

Curriculum Development
In the Fairfield Public Schools

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT

ENGLISH 22

Board of Education Approved 05/23/2006

ENGLISH 22

Statement of Purpose

English 22 builds on students' abilities to articulate their initial responses to literature, develop interpretations, and make connections between various works of literature and between literature and their own lives. Attention will be given in class to developing and honing students' skills in employing textual support. Additionally, this course asks students to look critically at what they read and to evaluate not only the ideas found in texts but the quality of the texts themselves.

Audience

10th grade students

Prerequisites

Successful completion of 9th grade English

Course Description

The literary selections for this course focus on key themes in literature: defining family, reconciling personal desires with responsibilities, the acquisition of knowledge and the loss of innocence, decisions and their consequences, expressing personal beliefs, and celebrating life. Building on their interpretive strategies that they learned in 9th Grade, students will extend their analysis of texts by examining literary craft. Students will evaluate the literary devices of drama, fiction, non-fiction, and poetry in order to build a repertoire of knowledge about stances about texts. They will continue and expand upon their ability to use textual evidence to support their claims and illustrate their points. As writers, students will use their knowledge of craft to improve their own writing, especially as they write the memoir and a short story. With expository writing, students will write an exploratory essay, a thesis-based essay, and a persuasive essay. They will learn to create a critical stance about the literature they read. Students will write in expository, inventive, and narrative forms as means of responding to literature and supporting their positions.

Goals

Students will:

- express their personal beliefs and explore the reasons behind them.
- connect works of literature to one another, to their own lives, and to larger social issues.
- develop an awareness of audience in their own writing.
- use textual evidence effectively, in order to support their claims and illustrate their points.
- recognize and appreciate writers' craft through literary analysis and apply that knowledge in their own writing.
- think inductively, deductively, and narratively as they read and write.
- recognize and challenge their perceptions and understandings as they read literature and produce texts of their own.

- collaborate to deepen and broaden individual thinking about texts and to evaluate ideas.
- focus on critical stance as they read texts and produce texts on their own.
- broaden their understanding and appreciation about the variety of human experiences.

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

- demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be a family.
- develop a personal response to literature.
- form an initial understandings as they read by asking questions about the text articulating their confusions and surprises, and giving initial reactions to characters, events, and conflicts of the text.
- develop an interpretation using textual evidence in a cohesive, well-organized essay.
- apply literary devices (point of view, symbolism, figures of speech, methods of characterization) that best express their ideas as they write personal narratives.
- demonstrate the understanding of a character.
- demonstrate an understanding of symbolism in literature to create meaning.
- demonstrate an understanding of point-of-view in literature to create meaning.
- participate in collaboration in order to strengthen individual interpretations.
- create interpretive and evaluative questions as they read.
- use textual evidence to develop interpretations.
- develop a thesis statement which is analytical rather than merely descriptive (e.g. Sue Monk Kidd uses the bee motif as a metaphor for Lily's journey into adulthood is an analytical statement. The bees are a symbol in *The Secret Life of Bees* is a descriptive statement.)
- write a cohesive essay with well-structured paragraphs, motivated by ideas rather than a specified number of paragraphs.
- write a conclusion which does not repeat.
- explain how a quotation from the text helps them to understand characters, conflicts, and themes.
- make connections to a text with personal experience and with other texts.
- evaluate the quality of a text, using evidence of craft or style.
- discuss the implications of conflicts between personal desire and family responsibility both in literature and in life.
- elaborate with specific examples from the text as they respond to literature.
- develop an understanding of the ways in which an author uses the conventions of drama: dialogue, stage directions, setting, music, and lighting.
- demonstrate their ability to collaborate.
- make inferences to support an interpretation.
- use the conventions of drama/film in their own writing.
- recognize how gaining knowledge contributes to the loss of innocence.
- define knowledge and innocence from their own experience.

