

Freshman English

PREREQUISITES: Acceptance into the Freshman year at Covington Latin School

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Freshman English is designed as a composition course, emphasizing skills in mechanics and grammar as well as construction. Composition will center on narrative writing and literary response, as well as creative writing. Students will be introduced to the major genre of literature and learn to be active readers.

COURSE GOALS:

- To learn methods of taking notes and studying
- To learn and be able to recognize parts of speech and parts of the sentence
- To learn the components of the writing process
- To read and appreciate great works of American and world literature

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To learn the components of a five-paragraph essay and literary response essay
- To properly edit and improve one's own composition
- To learn how to convey one's opinion on a topic through writing
- To recognize and diagram correctly parts of speech and parts of the sentence
- To come to appreciate the craft of short story writers, novelists, poets and playwrights

Quarter One

Grammar

Review of Parts of Speech

Goals and objectives: Students will participate in an overview of terms and definitions designed to familiarize them with these building blocks of language, and as a basis for more in-depth study. This overview serves to complement and precede the study of parts of speech in their Latin class.

Formative Evaluation: Students will identify in class discussion parts of speech and create sentences that demonstrate their familiarity.

Nouns Unit

Goals and objectives: Students will study nouns and their roles in sentences, as well as proper, plural, and possessive forms.

Formative Evaluation: Students will demonstrate mastery in a series of quizzes and a final unit test.

Pronouns Unit

Goals and Objectives: Students will study personal pronouns and their cases, interrogative pronouns, relative pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, and compound personal pronouns (reflexive and intensive).

Formative Evaluation: Students will demonstrate mastery in a series of quizzes and a final unit test.

Literature

Short Stories and Literary Devices

The Secret Life of Walter Mitty: point of view

The Most Dangerous Game: plot diagram, foreshadowing, irony, conflict

The Interlopers: conflict, setting, plot

The Lady or the Tiger: dilemma, characterization

Goals and Objectives: Students will understand and appreciate how authors employ literary devices to convey meaning in their writing.

Formative Evaluation: Students will demonstrate reading comprehension and appreciation in classroom discussion, a series of quizzes, and mastery of literary devices in a final unit test.

Writing

The Writing Process, Personal Narratives, Literary Responses, and Creative Writing

Goals and Objectives: After a review of the writing process, students will create narrative essays which convey their life experiences (“my scariest moment,” “a time when I’ve experienced or witnessed prejudice,” “my unjust punishment,” etc.) which parallel the short story study. Creative writing will involve crafting a short story, with a student partner, based upon an illustration from the Chris Van Allsburg book *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick*.

Formative Evaluation: Students will demonstrate an introductory knowledge of the writing process and the literary response essay.

Personal Journal

Goals and Objectives: Throughout the year, each student will create a journal with 2-3 entries per month. The entries will sometimes be responses to the work of literature we are studying (often assigned) or short essays about something they have encountered in the media or society. The goal is to improve their written communication skills in a less-formal way and foster creative approaches to writing.

Formative Evaluation: Students will submit their journal each month and be evaluated on how well they met the objectives.

Quarter Two

Grammar

Verbs and Verb Tenses

Goals and Objectives: Students will study the four principal parts of irregular verbs and fourteen different verb tenses and how they impact meaning in writing. Study will also focus on voice, transitive and intransitive verbs, and helping verbs.

Formative Evaluation: Students will be able to recognize incorrect verb forms and create sentences using correct forms and write using different tenses of verbs and active and passive voice. Evaluation will culminate in a final unit test.

Modifiers

Goals and Objectives: Students will study adjectives, articles and adverbs and how they enhance description in our language.

Formative Evaluation: Students will be able to recognize and use adjectives, articles and adverbs in sentences. Evaluation will culminate in a final unit test.

Prepositions

Goals and Objectives: Students will study prepositions and their function in language as connectors. The function of prepositional phrases as modifiers will also be studied.

Formative Evaluation: Students will be able to list at least forty prepositions and use them correctly in quizzes and a final unit test.

Literature

The Odyssey

Goals and objectives: As a complement to their study of ancient history in their World Civilization class, students will read an English translation of the text and discussion will, among other topics, center upon the epic journey in the literary tradition.

