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| **COURSE DESCRIPTION:** *This is an overview of the course. The course should be committed to the following culturally relevant, empowering, and coherence-driven tenets:*  *-has students learn valuable and engaging ideas about themselves and about others. (Identity)*  *-covers skills/standards that support college/career preparation, creative, and personal development. (Skills)*  *-has students become smarter about academic challenges, their lives, and the world around them. (Intellect)*  *-engages students about power, discrimination & oppression personally, locally, and nationally/globally (Criticality)*  *-allows for access, success and support both in-school and remotely (Coherent Methodology)*  *-allows for success and support collaboratively and independently (Diverse Platforms & Methodology)* |
| This course will explore American literature through the lens of minorities (people of color, women, lgbtq, etc). It is designed to prepare you to succeed, while providing opportunities to build strategies and skills to become a more effective researcher, reader, writer and speaker.  We will read, interpret and respond to a range of “American” texts spanning from the very beginnings of the nation in the 17th century to the tempestuous present day. We will explore a number of essential questions, including: ***How can a nation founded on the promise of equal rights and opportunity be home to such disparities in wealth and prosperity? Does the American Dream exist for all? What does it mean to be an American? How can each of us find our place in American society?***  The main focus of this course will be in developing a critical and analytical understanding of the evolution of the American Experience as displayed through literature, poetry, and informational text both written in and about the time period and texts we are studying. We will analyze these historical texts in relation to other texts from the time period and examine how this time period has come to be represented in more modern pieces of literature and historical interpretation. In addition, we will compare texts across genres, time periods, and themes to look for critical issues related to both the human condition and the American  Experience.  As the title of the course implies, there are no clear answers to any of these questions, and we will each have our own opinions. |
| **ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS/QUESTIONS:** *Please state the most important ideas and/or questions for the course. Please name valuable and empowering ideas about themselves and about others. (Identity) Critical and valuable ideas about power, discrimination, oppression and authority in the material, in their lives, and in communities and the world. (Criticality)* |
| |  | | --- | | * America is in a constant state of transformation and (re)interpretation. | | * Literature helps humanity come face to face with complex concepts, such as identity and justice, and decide for themselves how they will approach those concepts in their lives. | | * Literature is a unique art form with it’s own tools. These tools aren’t only meant to convey ideas, but to convey an aesthetic. | | * Stories come in many forms: written, filmed, spoken, even played out by individuals themselves, but the best stories have the same overarching goals entertain and enlighten. | | * Literature shapes our perceptions of the world around us. | |

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| **SPECIFIC ACADEMIC SKILLS**: *These are the most important skills for the course, including: those that support college/career preparation, creative, and personal development (Skills); and those that help students become smarter about academic challenges, their lives, and the world around them. (Intellect)* |
| * Present clear claims/arguments/counterclaims supported with relevant, specific evidence and analysis. |
| * Identify, analyze and utilize literary devices and rhetorical strategies in order to write persuasively. |
| * Determine and clarify meanings of known and multiple-meaning words, using a range of strategies. |
| * Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different meanings and formats in order to address a question or solve a problem. |
| * Develop claims and counterclaims fairly, supporting the evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of both. |

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| **CCL STANDARDS:** *These are the important Common Core Learning Standards (in short form) that will drive the curriculum and connect to units of study and academic skills. No need to list every one!* |
| * R.1 11-12 Cite strong and thorough textual support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including where the test leaves matters uncertain. |
| * W1. 11.12 Write Arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and sufficient evidence. |
| * SL 1. 11-12 Initiate and participate in a range of collaborative discussions on substantive topics, texts and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. |
| * L 1. 11-12 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. |

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| **ASSESSMENTS OF SKILLS/STANDARDS**: *These are the major formative and summative measures that will be used to assess student progress on the specific skills, understandings and standards listed above. Please be specific!* |
| * CCLS-modeled literary/rhetorical analysis essays (Text Analysis Response (TAR), Argument Essay) |
| * CCLS- and SAT-modeled multiple choice exams (textual analysis, literary/rhetorical terms, vocabulary, grammar, conventions, usage) |
| * Reading comprehension short answer responses |
| * Personal/Narrative Essays (college essay) |

**UNITS OF STUDY:** *These are the titles/descriptions of the primary units covered during the course. These units should develop identity, skills, intellect, and criticality, as described above.*

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| 1. .  **We the People:** Exploring social issues that affect teenagers in today’s society |  | 5.**Modern Times/Satire:** How have Americans responded to modern life in a globally connected world? What’s So Funny About White Supremacy? Examining topics such as how Americans have responded to modern life, globalization, and the information age. |
| 2. **Building a Democracy:** How did the founders of the United States balance protecting individual rights and creating a strong union in the nation’s founding documents? |  |  |
| 3. **My rightful place in Society (Othello):** (Finding One’s Place in Society) How has American society balanced the ideal of individual freedom with the needs of society? |  |  |
| 4. **Birth of A New Freedom:** *Extended unit explore emancipation of African Americans and Women in America.*How did the granting (or denial) of rights and freedoms evolve after the Civil War? |  |  |

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| **TEXTS/MEDIA:** *This is a sampling texts, media, materials covered/utilized in the course. These resources are diverse, relevant, empowering and easily accessible and usable both in-school and remotely.* |
| **We the People:** *Non-fiction text, News ELA (film adaptation and full text of play)*  **Building A Democracy:** Foundational U.S. documents i.e Declaration of Independence  **Rightful Place in Society:** Othello  **Birth of A New Freedom:** *Narrative of the Life of a Slave, Declaration of Sentiments*  **Modern Times/Satire:** *The Great Gatsby (Film adaptation and full text of novel), Fast Food Nation (jigsaw chapters))*, “The New Jim Crow (jigsaw chapters) *Black Like Me* (excerpts) *The Dave Chappelle Show (selected skits)*, *Sorry to Bother You*, *Dear White People* (selected episode(s)), *A Day Without Mexicans* (selected scenes)  \* All units will organized and/or supported extensively with the McGraw-Hill digital curriculum platform, Study Sync, which includes digital library of some 1800 texts, differentiated reading comprehension questions, current events “blasts”, extensive lessons and exercises on literary elements and grammar and punctuation, and much more. |

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| **COURSE RULES AND GUIDELINES:** *These are the mechanisms that will manage the class and if followed result in student success for this course. These rules/guidelines should be fair, democratic, coherent, sustainable and able to implemented both in-school and remotely, collaboratively and independently.* |
| * **Be on time and prepared to learn** |
| * **Participate in speaking and listening activities/ TURN YOUR CAMERA ON!** |
| * **Read and analyze assigned texts** |
| * **Compose, revise, edit and proofread formal writing assignments on time** |
| * **Complete homework and practice assignments on time.** * **Respect for All** |

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| **COURSE HOMEWORK POLICY:** *This is an overview of homework distribution schedule and the process for completion and collection. This policy is consistent with the school-wide policy (to-be-finalized) and hold students accountable but also supports them, and does so both in-school and remotely.* |
| Homework counts for 10% of your final grade; in other words, you cannot receive an “A” for the course if you do not do your homework. More importantly, though, homework helps you practice skills and acquire knowledge to become a more  educated and powerful individual in society -- your future depends on it! |