- recognize their personal paradox regarding their wanting to grow up and also remain children.
- reference literary texts as they explore ideas and support positions.
- make personal connections to works of literature.
- compose poetry as a means for exploring individual ideas and questions.
- demonstrate how allusions are used to enhance the meaning of texts.
- analyze poetry as a strategy for understanding film.
- analyze personal strengths and weaknesses with dimensions of CAPT Response to Literature simulation.
- demonstrate proficiency in the four dimensions of CAPT Response to Literature
- analyze personal strengths and weaknesses with CAPT Editing and Revising.
- analyze short stories in terms of literary merit.
- explain the motives behind ambition and the need for power.
- analyze character motivations.
- recognize philosophical ideas about human nature that the texts afford.
- create evaluative, multi-layered questions about ideas that the texts afford.
- complete an on-going assignment analyzing language and text.
- develop an interpretation of language and text.
- identify the difference between denotation and connotation.
- explain how connotation affects meaning in literature.
- write to consider a question from multiple perspectives in an essay.
- explore ambiguities in an essay.
- write an essay in which the structure follows a path of inquiry.
- write a conclusion to an essay in which they communicate where they are in their inquiry although they may or may not reach a certain conclusion.
- express “truth” as an inquiry that is fully conducted.
- examine how authors and other people find deep meaning in daily life.
- explore how one moment can be viewed both optimistically and pessimistically.
- demonstrate an understanding of the perspective gained from the passage of time in literature and in their own lives.
- effectively use retrospection in their own narrative writing.
- effectively employ word choice to enhance the meaning of their own narratives.
- compare and contrast the quality of various personal essays.
- identify the central beliefs and attitudes expressed in works of non-fiction.
- express their own personal beliefs and explore the reasons behind them.
- demonstrate philosophical interaction between their beliefs of the students and the beliefs expressed in the text.
- communicate the significance of a central idea or insight that has a deep personal meaning to the writer.
- use the first person voice effectively and powerfully in writing.
- integrate anecdotes into a personal narrative.
- use the texts to help students develop their personal beliefs on life issues.

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- organize their writing in logical and effective paragraphs.
- identify and use effective transitions in narrative writing
- correctly use the apostrophe for possessive case
- demonstrate correct pronoun case (including who and whom) and pronoun agreement.
- identify and use effective transitions in analytical writing
- identify and create compound sentences, including the correct use of commas, conjunctions, semi-colons, and colons.
- demonstrate test-taking strategies for CAPT Response to Literature and CAPT Editing and Revising.
- take sample CAPT Editing tests and review results.
- read a CAPT story and take marginal notes.
- learn the process of elimination in test-taking.
- write responses to all CAPT questions.
 - share examples
 - rewrite weak responses
 - share their responses
- identify and use complex sentences and punctuate them correctly.
- identify and use effective transitions in narrative writing.

English Standards

Reading and Responding - Students read, comprehend and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts in both print and multimedia formats.

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

Students will identify, use and analyze text structures.

Students will make and justify inferences from explicit and or implicit information.

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

Students will make, support and defend judgments about texts.

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

Students will identify and discuss the underlying theme or main idea in texts.

Exploring and Responding to Literature - Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

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.

Students will analyze literary conventions and devices an author uses and how they contribute meaning and appeal.

Students explore multiple responses to literature.

Students will develop a critical stance and cite evidence to support the stance.

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

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

Students will listen to or read a variety of genres to use as models for writing in different modes.

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

Students will 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.

Students will revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency and clarity.

English Language Conventions - Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.

Students will use resources for proofreading and editing.

Information and Technology Standards – to be added

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

- What defines a family?
- How do people reconcile personal desire with family responsibility?
- What is the relationship between the loss of innocence and the acquisition of knowledge?
- How is reading a strategy for writing and writing a strategy for reading?
- What constitutes humanity?
- How can we celebrate life?
- How do people develop and express their personal beliefs?

UNITS of STUDY

Unit 1: Family

English Standards

Reading and Responding - Students read, comprehend and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts in both print and multimedia formats.

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

Students will identify, use and analyze text structures.

Students will make and justify inferences from explicit and or implicit information.

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

Students will make, support and defend judgments about texts.

Exploring and Responding to Literature - Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.

Students will analyze literary conventions and devices an author uses and how they contribute meaning and appeal.

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

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.

Students will revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency and clarity.

English Language Conventions - Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.

Students will use resources for proofreading and editing.

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 Question

What defines a family?

