

# ENGLISH 31

## Description

This course focuses on increasing students' personal response to texts by adding reading strategies of research about biography, history, and culture to their repertoire of reading strategies. Students explore the assumptions inherent in the texts they read as well as the assumptions of themselves as readers shaped by their culture. Students read notable works of American literature and analyze those texts in relation to one another. Students write a broad range of formal expository and inventive pieces which include a personal narrative about culture, a narrative of thought about a pervasive idea of the American experience, an argument/proposal about an issue in contemporary American society as well as a speech about that issue, an extended definition about a term related to the American frontier, a memoir about the American Dream, a debate about disenfranchisement and the American Dream, an exploratory essay about inequities in the American society, creative writing from the perspective of a literary character, and a literary analysis of a text from a particular literary period.

## Course Overview

### Course Goals

Students should:

- recognize, question, and articulate values, beliefs, and practices of the American experience.
- identify cultural assumptions of a text and how they reflect and/or challenge their own assumptions.
- engage in metacognition through reading, writing, collaboration, speaking and debating.
- distinguish how language functions to construct and deconstruct beliefs, meaning, and perceptions.
- construct a knowledge base of American historical and cultural influences.
- increase their ability to think in unconventional and individualistic ways as demonstrated through discourse.
- develop familiarity with literary criticism in order to challenge and qualify the literary perspectives of others through writing and discourse.

### 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*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write formal papers that go through the full steps of the writing process, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Personal Narrative</li> <li>○ Narrative of Thought</li> <li>○ Argument / Proposal</li> <li>○ Persuasive Speech</li> <li>○ Extended Definition Essay</li> <li>○ Memoir</li> <li>○ Literary Analysis</li> <li>○ Creative Writing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• demonstrate an expanded view of economic, social, and racial factors which influence their individual assumptions and the assumptions of the national culture as well as the local culture.</li> <li>• conduct research utilizing print and non-print sources.</li> <li>• demonstrate narrative, deductive, and inductive thinking in expository writing and oral presentations.</li> </ul>		
<p><b><u>Content Outline</u></b></p> <p>I. <a href="#">Unit 1</a> - American Culture</p> <p>II. <a href="#">Unit 2</a> - Individualism in America Society</p> <p>III. <a href="#">Unit 3</a> - Individual Thought and Independent Action</p> <p>IV. <a href="#">Unit 4</a> - The American Frontier: Then and Now</p> <p>V. <a href="#">Unit 5</a> - The American Dream</p> <p>VI. <a href="#">Unit 6</a> - Inequities in American Society</p> <p>VII. <a href="#">Unit 7</a> - American Literary Periods</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><b><i>Reading and Responding</i></b>  <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><b><i>Exploring and Responding to Literature</i></b>  <b>Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and</b></p>	<p><b><u>Grade Level Skills</u></b></p> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

	<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			3rd Marking Period			4th Marking Period	
September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Unit 1 <u><a href="#">American Culture</a></u>  2 weeks	Unit 2 <u><a href="#">Individualism in America Society</a></u>  6 weeks	Unit 3 <u><a href="#">Individual Thought and Independent Action</a></u>  6 weeks	Unit 4 <u><a href="#">The American Frontier: Then and Now</a></u>  5 weeks	Unit 5 <u><a href="#">The American Dream</a></u>  6 weeks	Unit 6 <u><a href="#">Inequities in American Society</a></u>  6 weeks	Unit 7 <u><a href="#">American Literary Periods</a></u>  2 weeks			

**Unit 1: American Culture, 2 weeks** [top](#)

**Standards**

*Exploring and Responding to Literature*

**Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.**

Students will:

- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.

*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.

*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:

- recognize and evaluate artifacts of American culture.
- read texts that reveal a variety of perceptions about American society.
- use classroom experiences, including discussion, readings, and informal writing, to develop their own perceptions about American society.

**Essential Questions**

- 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**

- What is American culture?
  - What is unique about American culture?
  - What are foreign perceptions of American society?
  - Is there an exclusively American identity?

