

# LITERATURE OF THE SUPERNATURAL

## Description

Supernatural Literature is a semester English elective. The focus of the course is to analyze how the supernatural, as portrayed in literature, is reflective of the human condition. Cultures throughout place and time have written about the supernatural realm in order to contemplate life, death, and the universe. Students will read and discuss aspects of the supernatural in works from the past to the present by such authors as Dante, Hawthorne, Bradbury, Shelley, and Stokers. Through both written and visual texts, students will explore such concepts as ghosts, vampires, devils, witches, and the afterlife. Analytical and creative writing skills will be developed and consistently required. Critical thinking, classroom collaboration, and independent work are integral components of the course. Students will also complete a cumulative project examining how and why humanity's interest in the supernatural is both timeless and universal. In the fall, students will prepare for the college application process by writing a personal essay, which may be used as a college essay. In the spring, students will complete a senior English Independent Study Project.

## Course Overview

### Course Goals

Students should:

- interpret and analyze what supernatural literature reveals about the nature of life, death, and the universe.
- examine the purpose and appeal of supernatural literature as a genre.
- consider how to evaluate whether to accept, believe, or reject the supernatural.
- write and research to deepen their understanding of supernatural elements.
- explore what supernatural literature reveals about the human condition.

### 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?

### Assessments

*Common Assessments*

*Skill Assessments*

### Content Outline

- I. [Unit 1](#) - Introduction to the Supernatural
- II. [Unit 2](#) - Non-Natural Beings (Vampires, Werewolves, Monsters, Zombies)
- III. [Unit 3](#) - Devils, Witches, Black Magic and White Magic
- IV. [Unit 4](#) - Death and the Afterlife

### Standards

[State of Connecticut English Language Arts Curriculum Frameworks](#)

Connecticut State Standards are met in the following areas:

### Grade Level Skills

Students will:

- Skills Matrix

	<p><i>Exploring and Responding to Literature -</i> Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.</p> <p><i>Communicating with Others</i> Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.</p> <p><i>Applying English Language Conventions</i> Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.</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 <a href="#"><u>Introduction to the Supernatural</u></a>  1 week	Unit 2 <a href="#"><u>Non-Natural Beings (Vampires, Werewolves, Monsters, Zombies)</u></a>  6 weeks	Unit 3 <a href="#"><u>Devils, Witches, Black Magic and White Magic</u></a>  3 weeks	Unit 4 <a href="#"><u>Death and the Afterlife</u></a>  7 weeks	

## Unit 1 - Introduction to the Supernatural, 1 week [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.
- analyze and evaluate themes and connections that cross cultures.
- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.

### Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- define the supernatural.
- understand differences between supernatural literature, science fiction, and fantasy literature.
- explore concepts of fear, death, and afterlife and what constitutes humanity.

### Essential Question

- How does literature enrich our lives?

### Focus Questions

- What is natural?
- What is the supernatural?
- Are all supernatural occurrences necessarily sinister?
- Why would an author choose supernatural literature as a genre?
- Why is suspension of disbelief so important to supernatural literature?

### Assessment

### Skill Objectives

Students will:

## Unit 2 – Non-Natural Beings (Vampires, Werewolves, Monsters, Zombies), 6 weeks [top](#)

### Standards

#### *Exploring and Responding to Literature*

**Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.**

Students will:

- identify the various conventions within a genre and apply this understanding to the evaluation of the text.

#### *Communicating with Others*

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

Students will:

- write to delight in the imagination.

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

Students will:

- 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:

- identify and define the epistolary novel.
- consider why an author would choose an epistolary format.
- discuss and examine the nature of evil.
- analyze and deconstruct the supernatural novel focusing on characterization, theme, and symbolism.
- pose an evaluative question and explore it using examples and/or reasons.
- brainstorm ideas for personal narrative.
- develop clear and consistent voice in their narrative writing.

### 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 evil?
- What is the source of the spirit or soul?
- Why are so many cultures interested in the undead, living dead or reanimation?

### Assessments

- A personal narrative, which can be used for a college essay
- Creative writing from Dracula's point of view
- Responses and quizzes on major texts
- Process piece: Exploratory essay on evil

### Skill Objectives

Students will:

- revise for redundancy and wordiness.
- recognize and avoid exaggeration.
- avoid sentence sprawl.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write for a specified audience (college admissions officer) and a specific purpose.</li> <li>• develop unity and coherence in their narrative writing.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• revise for sentence variety.</li> </ul>
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### Unit 3 - Devils, Witches, Black Magic and White Magic, 3 weeks [top](#)

#### Standards

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

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

Students will:

- compare/ contrast and evaluate ideas, themes and/or issues across classical and contemporary texts.

##### *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:

- display an understanding of the importance of *Paradise Lost* and its historical context.
- identify characteristics of the epic and epic hero.
- examine contemporary magic and its roots.
- interpret an allegorical text.
- examine the Faust legend.

Senior English Independent Study Project

- brainstorm possible questions to explore.
- determine personal question to explore.
- identify sources for research such as people to interview and texts to read.
- research their question through multiple sources.

#### Essential Questions

- How does literature enrich our lives?
- How do we write, speak and present effectively?

#### Focus Questions

- What are advantages of believing in a devil?
- Why would an author choose to cast Satan as an epic hero?
- Why has the concept of magic remained a consistent element in many cultures?

#### Assessments

- Responses and quizzes on major texts
- Student research and presentation, examining why the concept of magic has remained a consistent element in many cultures

#### Skill Objectives

Students will:

- avoid misplaced modifiers.
- use adverbial connectives for emphasis and transition.
- punctuate adverbial connectives, using a semi-colon and a comma with transitions such as therefore and however.

## Unit 4 - Death and the Afterlife, 7 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 themes and connections that cross cultures.
- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.

#### *Communicating with Others*

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

Students will:

- evaluate the validity of primary and secondary sources of information to authenticate research.

#### *Applying English Language Conventions*

**Students use knowledge of their language and culture to improve competency in English.**

Students will:

- read, listen to and tell stories from a variety of cultures, and identify the similarities and differences in the way language is used.

### Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- consider the historical and social significance of *The Inferno*.
- analyze different depictions of the afterlife.
- gather textual evidence to support an analysis.
- analyze the use of symbolism, color, and cinematic technique in film.
- deconstruct and analyze an allegory.
- conduct research to explore how different cultures throughout history have dealt with the supernatural.

Senior English Independent Study Project

- decide format for presentation, utilizing oral, written, visual, and/or technological

### 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 questions surround death?
- How have different societies and cultures attempted to answer these questions?
- Is it important to discover what will happen after death?
- How does one's conception of /attitude about death affect one's life?
- How and why is human interest in the supernatural both timeless and universal?

### Assessments

- Research on how varied cultures view death and/or the afterlife
- Analytical essay
- Senior English Independent Study Project

### Skill Objectives

Students will:

- use dash and ellipses.
- punctuate quotations within quotations, using single quotation marks.

<p>components for effectiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• determine audience.</li><li>• organize research for audience.</li><li>• write first draft.</li><li>• revise for audience.</li><li>• present project.</li></ul>		
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