Core Topic

- Family

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be a family.
- develop a personal response to literature.
- form an initial understandings as they read by asking questions about the text articulating their confusions and surprises, and giving initial reactions to characters, events, and conflicts of the text.
- develop an interpretation using textual evidence in a cohesive, well-organized essay.
- apply literary devices (point of view, symbolism, figures of speech, methods of characterization) that best express their ideas as they write personal narratives.
- demonstrate the understanding of a character.
- demonstrate an understanding of symbolism in literature to create meaning.
- demonstrate an understanding of point-of-view in literature to create meaning.
- participate in collaboration in order to strengthen individual interpretations.
- create interpretive and evaluative questions as they read.
- use textual evidence to develop interpretations.
- develop a thesis statement which is analytical rather than merely descriptive (e.g. Sue Monk Kidd uses the bee motif as a metaphor for Lily's journey into adulthood is an analytical statement. The bees are a symbol in *The Secret Life of Bees* is a descriptive statement.)
- write a cohesive essay with well-structured paragraphs, motivated by ideas rather than a specified number of paragraphs.
- write a conclusion which does not repeat.
- explain how a quotation from the text helps them to understand characters, conflicts, and themes.
- make connections to a text with personal experience and with other texts.
- evaluate the quality of a text, using evidence of craft or style.

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- organize their writing in logical and effective paragraphs.
- identify and use effective transitions in narrative writing
- correctly use the apostrophe for possessive case

Assessments

- On-going and frequent response to literature assignments, such as double-entry journals, initial and finalized responses, or quote analyses, which provide the foundation for a formal literary analysis
- Personal Narrative*
- Thesis-based literary analysis*

* Indicates formal writing assignments through which writing is taught and which go through the steps of the writing process

Pacing

5 weeks

Unit 2: Reconciling Personal Desire with Family Responsibility

English Standards

Reading and Responding - Students read, comprehend and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts in both print and multimedia formats.

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

Students will make and justify inferences from explicit and or implicit information.

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

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

Students will listen to or read a variety of genres to use as models for writing in different modes.

Students will 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.

Students will revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency and clarity.

English Language Conventions - Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will use resources for proofreading and editing.

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 Question

How do people reconcile personal desire with family responsibility?

Core Topic

- Reconciling Personal Desire with Family Responsibility

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- discuss the implications of conflicts between personal desire and family responsibility both in literature and in life.
- elaborate with specific examples from the text as they respond to literature.
- develop an understanding of the ways in which an author uses the conventions of drama: dialogue, stage directions, setting, music, and lighting.
- demonstrate their ability to collaborate.
- make inferences to support an interpretation.
- use the conventions of drama/film in their own writing.
- form initial understandings as they read by asking questions about the text articulating their confusions and surprises, and giving initial reactions to characters, events, and conflicts of the text.
- explain how a quotation from the text helps them to understand characters, conflicts, and themes.
- make connections to a text with personal experience and with other texts.
- evaluate the quality of a text, using evidence of craft or style.

Skill Objective

Students will:

- demonstrate correct pronoun case (including who and whom) and pronoun agreement.

Assessment

Inventive writing of original dramatic piece, such as an individual monologue, an individual one-act play, or a collaborative one-act play, which reflects the theme of individual desire vs. responsibility *

Pacing

4 weeks

Unit 3: Acquisition of Knowledge and Loss of Innocence

English Standards

Reading and Responding - Students read, comprehend and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts in both print and multimedia formats.

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.

Exploring and Responding to Literature - Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

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.

Students will analyze literary conventions and devices an author uses and how they contribute meaning and appeal.

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

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

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

English Language Conventions - Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.

Students will use resources for proofreading and editing.

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 Question

What is the relationship between the loss of innocence and the acquisition of knowledge?

Core Topic

- The loss of innocence and the acquisition of knowledge

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- recognize how gaining knowledge contributes to the loss of innocence.
- define knowledge and innocence from their own experience.
- recognize their personal paradox regarding their wanting to grow up and also remain children.
- reference literary texts as they explore ideas and support positions.
- make personal connections to works of literature.
- compose poetry as a means for exploring individual ideas and questions.
- demonstrate how allusions are used to enhance the meaning of texts.
- analyze poetry as a strategy for understanding film.
- form initial understandings as they read by asking questions about the text articulating their confusions and surprises, and giving initial reactions to characters, events, and conflicts of the text.
- explain how a quotation from the text helps them to understand characters, conflicts, and themes.
- make connections to a text with personal experience and with other texts.
- evaluate the quality of a text, using evidence of craft or style.

