

# CALL OF THE WILD

## Description

Call of the Wild utilizes a wide range of literature and media, challenging students to continually reexamine their relationship with nature. Major attention will be paid to assessing the role that nature does or should play in modern life. Texts include novels, films, essays, stories, poems, artwork, and music. Writing assignments include critical analysis, narrative reflection, and field journaling. All reading and analysis for Call of the Wild require an introspective spirit of philosophical inquiry and the ability to make connections and articulate common themes.

In addition to analyzing and responding to literature, students are expected to participate in experiential activities that take place within wilderness settings. A day hike in nearby rural Connecticut extends the students' appreciation of the images often utilized in nature writing, such as old stone walls, the New England farm, trees, beaver lodges, and wilderness sounds. Students are afforded the opportunity to step out of a busy routine and closely observe the beauty and significance of their own local landscape. The backpacking trip on the Appalachian Trail in north-west Connecticut provides an intensive physical and psychological adventure that draws the students together socially, stimulates individual growth, and further motivates interest in the role of wilderness in their own lives. Students are also required to document their independent experiences in nature in their field journals.

## Course Overview

### Course Goals

Students should:

- further develop their collaborative skills by participating in serious class discussion which demands alert listening and substantive responding.
- identify and articulate their own values and attitudes towards nature – related themes and topics of the course through introspection fostered by ongoing collaborations, their extensive class notes about readings, class discussions, impromptu writing, and formal writing assignments.
- construct a glossary from readings and discussions comprised of vocabulary specific themes of the course.
- develop sophisticated analytical reading skills for fiction and non-fiction that include identification of theme, purpose,

### Essential Questions

- How do we understand what we read?
- How does literature enrich our lives?
- How do we write, speak and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

### Assessments

*Common Assessments*

*Skill Assessments*

<p>and narrative style.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write well-organized, concise, and well-supported expository essays in nature which incorporate the themes of the course.</li> <li>• write well-organized, concise, and well-supported narrative essays about their own experiences in nature which reflect an understanding of nature writing and which may be used as the basis for a college essay.</li> <li>• document and reflect upon independent experiences in local natural settings by keeping a field journal.</li> <li>• conduct an independent study stemming from the focus questions of the course and deliver an engaging presentation on that project.</li> <li>• demonstrate a willingness and some ability to participate in all of the experiential components of the course.</li> </ul>		
<p><b><u>Content Outline</u></b></p> <p>I. <a href="#">Unit 1</a> - Lives Out of Balance  II. <a href="#">Unit 2</a> - One Foot In; One Foot Out  III. <a href="#">Unit 3</a> - The Listening Point  IV. <a href="#">Unit 4</a> - Landscape and the Human Story  V. <a href="#">Unit 5</a> - The Country Walk  VI. <a href="#">Unit 6</a> - Wilderness Experience  VII. <a href="#">Unit 7</a> - Individual Inquiry</p>	<p><b><u>Standards</u></b></p> <p><a href="#">State of Connecticut English Language Arts Curriculum Frameworks</a></p> <p>Connecticut State Standards are met in the following areas:</p> <p><i>Reading and Responding</i>  <b>Students read, comprehend and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts in both print and multimedia formats.</b></p> <p><i>Exploring and Responding to Literature -</i>  <b>Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and</b></p>	

	<p><b>literary periods.</b></p> <p><i>Communicating with Others</i>  <b>Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.</b></p> <p><i>Applying English Language Conventions</i>  <b>Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.</b></p>	
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Pacing Guide						
1st Marking Period			2nd Marking Period			
Month 1	Month 2		Month 3	Month 4		Month 5
Unit 1 <u>Lives Out of Balance</u> 2 weeks	Unit 2 <u>One Foot In; One Foot Out</u> 2 weeks	Unit 3 <u>The Listening Point</u> 3 weeks	Unit 4 <u>Landscape and the Human Story</u> 3 weeks	Unit 5 <u>The Country Walk</u> 1 Week	Unit 6 <u>Wilderness Experience</u> 3 weeks	Unit 7 <u>Individual Inquiry</u> 4 weeks

## Unit 1 - Lives Out of Balance, 2 weeks [top](#)

### Standards

#### *Reading and Responding*

**Students interpret, analyze and evaluate text in order to extend understanding and appreciation.**

Students will:

- discuss and respond to texts by making text-to-self, text-to-text and text-to-world connections.

### Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- evaluate the universality of the two focus questions for this unit.
- articulate the personal implications of this philosophical inquiry.
- identify a central emerging theme and explore that theme within several relevant texts.
- identify the salient aspects of class discussion and readings by keeping extensive notes.
- analyze emerging theme through class collaboration.

### Essential Question

- How do we understand what we read?

### Focus Questions

- Why do the "mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation," and what can be done to avoid it?
- In what ways has modern suburban America(Fairfield) grown detached from the basic influences and cycles of nature?

