

Scope and Sequence

The Red Couch Reading Room's
American Literature



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-Cara L. Shelton (aka Miss Cara)

Course: RCRR's American Literature (Amer Lit): Take Your Place in the Great Conversation

Reading Strand	Writing Strand	Oral Strand
<p>Description: The goal of reading the texts assigned in <i>RCRR's Amer Lit</i> is to increase the student's critical and analytical competency. Emphasis will be placed upon five levels of interaction with the text:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehension: the fundamental understanding of the text at a literal level. Through modeled reading, discussing, and being responsible for higher-level texts, the student learns to be fully cognizant during reading, and begins to develop more mature comprehension. 2. Discernment of meaning: In lecture, homework, and discussion, the student will be encouraged to find and understand the implications and inferences in a text, along with the deeper meaning they create. 3. Analysis: In American Lit, the student is constantly aware of the text as a product of its historical and sociopolitical context. 4. Critic: In this course, the student will be reminded to the reality of authorship and steered toward understanding the implications for theme and message. 5. Debating Criticism: Student will be introduced to existing critical analysis and guided through a process of examining the criticism via comparison with the text. <p>Student competency will be evaluated through the provided on-line reading comprehension quizzes, and study questions in written or oral discussion format. Vocabulary study is a critical element of competency, and each major unit includes a vocabulary component with assessment. Semester writing assignments provide extensive insight into a student's grasp of the works studied and their ability to work with elements of the text.</p>	<p>Description: The process of writing reflects and builds organization in thinking. The act of putting one's thoughts down on paper requires one to articulate those thoughts in a more formal and concrete way than any other mode of communication requires. Learning to write well, to write persuasively, to write with grace and style, is as much an art as it is a science. Writing goals for <i>American Literature</i> include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Master paragraph construction. Introduce the Toulmin method of argumentation and how it applies to literary analysis papers. 2. Understand how to correctly format a literary analysis paper, including specific introduction, supporting paragraph, and conclusion requirements. 3. Reinforce writing style tips to help bring grace and elegance to the expression of students' thoughts. <p>The bulk of improvement in writing happens as a result of exposure to good writing, which the student will obtain within the reading strand of the course, and with practice. RCRR's literature courses each contain a substantial writing component. In <i>American Lit</i>, the student will receive a</p>	<p>Description: The student will participate in dramatic readings of literary selections from a variety of genres including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poem • Speech or essay • Scene from a play • Sustained reading of a novel • Reader's Theater <p>Each semester, students will prepare to participate in a Socratic seminar around one of the works they have read. The student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take notes to prepare for oral presentation • Use relevant textual detail to support their assertions • Explain how textual quotes support points • Cite information sources • Use body language and eye contact to indicate active listening • Pose and respond to questions

The following texts will be covered during this course. **The texts which are highlighted must be purchased for the class by the student/parent. Any version is acceptable, but it must be unabridged and the student must be free to mark in it.** Other items (short stories, essays, poems, plays) will be provided via pdf for the student to print out or read on an e-reader:

Unit 1: Foundations in American Literature -The Colonials

- Anne Bradstreet, Piety & Passion (pdf)
- Anne Bradstreet, Poems
- John Smith, Jamestown reflections
- Mary Rowlandson, captivity narrative
- Johnathan Edwards, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*
- Edward Taylor, Poems
- Samuel Sewell, diary excerpts
- **Arthur Miller, *The Crucible***

Unit 2: Freedom Literature: The Revolutionaries

- Thomas Jefferson: *The Declaration of Independence*
- Patrick Henry: speech to Virginia House
- Phyllis Wheatley, Poems
- Ben Franklin: *Autobiography (excerpts), letters, essays*
- Washington Irving: *Rip Van Winkle, Sleepy Hollow, The Devil & Tom Walker*
- de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America (excerpts)*

Unit 3: American Renaissance:

- **Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter***
- Hawthorne: *The Birthmark & The Minister's Veil*
- Fireside Poets: (Bryant, Holmes, Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell) assorted poems
- Edgar Allen Poe: *Tell Tale Heart, Cask of Amontillado, The Purloined Letter*
- Walt Whitman, Edgar Allen Poe, Emily Dickinson - assorted

writing packet each semester entitled *Occupa Locum Tuum in Conloquio Magno* (*Take Your Place in the Great Conversation*).

This packet includes a selection of choices of literary responses, from which - together with their on-site teacher (parent or tutor) - the student will select four of the possible response prompts to which they will respond, forming their semester writing project. Estimated formal writing word count (for the year, divided between the two semester-long writing projects): 12,000

Literary Devices - the student will review/be introduced to several literary devices & techniques each unit. The goal will be to anchor their understanding in a well-known song or poem that uses the device, explore how the author fashioned and made use of the device, and then practice using the device in their own writing. The goal is to provide additional tools from which the student may select to hone his or her own writing. Devices covered will include:

- Allusion
- Simile & metaphor
- Analogy
- Personification
- Apostrophe
- Metonymy & Synecdoche
- Allegory
- Parallelism

- Use appropriate transitions to build on or change topics
- Summarize and clarify ideas

poems.

Unit 4: American Renaissance: The Transcendentalists & the Antis!

- Transcendentalists: Emerson & Thoreau, excerpts from “Walden” & “Self-Reliance” – also various poems
- Anti-Transcendentalists: Herman Melville: *Billy Budd, Sailor*

Unit 5: The Realists and the Naturalists:

- **Mark Twain, *The Adv. of Huckleberry Finn***
- **Frederick Douglass: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas.***
- Kate Chopin, O. Henry, Mary Freeman, Stephen Crane, Jack London: (Assorted Short Stories)

Unit 6: American Theater:

- Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*
- Edgar Lee Masters: *Spoon River Anthology*

Unit 7: Modernists:

- Steinbeck, *The Pearl*
- **Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby***
- Assorted Short Stories (Faulkner’s *A Rose for Miss Emily*, Gaspell’s *A Jury of Her Peers*)
- Assorted Poems: Langston Hughes, ee cummings, Williams Carlos Williams, Robert Frost

Unit 8: Post- WWII:

- **Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird***
- JFK - *First Inaugural Address*
- Ronald Reagan - *Let Us Make a Vow speech*

- Antithesis
- Climax
- Irony
- Understatement & Litotes
- Hyperbole
- Rhetorical Questions
- Diction Choice: Connotation vs. denotation
- Point of View
- Satire & Parody
- Alliteration
- Assonance & Consonance
- Cacophony vs. Euphony
- Onomatopoeia
- Rhyme in Poetry
- Refrain & Repetition
- Anaphora & Epistrophe
- Polysyndeton & Asyndeton
- Enjambment & Caesura
- Rhythm & Meter in Poetry

Grammar Review: Each of the 30 class lessons will include a quick “Grammar Gaffe” in which an Aesop’s fable is retold with evident grammar errors. The student will be encouraged to locate the errors, writing the fable correctly. The teacher/parent guide will include the solution, enabling them to quickly go through the errors and the rules behind them. Worksheets accompany this exercise.