**Assessments**

- Personal narrative, incorporating an analysis of cultural artifacts

**Skill Objectives**

Students will:

- avoid vague language (i.e. “thing”,

		“got”) • demonstrate consistent point of view (avoid switching to “you” in writing).
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## Unit 2: Individualism in America Society, 6 weeks [top](#)

### Standards

#### *Exploring and Responding to Literature*

**Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.**

Students will:

- analyze and evaluate the basic beliefs, perspectives and assumptions underlying an author's work.
- discuss how the experiences of an author influence the text.
- discuss how the experiences of a reader influence the interpretation of a text.
- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.

#### *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:

- analyze an American text that illustrates how society treats an individual with beliefs or attitudes which conflict with norms of the larger group and relate that conflict to contemporary America.
- discuss essays from the American Romantic period (including Transcendentalism) which reveal the

### Essential Questions

- 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

- Does American society truly value individualism?
  - How can one be both an individual and a

### Assessment

- Narrative of thought which traces the development of an idea relevant to the unit and incorporates references to multiple works studied in class

<p>perpetual struggle between individuals and American society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and evaluate contemporary American beliefs about what it means to be an individual, specifically including examples of how we deal with “dissenters” in our country today.</li> <li>• integrate writing techniques of consistent voice, metacognition, and the weaving of references to multiple texts.</li> <li>• record interpretive responses to each text preliminary to the assessment</li> </ul>	<p>part of society?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How has and how does our society treat individuals who stray from American cultural norms?</li> <li>○ Do we, as Americans, truly value individualism?</li> </ul>	
		<p><b><u>Skill Objective</u></b>  Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eliminate use of vague pronoun reference.</li> </ul>

### Unit 3 - Individual Thought and Independent Action, 6 weeks [top](#)

#### **Standards**

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

**Students communicate with others to create interpretations of written, oral and visual texts.**

Students will:

- persuade listeners about understandings and judgments of works read, written and viewed.

##### ***Exploring and Responding to Literature***

**Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.**

Students will:

- analyze and evaluate the basic beliefs, perspectives and assumptions underlying an author's work.
- discuss how the experiences of an author influence the text.
- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.

##### ***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.
- 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 speak and write using standard language structures and diction appropriate to audience and task.**

Students will:

- evaluate the impact of language as related to audience and purpose.

**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:

#### **Essential Questions**

- How do we understand what we read?

#### **Assessments**

- Argument/ Proposal, persuading in



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• read texts that illustrate the movement from individual thought to independent action and, through written and oral discourse, analyze what forces are influential in provoking that process.</li> <li>• recognize and apply rhetorical devices including tone, organization, logos, pathos, and ethos.</li> <li>• identify and discuss how specific American literary figures (authors and characters) have been instrumental in changing the course of American society.</li> <li>• develop a thesis statement avoiding inflated or vague language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does literature enrich our lives?</li> <li>• How do we write, speak and present effectively?</li> <li>• How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Focus Questions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What provokes the movement from individual thought to independent action? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Why act against conventional beliefs?</li> <li>○ What positive and negative consequences could stem from independent action?</li> <li>○ How have the actions of individual men and women shaped the landscape of American society?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>regard to an issue in contemporary American society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persuasive speech and written text, incorporating use of rhetorical devices</li> </ul>
		<p><b><u>Skill Objective</u></b> Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• avoid inflated or vague language when formulating thesis statements of exploratory questions in essays.</li> </ul>

## Unit 4 - The American Frontier: Then and Now, 5 weeks [top](#)

### Standards

#### *Exploring and Responding to Literature*

**Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.**

Students will:

- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.

#### *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:

- analyze texts that examine the harmful consequences potentially present in a spirit of conquest.
- through written and oral discourse, identify the causes and effects of frontier mentality in American history and/or contemporary society.
- demonstrate an understanding of critical thinking strategies of cause and effect, analogy, classification, and exemplification.

### Essential Questions

- 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 Question

- Is a frontier mentality (including concept of conquest, manifest Destiny, and a spirit of exploration) still essential part of the American spirit?
  - Does “conquest” inherently imply “progress”?

### Assessment

- Extended definition essay, demonstrating deductive thinking, which examines a term related a concept from the unit

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What attitudes or beliefs about America are reflected in our country's historic desire for conquest?</li> <li>○ How has our country been shaped by a spirit of pioneering and exploration?</li> </ul>	
		<p><b><u>Skill Objective</u></b> Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● eliminate excessive wordiness and redundancy in writing.</li> </ul>

## Unit 5 - The American Dream, 6 weeks [top](#)

### **Standards**

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

**Students communicate with others to create interpretations of written, oral and visual texts.**

Students will:

- persuade listeners about understandings and judgments of works read, written and viewed.