Formative Evaluation: Reading quizzes and a final paper will demonstrate an understanding of the epic and the work.

A Christmas Carol

Goals and objectives: As they read, students will study the many themes of the novel and the timeless lessons for today's readers. Victorian literature, Victorian society and the life of Dickens will also be explored.

Formative Evaluation: Reading quizzes and a final paper will demonstrate an understanding of the work and the impact of Charles Dickens on world literature.

Writing

Five Paragraph Essay, Literary Response and Analysis

Goals and objectives: Students will, in five paragraph essay form, express a grasp and appreciation of the epic and the novel, especially in reference to thematic elements in both works.

a Formative Evaluation: Students will demonstrate a grasp of the form of the five-paragraph essay and the literary response essay.

Quarter Three

Grammar

Verbals

Goals and objectives: Students will explore the use of gerunds, participles and infinitives and the many roles they play in our language as nouns, adjectives, and adverbs.

Formative Evaluation: Students will be able to recognize and use verbals in sentences. Evaluation will culminate in a final unit test.

Parts of the Sentence and Sentence Structure

Goals and objectives: Students will study the different parts of the sentence, different types of sentences, phrases and clauses, and the difference between complete sentences and fragments. This will be in addition to previous class discussion and teacher response to their composition.

Formative Evaluation: In addition to quizzes, unit tests in predicate words and direct and indirect objects will be administered.

Diagramming Sentences

Goals and objectives: Students will learn the analysis of sentence structure and traditional rules of sentence diagramming.

Formative Evaluation: Students will show mastery of diagramming in class quizzes and a final unit test (most likely culminating in the fourth quarter).

Literature

Poetry and Poetry Terms

Casey at the Bat: literal and figurative language, rhyme

The Runaway: rhyme scheme, imagery

The Ballad of William Sycamore: ballad

Lord Randall: ballad

The Raven: internal rhyme, repetition

Legacies: theme

Sarajevo Bear: symbolism

Dream Deferred: The Harlem Renaissance

Dreams: symbolism and metaphor

Goals and Objectives: Students will understand and appreciate how poetry impacts everyday life for those who study and enjoy it.

Formative Evaluation: Students will demonstrate mastery of the poetry terms in a final unit test. They will also create a work of “found poetry,” using a news story, cartoon, or advertisement (any printed work, really) to search for hidden poetic potential and craft a poem from it.

Shakespeare and *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*

Goals and Objectives: Students will learn about the life of William Shakespeare and his impact on the English language and world literature. The canon of his work will be studied, as well as Elizabethan vocabulary in preparation for the play. The challenges of being an Elizabethan actor will be studied in Marchette Chute's *Shakespeare of London*. An introduction to line scanning and iambic pentameter precedes the play, as well. The entire play is read in class by students and teacher.

Formative Evaluation: Students will be tested on Shakespearean and Elizabethan history, as well as Elizabethan vocabulary. Students will translate a scene, then act it out in the original language. A final paper on character analysis will end the unit (most likely culminating in the fourth quarter).

Writing

Poetry, The Five Paragraph Essay and Literary Analysis

Goals and Objectives: Students will create a poem (see “found poetry” above) and write a character analysis in five paragraph form about a character in *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*.

Formative Evaluation: Students will demonstrate a grasp of poetic devices in their poems, and progress and improvement with their mastery of the five-paragraph essay and literary response essay.

Quarter Four

Grammar

Diagramming (continued, see Quarter Three above)

Literature

Shakespeare and *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* (continued, see Quarter Three above)

To Kill a Mockingbird

Goals and Objectives: In reading the novel, students will study the historical context, the reliability of the first-person narrator, setting, and thematic elements.

Formative Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on reading comprehension and their grasp of the importance of the novel in reading quizzes and a final paper.

Writing

Goals and Objectives: Students will explore a historical reference in *To Kill a Mockingbird* and write a research paper on that topic.

Formative Evaluation: Students will create research papers in which research and sources are evident and sources are documented in MLA style.

EVALUATION: papers, worksheets and exercises, quizzes, tests, projects.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS: worksheets, additional poems, videos