesting character.

Crime:

There is really no way to give the perfect definition of crime. I think that everybody has his own separate definition. What some people may consider crime other people may not. You usually know when you're committing a crime.

Freedom of speech:

Freedom of speech is one of the basic rights guaranteed by the Constitution. It means that you can say just about anything that you want to say, as long as you don't hurt anybody. It doesn't give you the right to break any other laws, but it does let you say pretty much anything that you want to say.

Sexual equality:

Sexual equality is often thought to mean treating men and women exactly the same in all circumstances. One of the problems with this "definition" is that it does not take into account the fact that the circumstances of society are traditionally unequal. This definition also lacks the necessary precision to offer helpful guidelines in situations where the differences between women and men make it difficult to decide what "equality" means. A working definition of sexuality equality should include at least five important elements: 1) equal opportunity for employment, on the basis of individual suitability for the job, without discrimination on the basis of gender 2) equal pay for equal work 3) equal treatment under the law, on the basis of individual situations, without discrimination due to gender 4) equal opportunity for men's and women's concerns to be known to society 5) acknowledging and respecting the differences between women and men, as differences due to individual situations, in all matters of business, law, and domestic issues.

In order to clarify our working definition we must examine its parts, and see what each element would mean in everyday life. Number five, the most vague statement, is perhaps the most important, and could serve as a guide to the meaning of the other four elements. "Respecting the differences between women and men, as differences due to individual situations" means that the possibility of a woman's pregnancy, or of a man's need to car for his child(ren) should both betaken into account "in all matters of business, law, and domestic issues." Many businesses allow women to take "domestic leave" from their jobs in order to take care of their babies and small children, but businesses do not allow men the same opportunity. Treatment displaying sexuality equality would allow "childcare leave" for female and male workers alike. Under "law issues" number five would mean that the court system would find a means of protecting the unique emotional needs of the victim of rape, or any other extremely violent crime where the individual is brutally traumatized."

Law issues are also treated by statement number three, but in a slightly different context. A scenario that would explain the "law issues" in statement three might involve a situation where a judge has to make a decision in a divorce trial, concerning which parent should receive custody of the children. According to statement three, the judge should make his decision based on the individual qualifications of the parents, not on their gender.

(...this paper continues to elaborate on the criteria for sexual equality)

Extended Definition Check Sheet

Writer's name: _____

Evaluator's name: _____

Topic (term) chosen for extended definition: _____

- | | | | Yes | No |
|-----|---|--|-----|----|
| 1. | Does the paper name the term to be defined and place it within a class? | | | |
| 2. | Does the paper differentiate the term to be defined from others within that same class? | | | |
| 3. | Does the paper give adequate criteria to clarify the term being defined? | | | |
| 4. | Does the paper contain enough examples? | | | |
| 5. | Do the examples clearly illustrate the criteria? | | | |
| 6. | Do the examples include borderline situations? | | | |
| 7. | Does the paper clearly explain why the borderline situations do or do not fit the criteria? | | | |
| 8. | Does the paper contain contrastive examples? | | | |
| 9. | Does the paper explain why the contrasting examples do or do not fit the criteria? | | | |
| 10. | Is the paper clearly written and understandable in all parts? | | | |
| 11. | What rating, based on the "Scale for Extended Definition," would you give this paper? | | | |

Scale for Extended Definition

- Level 1: These compositions only mention the term or vaguely discuss the concept without even minimally defining.
- Level 2: Compositions in this group state the term to be defined, identify a class to which it belongs, and give some differentiating details. These details are generally unelaborated examples, synonyms, or description.
- Level 3: These compositions put the term in a class and provide differentiae. They also give some criteria to define the term and contain a few examples. The criteria are general, superficial, or unclearly stated, and the examples often are not clearly related to the criteria.
- Level 4: Besides classifying and differentiating, compositions in this group contain several specific criteria that identify the term and examples that explain and elaborate these parts or forms (that is, dividing child abuse into physical and mental abuse) and provide criteria and examples for each.
- Level 5: These compositions contain the characteristics of level 4, but they are more sophisticated because they also contain elaborate criteria and examples that focus on distinguishing the term from other closely related terms or concepts. Criteria and examples deal with the gray areas and borderline cases in order to clarify the limits of the definition. Criteria are often clarified through and examples followed by a contrasting example.