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- identify and use effective transitions in analytical writing
- identify and create compound sentences, including the correct use of commas, conjunctions, semi-colons, and colons.

Assessment

- Thesis-based literary analysis *

Pacing

6 weeks

Unit 4: Responding to Short Stories and Creating Short Stories

English Language Arts Standards

Exploring and Responding to Literature - Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

Students explore multiple responses to literature.

Students will develop a critical stance and cite evidence to support the stance.

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

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

Students will listen to or read a variety of genres to use as models for writing in different modes.

Essential Questions

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

Focus Question

- How is reading a strategy for writing and writing a strategy for reading?

Core Topic

- Responding to Literature

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- analyze personal strengths and weaknesses with dimensions of CAPT Response to Literature simulation.
- demonstrate proficiency in the four dimensions of CAPT Response to Literature
- analyze personal strengths and weaknesses with CAPT Editing and Revising.
- analyze short stories in terms of literary merit.
- form initial understandings as they read by asking questions about the text articulating their confusions and surprises, and giving initial reactions to characters, events, and conflicts of the text.
- explain how a quotation from the text helps them to understand characters, conflicts, and themes.
- make connections to a text with personal experience and with other texts.
- evaluate the quality of a text, using evidence of craft or style.

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- demonstrate test-taking strategies for CAPT Response to Literature and CAPT Editing and Revising.

- take sample CAPT Editing tests and review results.
- read a CAPT story and take marginal notes.
- learn the process of elimination in test-taking.
- write responses to all CAPT questions.
 - share examples
 - rewrite weak responses
 - share their responses

Assessments

- CAPT practice test
 - score the results
 - review answers and explain
 - revise responses to literature
 - review editing issues and revises additional sample
- Original short story in CAPT style *

Pacing

4 weeks

Unit 5: Understanding What Constitutes Humanity

English Standards

Reading and Responding - Students read, comprehend and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts in both print and multimedia formats.

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

Students will identify, use and analyze text structures.

Students will make and justify inferences from explicit and or implicit information.

Exploring and Responding to Literature - Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.

Students will analyze literary conventions and devices an author uses and how they contribute meaning and appeal.

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

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.

Students will revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency and clarity.

English Language Conventions - Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.

Students will use resources for proofreading and editing.

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 Question

What constitutes humanity?

Core Topic

- Decisions and their consequences

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- explain the motives behind ambition and the need for power.
- analyze character motivations.
- recognize philosophical ideas about human nature that the texts afford.
- create evaluative, multi-layered questions about ideas that the texts afford.
- complete an on-going assignment analyzing language and text.
- develop an interpretation of language and text.
- identify the difference between denotation and connotation.
- explain how connotation affects meaning in literature.
- write to consider a question from multiple perspectives in an essay.
- explore ambiguities in an essay.
- write an essay in which the structure follows a path of inquiry.
- write a conclusion to an essay in which they communicate where they are in their inquiry although they may or may not reach a certain conclusion.
- express “truth” as an inquiry that is fully conducted.

Skill Objective

Students will:

- identify and use complex sentences and punctuate them correctly.

Assessment

- Exploratory Essay *

Pacing

5 weeks

Unit 6: Celebration of Life

English Standards

Reading and Responding - Students read, comprehend and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts in both print and multimedia formats.

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

Students will identify and discuss the underlying theme or main idea in texts.

Exploring and Responding to Literature - Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.

Students will analyze literary conventions and devices an author uses and how they contribute meaning and appeal.

Communicating with Others - Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

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

Students will listen to or read a variety of genres to use as models for writing in different 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.

Students will revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency and clarity.

English Language Conventions - Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.

Students will use resources for proofreading and editing.

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

- How can we celebrate life?
- How do people develop and express their personal beliefs?

Core Topic

- Expressing Personal Beliefs

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- examine how authors and other people find deep meaning in daily life.
- explore how one moment can be viewed both optimistically and pessimistically.
- demonstrate an understanding of the perspective gained from the passage of time in literature and in their own lives.
- effectively use retrospection in their own narrative writing.
- effectively employ word choice to enhance the meaning of their own narratives.
- compare and contrast the quality of various personal essays.
- identify the central beliefs and attitudes expressed in works of non-fiction.
- express their own personal beliefs and explore the reasons behind them.
- demonstrate philosophical interaction between their beliefs of the students and the beliefs expressed in the text.
- communicate the significance of a central idea or insight that has a deep personal meaning to the writer.
- use the first person voice effectively and powerfully in writing.
- integrate anecdotes into a personal narrative.
- use the texts to help students develop their personal beliefs on life issues.

