

## Sports, Literature and Society

Mr. Miller

**Overview:** In a community and culture heavily influenced by and immersed in the world of sports, what better way is there to develop critical thinking and analytical communication and writing skills than in a forum where students are studying what affects, interests and inspires them? “Sports, Literature and Society” will focus on how sport is a metaphorical reflection of our culture and our world and will also explore how sport has been used as a platform for social commentary and philosophical questioning.

**Course Description:** Throughout the semester, we will study each sport in separate units, using the following two categories as vehicles for study:

Sports as Literature: Sport functions as its own literature, complete with its distinct language, characters, conflicts, themes, symbols, setting, and, of course, points of view. We will be using a wide array of non-fiction sports writing, including articles, columns and essays, in addition to a variety of clips from TV journalism and cinematic documentaries to examine and analyze how language and image are used to establish a story: the always changing, always controversial story of sport.

Sports Literature: Naturally, we will be reading and dissecting an expansive collection of sport novels, short stories and poems and viewing an assortment of sport films en route to discovering how and why authors and directors use the world of sport to tell their stories.

### Grading:

Each student’s grade will be calculated as follows:

**25%: Book Review Projects:** For the semester, each student will be asked to complete two projects. **First quarter**, the students will be independently reading one **nonfiction** sports book of their choice, and **second quarter**, they will be reading one **sports novel** of their choice. After reading closely, students will write critical responses.

**25%: Homework/Reading quizzes:** There will be occasional reading assignments, which will be assessed with homework (written responses) and “simple” quizzes.

**25%: Journal:** Each student needs a **bound** journal, which will be brought to class every day and will be used to expound on ideas we are discussing or are about to discuss.

**25%: Classwork:** All students are expected to contribute to class discussions, pay close attention, share ideas, ask thoughtful questions and behave in a respectful manner. Each student should have two folders and a notebook.

### Teams:

To fit in with the theme of the class and to measure how competition affects learning and interpersonal relationships, students will be put into teams, which will “compete” against each other during designated tasks and games. Teams will be different for both quarters. All members of each winning team will be inducted into the “Sports, Literature and Society **Hall of Fame**.”