### Assessment

- Reflection, referencing specific literary texts

### Lesson Planning Resources

### Suggested Materials/Resources

### Skill Objectives

Students will:

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### Technology Resources

### Differentiated Instruction

### Enrichment/ELL

## Unit 2 – One Foot In; One Foot Out, 2 weeks [top](#)

### Standards

#### *Reading and Responding*

**Students select and apply strategies to facilitate word recognition and develop vocabulary in order to comprehend text.**

Students will:

- develop vocabulary through listening, speaking, reading and writing.

#### *Exploring and Responding to Literature*

**Students recognize and appreciate that contemporary and classical literature has shaped human thought.**

Students will:

- discuss, analyze and evaluate how characters deal with the diversity of human experience and conflict.

#### *Communicating with Others*

**Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.**

Students will:

- use the appropriate features of persuasive, narrative, expository or poetic writing.

**Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.**

Students will:

- apply the most effective processes to create and present a written, oral or visual piece.
- revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency and clarity.

#### *Applying English Language Conventions*

**Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.**

Students will:

- demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.
- use resources for proofreading and editing.

### Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- explore multiple definitions of wilderness and their implications for our relationship to nature.
- examine the hero quest motif and specifically explore and evaluate the actions of Chris McCandless and other literary and/or historic figures.

### Essential Questions

- How do we understand what we read?
- How does literature enrich our lives?
- How do we write, speak and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

### Focus Questions

### Assessment

- Exploratory essay referencing specific literary texts

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify specific archetypal patterns including the hero's journey into the unknown(wilderness) and the father figure.</li> <li>• connect the focus questions of the course and major themes to their reading of a book length memoir.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the essential elements of a "wilderness" experience, and what part do these elements play in the quest for a satisfying and meaningful life?</li> <li>• What are some of the essential symbols of humanity's relationship with the natural world, and how are these symbols reflected in literature and in our lives?</li> <li>• Specifically, what is the basic hero quest motif, and how does it reflect the conflicting influences of social and natural forces on the spirit of youth, both in literature and in life?</li> </ul>	
<b><u>Lesson Planning Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Suggested Materials/Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Skill Objective</u></b> Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate sentence variety (coordination and subordination; use of sentence fragments) in their writing.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Technology Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Differentiated Instruction</u></b>	<b><u>Enrichment/ELL</u></b>

### Unit 3 - The Listening Point, 3 weeks [top](#)

#### Standards

##### *Communicating with Others*

**Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.**

Students will:

- use the appropriate features of persuasive, narrative, expository or poetic writing.
- write to delight in the imagination.

**Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.**

Students will:

- apply the most effective processes to create and present a written, oral or visual piece.
- revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency and clarity.

##### *Applying English Language Conventions*

**Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.**

Students will:

- demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.
- use resources for proofreading and editing.

#### Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- examine the need for and possibility of finding release and renewal in nature without jeopardizing healthy and responsible relationships with society.
- identify the essential elements of a “listening point,” and consider those elements in the discovery of their own local listening point.
- closely observe and document specific elements in nature through the completion of field journal entries.
- develop and articulate various inventive expressions of their communion with the natural world, which may include: haiku, free-writes, photography, and sketches.

#### Essential Questions

- How do we write, speak and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

#### Focus Questions

- What role do solitude and silence play in enhancing our relationships with nature and with one another?
- What means can be employed to recognize and reestablish connections to and respect for the basic influences and cycles of nature?
- How can close examination of natural phenomena reveal truths about our own psychology?
- How can appropriate balances be developed between the interests of the environment and

#### Assessment

- Field journal entries



	<p>those of our commercial society?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what ways does technology alienate humanity from nature? How can technology be brought into harmony with nature?</li> </ul>	
<b><u>Lesson Planning Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Suggested Materials/Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Skill Objective</u></b> Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate consistency of voice.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Technology Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Differentiated Instruction</u></b>	<b><u>Enrichment/ELL</u></b>

## Unit 4 - Landscape and the Human Story, 3 weeks [top](#)

### Standards

#### *Communicating with Others*

Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.

Students will:

- research information from multiple sources for a specific purpose.

### Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- demonstrate an understanding of and an appreciation for the power of stories, rituals and heritage in Native American cultures in comparison to their own lives.
- evaluate the notion that modern society diminishes our awareness of landscape and the basic cycles of nature.
- analyze a full-length literary text in light of the essential questions of this unit.
- conduct interviews.
- research the story behind an important object in their home, their town, or their religion.

### Essential Question

- How do we write, speak and present effectively?

### Focus Questions

- What is the essential philosophical difference in viewing nature between mainstream Western and Native American attitudes?
- How can knowledge of local history, legends, stories, and landscapes enhance our appreciation of and respect for place?

### Assessment

- Personal archaeology assignment, demonstrating research and reflection

### Lesson Planning Resources

### Suggested Materials/Resources

### Skill Objective

Students will:

- punctuate restrictive and non-restrictive clauses correctly.

