

Honors 9th Grade Literature and Composition

Taking advanced courses is a wonderful opportunity that often presents students with learning experiences not found in general level courses. However, the rigor and work load can be a bit of an adjustment for students who are not prepared. In an effort to ensure that every student is as successful in Honors 9th Grade Literature as possible, we would like to offer a clear picture of what can be expected from the Honors course.

Course Description: This is an advanced level language arts course. **As such, it will be significantly more rigorous than general level literature classes and deadlines are much stricter.** Students should be prepared to work on reading and/or assignments outside of class on a regular basis. This may require access to technology, whether at home, or before or after school at WBHS, the local library, etc. Additionally, the intent of this course is to help prepare students for other advanced courses and college and the content and rigor they may see there. **For this reason, some materials may contain mature and/or sensitive language, themes, and topics. The intent of the assignments and discussions on these materials is academic and focuses on literary elements and value.**

Expectations: Students taking Honors 9th Grade Literature and Composition need a strong work ethic, a great deal of motivation and initiative, and a positive attitude. In the course, students can expect:

- regular reading in and out of class (including summer reading).
- regular writing and revision work in and out of class.
- deeper analysis of literature and more rigor, research, writing, revision, sharing, and discussion than a general level 9th Grade Literature and Composition course.
- larger impact of absences than general level language arts classes. Students should prepare to stay after school to make up missed instruction and assignments. Students are responsible for obtaining missed work and communicating with their teacher when they have been or are going to be out.
- a fair amount of choice in what they read, what they write, what they research, how they learn, and how they demonstrate their knowledge and mastery of standards.
- a variety of literature and materials such as music, art, theatre, film, animation, photography, etc.
- a unique blend of classic literature and modern young adult literature.
- weekly viewing and discussion of current events and relevant world issues.
- to read, view, and discuss materials that may contain mature/sensitive language or content.
- a safe, respectful environment to share work, thoughts, and opinions on various topics.
- lessons, activities, and projects that branch outside of what is traditionally found in an ELA class.

Student comment on the course: “We learned how to analyze poetry and write a good essay and an interesting story, but we also learned to respect each other and stand up for what we believe.”

If you have any questions or require further information, please feel free to email Mrs. Holt at maegan.holt@barrow.k12.ga.us. I am happy to help, and I look forward to meeting you all next school year.

Parents and guardians, this letter is intended to help you understand the expectations of the course. If you or your student feel this course is not the correct placement for your child, you have the right to request a schedule change before the start of the 2021-2020 school year. Schedule changes after the start of the semester are very rare.

Summer Reading

The goal of the summer reading assignment is to provide students an opportunity to demonstrate both their abilities to handle the rigor of advanced courses and their motivation to keep up with the heavier workload. Experience indicates that students who do not complete the assignments are not yet prepared to handle the course work required in Honors English. You will need to read **TWO** books and complete **ALL** of the corresponding assignments for each novel. There is both a writing component AND a creative component required for EACH novel. In order to receive full credit, you **MUST** complete BOTH parts for BOTH novels.

Be sure to complete one novel from the Social Injustice and Courage List and one novel from the Hero's Journey list.

Assignments are due the third week of school – **Friday, August 20, 2020. This due date is the same time for ALL students, whether enrolled in 9th Honors Literature first or second semester.**

This project counts for TWO major grades. These major grades cannot be replaced with alternate assignments, and no other chances to complete the summer reading assignments will be offered. In addition, there will be major writing assignments based on the summer reading as the term progresses. Students who do not complete the reading will have a difficult time being successful in the class.

Academic dishonesty will result in a zero with no chance for revision, so please be sure all work that you turn in is entirely your own. Do not use ANY resources other than the novels.

Submission: Once complete, your assignments **MUST** be submitted to your teacher in hard copy in a 9x12 envelope. All parts of the assignments, including the composition notebook, should be submitted in the envelope. **On the front of the envelope, write your name, the two novels you read, and the semester and class period that you are taking 9th Honor Literature.** Submitting in this format will help ensure all your work stays intact and earns you full credit.

You will need a composition notebook to complete the writing assignments. The writing assignments for both novels should be completed in the same composition notebook. This notebook will be used throughout the semester as well, so it is important that you have one.

Questions? Feel free to email Mrs. Holt with any questions or concerns. It may take a few days to get response over the summer, but I am here to help. I truly want students to be successful with these assignments and in the course.

Please note: some of the novels on the lists may include mature content and/or deal with sensitive subjects. I strongly recommend researching the novel choices before making your decision. Of course you are welcome to change your novel if time allows. All reading is to be done from the original text, rather than abridged versions, summaries, or text-aids. Also, if there is a corresponding movie, please understand that the movie version is different enough from the novel that simply watching the movie is not an acceptable alternative to reading the novel. You must also read the text in its entirety in order to complete the assignments based on the novels you will be given during the semester.

Book 1: Social Injustice and Courage

Choose ONE novel from this list:

- *The Book of Ivy* by Amy Engel
- *An Ember in the Ashes* by Sabaa Tahir
- *The Secret Side of Empty* by Maria Andreu
- *We Are All Made of Molecules* by Susin Nielson
- *When* by Victoria Laurie
- *Far From You* by Tess Sharpe
- *Girls Like Us* by Gail Giles
- *Here to Stay* by Sara Farizan
- *When I Was the Greatest* by James Reynolds
- *All American Boys* by Reynolds and Kiely

Assignment A: Written Component

After you read: In your composition notebook, write a response to EACH of the following writing prompts. Be sure to label the assignment with the novel title. Copy the question number and the question, then write your response in paragraph format (8-12 sentences, including a topic sentence and a conclusion sentence).