#### ***Exploring and Responding to Literature***

**Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.**

Students will:

- analyze and evaluate the basic beliefs, perspectives and assumptions underlying an author's work.
- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.

#### ***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.
- 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.

#### ***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:

- read and analyze texts that challenge traditional notions of the American Dream.
- develop and use a vocabulary list that can be used to cultivate sophisticated

### **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**

- Memoir, demonstrating narrative thinking, exploring the question: Is the American Dream worth pursuing?
- Formal debate about disenfranchisement and the American Dream

<p>discussion of style in writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate understanding of the writing strategies of developing a consistent voice and using dialogue.</li> <li>• through discourse and informal writing assignments, trace and document the evolution of the American Dream.</li> <li>• document how some groups may be disenfranchised by the expectations implicit in our society's concept of The American Dream.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Focus Questions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the American dream worth pursuing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What shape does the American Dream take in contemporary American society?</li> <li>○ How has the concept of the American Dream evolved and what has remained consistent?</li> <li>○ Is the American Dream an inclusive or exclusive ideology?</li> <li>○ How has the concept of the American Dream shaped our actions and beliefs as a society?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
		<p><b><u>Skill Objectives</u></b></p> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop and use a glossary of terms which can be used to cultivate sophisticated discussion of style in writing.</li> <li>• punctuate complex sentences correctly.</li> </ul>

## Unit 6 – Inequities in American Society, 6 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.

**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.
- research information from multiple sources for a specific purpose.
- evaluate the validity of primary and secondary sources of information to authenticate research.

#### *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:

- demonstrate an expanded view of economic, social and racial factors which influence their individual assumptions and the assumptions of the national culture.
- find and use critical sources in order to develop their own analysis of a text.
- investigate and discuss how labels such as “mainstream,” “majority,” “subculture,” and “minority” disseminate notions about “others”.
- read texts that reflect the existence of power structures and analyze how those structures can be oppressive to various groups in American society.

### Essential Questions

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

### Focus Questions

- How do dynamics between dominant and less dominant groups perpetuate or challenge existing power structures in American society?
  - Who holds power in American society and how is that power handled?
  - How do the beliefs and decisions of those who have power affect those who do not?
  - How does one gain power in American society?
  - What structures in American society

### Assessments

- Exploratory essay, demonstrating inductive thinking and addressing a question which arises from an experience-based project
- Creative writing from a lens/perspective of a literary character

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>participate in an experience-based project that fosters awareness of local power structures.</li> </ul>	<p>perpetuate existent power dynamics?</p>	
		<p><b><u>Skill Objective</u></b>  Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate sentence combining and crafting by incorporating parallelism, participial phrases and clauses, gerunds and sentence variety (e.g. compound and complex) in their writing.</li> </ul>

## Unit 7 – American Literary Periods, 2 weeks [top](#)

### **Standards**

#### ***Exploring and Responding to Literature***

**Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.**

Students will:

- analyze and evaluate the basic beliefs, perspectives and assumptions underlying an author’s work.
- discuss how the experiences of an author influence the text.
- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.

#### ***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.
- 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.
- research information from multiple sources for a specific purpose.
- evaluate the validity of primary and secondary sources of information to authenticate research.

#### ***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:

- investigate a specific literary period in American history (Romantic, Realist, Modern – Harlem Renaissance / Lost Generation, Contemporary – Beat Movement / Postmodernism) and present

### **Essential Questions**

- 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 Question**

### **Assessments**

- Research based group presentation of assigned literary period
- Literary analysis of a text from a specific time period



<p>findings to the class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collaborate to develop an activity or discussion about a story, poem, or essay from an assigned period in American literary history.</li> <li>• write creative pieces (poetry, stories, creative essays, drama) in the style of specific literary periods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How have philosophical, political, and social trends in American society shaped the American literary landscape?</li> </ul>	
		<p><b><u>Skill Objective</u></b> Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cite resources correctly when conducting research, utilizing MLA documentation.</li> </ul>