### Technology Resources

### Differentiated Instruction

### Enrichment/ELL

## Unit 5 - The Country Walk, 1 week [top](#)

### Standards

#### *Reading and Responding*

**Students interpret, analyze and evaluate text in order to extend understanding and appreciation.**

Students will:

- discuss and respond to texts by making text-to-self, text-to-text and text-to-world connections.

#### *Communicating with Others*

**Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.**

Students will:

- use the appropriate features of persuasive, narrative, expository or poetic writing.

**Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.**

Students will:

- apply the most effective processes to create and present a written, oral or visual piece.
- revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency and clarity.

#### *Applying English Language Conventions*

**Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.**

Students will:

- demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.
- use resources for proofreading and editing.

### Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- develop and demonstrate an appreciation for ways that natural history and human history have shaped local landscapes.
- demonstrate sense of curiosity, imagination and wonder by closely observing seemingly commonplace features of the land (growth patterns, stone walls and other relics of human history, markers of geologic time).
- reflect on the country walk experience through classroom activities.

### Essential Questions

- How do we understand what we read?
- How do we write, speak and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

### Focus Questions

- What means can be employed to recognize and reestablish connections to and respect for the basic influences and cycles of nature?
- How can knowledge of local history, legends, stories, and landscapes enhance our appreciation of and respect for place?

### Assessment

- Reflective essay demonstrating narrative thinking

<b><u>Lesson Planning Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Suggested Materials/Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Skill Objective</u></b> Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate appropriate diction by avoiding clichés, jargon, slang, and colloquialisms: using vivid language.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Technology Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Differentiated Instruction</u></b>	<b><u>Enrichment/ELL</u></b>

## Unit 6 – Wilderness Experience, 3 weeks [top](#)

### **Standards**

#### ***Reading and Responding***

**Students use appropriate strategies before, during and after reading in order to construct meaning.**

Students will:

- identify, use and analyze text structures.

**Students interpret, analyze and evaluate text in order to extend understanding and appreciation.**

Students will:

- discuss and respond to texts by making text-to-self, text-to-text and text-to-world connections.

#### ***Communicating with Others***

**Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.**

Students will:

- use the appropriate features of persuasive, narrative, expository or poetic writing.

**Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.**

Students will:

- apply the most effective processes to create and present a written, oral or visual piece.
- revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency and clarity.

#### ***Applying English Language Conventions***

**Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.**

Students will:

- demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.
- use resources for proofreading and editing.

### **Unit Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- acquire and practice the essential skills and ethics of safe and responsible travel through the backcountry (Leave No Trace, Honor Code, Gear and Food Preparation).
- develop a heightened awareness of their role within the dynamics of a group endeavor.
- develop an understanding of nature

### **Essential Questions**

- How do we understand what we read?
- How do we write, speak and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

### **Focus Questions**

- What are the essential elements of a "wilderness" experience, and what part do these elements play in the quest for a satisfying and

### **Assessment**

- Personal narrative essay (option to use as a college essay)

<p>writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflect upon their experiences in nature.</li> </ul>	<p>meaningful life?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what ways do physical challenge and adventure in the natural world promote personal growth?</li> </ul>	
<b><u>Lesson Planning Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Suggested Materials/Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Skill Objectives</u></b> Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b><u>Technology Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Differentiated Instruction</u></b>	<b><u>Enrichment/ELL</u></b>

## Unit 7 – Individual Inquiry, 4 weeks [top](#)

### Standards

#### *Communicating with Others*

**Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.**

Students will:

- use oral language with clarity, voice and fluency to communicate a message.

**Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.**

Students will:

- determine purpose, point of view and audience, and choose an appropriate written, oral or visual format.
- apply the most effective processes to create and present a written, oral or visual piece.
- revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency and clarity.
- research information from multiple sources for a specific purpose.
- evaluate the validity of primary and secondary sources of information to authenticate research.
- publish and/or present final products in a myriad of ways, including the use of the arts and technology.

#### *Applying English Language Conventions*

**Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.**

Students will:

- demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.
- use resources for proofreading and editing.

### Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- plan and explore their own line of inquiry that addresses one of the focus questions of the course.
- pursue some experiential enrichment beyond library or computer-based research such as: personal interviews with experts, a visit to a museum, self-designed field experience, participation in a community group or activity, reading a teacher-approved supplemental book, designing and conducting a survey.
- present a polished multi-media

### Essential Questions

- How do we write, speak and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

### Focus Question

- Each student selects an essential question as the basis for their own, self-directed inquiry.

### Assessments

- Construct an Action Log documenting time and energies spent on the experimental enrichment component of their learning
- Independent Study project
- Multimedia Presentation
- Final Reflection in response to the focus question which demonstrates their independent learning

<p>presentation of their findings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• connect a full-length text, which has been read and journaled extensively, to the larger themes of the course.</li> <li>• analyze themes of the course by participating in discussion of supplemental readings.</li> </ul>		
<b><u>Lesson Planning Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Suggested Materials/Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Skill Objectives</u></b> Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b><u>Technology Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Differentiated Instruction</u></b>	<b><u>Enrichment/ELL</u></b>