1. Identify one of the major themes of the novel. (Theme is a universal statement shown throughout the story, not a one- or two- word phrase.) Explain how the author develops the theme throughout the text. Give specific examples from several places in the novel.
2. Each of the novels deals with at least one specific issue that can be related to social injustice issues in existence today or issues affecting teens in the United States and around the world. Explain the connection between the issue(s) related in the novel and our real world today.
3. Choose one character from the text and describe him or her in depth. Include physical and personality traits. Give specific examples from the text. Also, discuss how the character contributes to the text as a whole.
4. Include an overall response to the text. This is not a plot summary; this is your reaction to the story. Include specific examples and evidence from the text. What parts did you like? What parts did you dislike? What do you wish was different? Why did you choose the novel? Would you recommend this novel to a friend?

Assignment B: Creative Component

For the creative component, select ONE from the following:

- A. Create an original (your own) poem (not haiku) or song reflecting the theme/characters/etc. of the story. A short (3-5 sentences) explanation of the connection to the novel should be included.
- B. Create an artistic rendering of some aspect of the novel such as an important event, characters, theme, relationship, concept, etc. Include a 3-5 sentence explanation of the piece and its connection to the novel. You must create this rendering either by hand or with a computer application such as Paint. You may not use Cliparts or premade photos.
- C. Write a series of 10-12 Twitter like responses that hold true to the 140 character limit per "tweet" to a particular element of the novel (scene, character, event, etc.)
- D. Create a playlist of at least 5 songs that reflect elements of the book (theme, character, scene, etc.). Provide the lyrics and a short (1-2 sentence) explanation for each song detailing the relevance and connection to the novel.
- E. Create a webpage or Facebook page for a character or event in the novel with a short explanation (4-6 sentences).

NOTE: All creative options must be completed on 8 ½ x 11 copy paper. You may complete the assignment digitally, but a printed copy is required. This project should be included in your envelope.

Book 2: Hero's Journey

Choose ONE novel from this list:

- *Whirligig* by Paul Fleischman
- *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien
- *Graceling* by Kristin Cashore
- *Inkheart* by Cornelia Funke
- *The Book of Lost Things* by John Connolly
- *Eragon* by Christopher Paolini
- *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury
- *Seafire* by Natalie C. Parker

Assignment A: Written Component

As you read: Select 5 passages from the novel. For each passage, choose one of the entry prompts and develop a response. The purpose of the two-column journal is to record your interactions with the text as you progress through the novel. Complete this writing assignment in your composition notebook. Be sure to label the assignment with the novel title.

- Show that you have read the entire novel by responding to passages from throughout the novel.
- Divide the page in half. Title the left column "Passages from the Text." Title the right column "Commentary/Responses."
- Each of your commentaries should be 7-10 sentences in length.
- An entry prompt may be used only once.
- Be sure to include the page number for each passage.

Entry Prompts:

1. This reminds me of...
2. The setting here gives the effect of...
3. The author/character seems to feel...
4. The tone of this part is...
5. A question I have about this part is...
6. This part is ironic because...
7. The imagery in this passage reveals...
8. An interesting word/phrase/sentence/thought in this passage is...
9. Something I notice/appreciate/don't appreciate about this part is...
10. This detail seems effective/out of place because...
11. I really connect with this character/event/relationship because...
12. I think this part is important to the novel as a whole because...

Example of a Two-Column Journal Entry: This is a sample for the work *Bless Me, Ultima*.

Passage from the Text

"She took my hand, and I felt the power of the whirlwind sweep around me. Her eyes swept the surrounding hills and through them I saw for the first time a new and wondrous universe. This wild beauty of our hills and the magic of the green river. My nostrils quivered as I felt the song of the mockingbirds, and the drone of the grasshoppers mingle with the pulse of the earth" (12).

Commentary/Responses

The imagery reveals Tony's sense of the earth around him. The author provides great detail as to Tony's experiences and observations of his surroundings. As Ultima touches his hand, Tony is drawn into what seems to be a powerful experience. This makes Tony think that Ultima knows his fate and that they will be close. It can be inferred that their relationship will be a significant part of the novel.

Assignment B: Creative Component

For the creative component, select ONE from the following options. Each option may be done on digitally or by hand.

A. Journey Map: Create a map charting at least 6 stops of the journey of the main character of the text *throughout* his/her story. For each stop, include an illustration/symbol and a brief (1-2 complete sentences) annotation describing what happened there. You should also indicate the order in which the journey occurred by numbering the stops or using arrows. This should be in color and look like a map and not a list of travels.

B. Timeline: Create a timeline of at least 12 major events from *throughout* the text. Each item on the timeline should include an illustration/symbol and a brief (1-2 sentences) description of the event. This should be neat and in color.

C. Diary: Pretend you are the character and you are keeping a diary **throughout all** of your travels. Include at least 10 entries. Each entry should be around 8-12 sentences in length. Reference specific events and stay true to the character.

D. Journalism: Create a series of magazine or newspaper articles reporting the events of the story. You should create at least 2 articles. Make sure you format your articles correctly, including columns, photos, captions, headings, etc.

E. Children's Book or Graphic Novel: Write and illustrate a children's book or a graphic novel relating the story. Be sure to include all major parts of the story. Illustrations should be neat and in color. Include at least 6 pages.

NOTE: All creative options must be completed on 8 ½ x 11 copy paper. You may complete the assignment digitally, but a printed copy is required. This project should be included in your envelope.