

PETERS TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL
CORE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE
THE BIBLE IN LITERATURE II
GRADES 9-12

For each of the sections that follow, students may be required to analyze, recall, explain, interpret, apply, or evaluate the particular concepts being taught.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This semester course will provide students with the opportunity to study one of the most influential books ever written - the Bible. Students will read the Gospels and other writings of the New Testament and examine biblical allusions in classic literature. Students will read other classic works of literature - a novel, short stories, and poetry - to analyze and interpret the Bible's influence. Knowledge of the Bible and its stories has long been recommended by colleges and universities because of the many biblical references that are found in great literature.

STUDY SKILLS:

ORGANIZATION:

- Keep course material, handouts, and study guides in an organized folder.
- Maintain an updated journal, filled with weekly reflections to various prompts and weekly biblical allusion observations.

ONLINE DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP:

- Effectively participate in online Discussion Board posts in Blackboard.
- Complete online quizzes, and utilize other interactive tools in Blackboard to complete various assignments.
- Navigate the tabs to find course material in Blackboard.
- Utilize reliable digital resources to conduct research.

READING, WRITING, AND SPEAKING:

- Students should compare literary works on the basis of form, structure, and content.
- Identify and evaluate the effective use of literary devices in given works.
- Demonstrate an increase in the scope of vocabulary.
- Participate in class discussions, and prepare a variety of presentations.

MAJOR UNIT THEMES:

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE IN LITERATURE II:

- Reflect on the benefits gained from an academic study of the Bible as literature and in literature.
- Review the constitutionality of studying the Bible.
- Review and reflect on the rationale for our textbook selection – *The Bible and Its Influence*.
- Analyze the influence of the New Testament on Western history and culture and more specifically, on American history and culture.
- Analyze and interpret the major themes and the kinds of literature found in The New Testament.
- Analyze and reflect on how understanding biblical allusions contributes to the study and enjoyment of literature, art, and music.
- Identify, interpret, and analyze biblical allusions in various pieces of literature, art, and music.
- Define the different literary genres found in the New Testament: narrative, poetry, proverb, parable, epistle, and visionary literature.

FOCUS ON THE NEW TESTAMENT AS ANOTHER COVENANT:

- Compare and contrast Jewish and Christian approaches to / interpretations of the Bible.
- Read, analyze, and interpret excerpts from the following pieces of Civil Rights literature: *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* by James Agee.
- Make connections between the themes, events, figures, conflicts, and other literary elements in portions of the New Testament with the literature, art, and music featured in the unit.
- Read, analyze, and interpret the themes in Handel's *Messiah* as outlined in the excerpt -- "Cultural Connections."

THE FOUR GOSPELS:

- Collaborate to analyze, interpret, discuss and report to the class about the literary elements in one of the four gospels.
- Identify examples of how the gospels of Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John have influenced Western culture.
- Read, analyze, and interpret excerpt from the following pieces of literature: "Simon the Cyrenian Speaks" by Countee Cullen, *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway, "The Journey of the Magi" by T.S. Eliot, and *Twelfth Night* by Shakespeare.
- Make connections between the themes, events, figures, conflicts, and other literary elements in portions of the New Testament with the literature, art, and music featured in the unit.

- Read, analyze, and interpret other literature that contains allusions to the gospels.

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY – A WORLD VIEW:

- Read and interpret the Acts of the Apostles and the Letters of Paul in order to interpret how these books influenced the formation of the new Christian community.
- Analyze how the journeys of Paul helped to spread the new Christian community along the Greek shipping routes.
- Read, analyze, and interpret excerpts from the following pieces of literature: Derek Walcott's poem "Pentecost," "St. Stephen and Herod," a medieval English ballad, and *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens.
- Make connections between the themes, events, figures, conflicts, and other literary elements in portions of the New Testament with the literature, art, and music featured in the unit.

THE LETTERS OF PAUL AND OTHER LETTERS:

- Read and analyze the Letters of Paul to interpret how Paul's works were important to the formation of the new Christian community.
- Analyze the general letters to identify and interpret the key arguments and essential content intended for the new Christian community.
- Interpret how the general letters gave advice on leading a good life and how John the Apostle focused on the message of love.
- Read, analyze, and interpret excerpts from the following pieces of literature: "The Birthmark" by Nathaniel Hawthorne, *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens, *Silence* by Shusaku Endo, *Franny and Zoe* by J.D. Salinger, and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis, *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis, *The Divine Comedy: the Inferno* by Dante Alighieri, and *The Gospel of Wealth* by Andrew Carnegie.
- Make connections between the themes, events, figures, conflicts, and other literary elements in portions of the New Testament with the literature, art, and music featured in the unit.

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE:

- Analyze and interpret the literary significance of the Book of Revelation as a prime example of apocalyptic literature.
- Read and interpret historical background information about the Book of Revelation.
- Read, analyze, and interpret excerpt from the following pieces of literature featured in the *BII* chapters: *Letters from Prison* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Holy Sonnet VII" by John Donne, *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, *The Prelude* by William Wordsworth, "Ode to the West Wind" by Percy Bysshe Shelley, "The Second Coming" and "A Vision" by William Butler Yeats, "The Hollow Men" and "The Waste Land" by T.S. Eliot, "The End of the World" by Archibald MacLeish, *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte, *The Divine Comedy* by Dante, and *Jerusalem* by William Blake.

- Make connections between the themes, events, figures, conflicts, and other literary elements in the Book of Revelation with the literature, art, and music featured in the unit.
- Identify, analyze, and interpret common themes, events, symbols, and other literary elements in Revelation with films, literature, art, etc. in contemporary/popular culture.
- Read, analyze, and interpret excerpts from Dante's *The Divine Comedy*.
- Interpret how the Book of Revelation has influenced/inspired other pieces of literature, music, and art, especially the epic poem by Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*.
- Interpret how the settings, themes, conflicts, images and symbols in Dante's work have inspired many works of art, music, and literature.

THE BIBLE'S IMPACT AND LEGACY:

- Analyze how the English Bible impacted the development of language and literacy throughout American history and how that influence continues today in a legacy of both freedom and faith.
- Analyze and interpret the impact of the following statement ... it has been said that "religious liberty makes pluralism more likely; pluralism makes religious liberty more necessary" (BII 372).
- Make connections between the themes, events, figures, conflicts, and other literary elements in portions of the New Testament with the literature, art, and music featured in the unit.

MATERIALS:

Blackboard (online classroom LMS)

Schippe, Cullen and Chuck Stetson, eds. *The Bible and Its Influence*. Ft. Royal, Virginia: Bible Literacy Project, 2006. Print.

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