Skill Objective

Students will:

- identify and use effective transitions in narrative writing.

Assessments

- Personal narrative, depicting an “ordinary”, seemingly simple moment that, paradoxically, depicts the profound beauty of life
- Personal essay, demonstrating narrative thinking *

Pacing

6 weeks

Texts such as:

The texts followed by the symbol ® are required texts for English 22. Additionally, teachers must incorporate at least one of the optional texts into the course.

Unit 1

- *The Secret Life of Bees*® or *Ordinary People*® or *Unaccustomed Earth*® or *Please Don't Come Back from the Moon*®

Unit 2

- *The Glass Menagerie*® or *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*®
- Film: *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?*® or *Marvin's Room*®

Unit 3

- *A Separate Peace*®
- selected poetry®
- *Dead Poets Society*®
- Looking for a coming of age novel with a female protagonist

Unit 4

- *Macbeth*® or *Julius Caesar*®
- *The Lord of the Flies*
- *The Kite Runner*

Unit 5

- *Tuesdays With Morrie*®
- Ted Koppel interviews with Morrie Schwartz®
- NPR "This I Believe" personal essays®
- "Knoxville: 1915," (short story)
- *Our Town*
- *Dandelion Wine*

CAPT Unit

- selected short stories®
- Independent Reading

TENTH GRADE LOOK AT THE LEARNER

In understanding the tenth grade learner, it is helpful to remember that developmentally there are more similarities between the ninth and tenth grader than there are differences for a good part of the tenth grade year. The fifteen-year-old tenth graders, like the fourteen-year-old ninth graders, are influenced by the physical changes of adolescence and the search for identity and independence. The tenth graders enter as freshmen and leave as juniors.

Yet, teachers of ninth and tenth grade see some obvious differences in the behavior of each group. Perhaps the most obvious difference is in attitude. The September ninth graders enter the classroom with anxiety and some trepidation; the tenth graders enter with a sense of place and greater self-confidence. A tenth grader has a bit more independence but no fear of college. They do not have many external obligations (e.g. employment, college search.), and so much of their time is spent where they like it---with friends, sports, and hobbies. This difference may be attributed to the tenth graders' identification with a fairly well- defined personal reference group which has a strong influence in determining their values, their behavior, and their academic performances. Having this sense of place in the school community and having a greater sense of self, the tenth graders are empowered to venture forth with greater confidence and with greater independence into the realm of inquiry, speculation, and collaboration.

As teachers of the tenth grade, it is important to recognize that the most viable context for the learners is a social one. They have learned how to collaborate and now participate even more effectively because they have developed more confident classroom voice. Moreover, the tenth grade learners seem to be ready to move from establishing their own points of view to encountering the ambiguity that results from opposing viewpoints raised during class discussions. Tenth grade seems to be a time when students are most interested in the notion and act of dissent. Initially, they see issues in simplistic terms i.e.: good or bad / right or wrong. They have a tendency to reduce dissent to a personal attack and to see others' dissent as a personal attack. Therefore, the teacher needs to capitalize on this interest while educating students about dissent by channeling students' willingness to disagree into effective, truly democratic debate with texts, with each other, and with the teacher. In helping students to tolerate ambiguity, before forming an individual interpretation or evaluation, the teacher is helping them to grow as thinkers and learners and to become aware of their own thought/belief system.

For the teacher, the challenge rests not just in devising lessons which allow for dialogue through which independent thought may be shaped; it rests more in creating situations and assignments where learners encounter and are taught the responsibility to use diverse, alien, and sometimes ambiguous viewpoints.

Ultimately, tenth grade is a time of upheaval – it is a quest to find self in the face of so many competing, questioned beliefs. It is an initiation into adulthood as they acquire driving licenses and begin “real” dating, “real” work, and “real” freedom. Students often redefine their peer group and their place in that group, as the pressures from academics, as well as from typical teenage interactions, increase. Recognizing this time in students' lives, the English program emphasizes strategies for exploring the world of ideas in order to shape thoughtful choices---as readers, writers, and thinkers.