

12 Grade English

Learning Objectives

Drama, Writing and Speech

General Course Description

The three parts of this course include the study of drama, writing and narrative poetry. The study of English and American dramas will involve discussing the antecedents of English and American drama (particularly those that influenced Shakespeare), such as the *comedia dell'arte*, the morality plays, and the Latin comedies of Plautus. Selected dramas will include 17th, 18th-, 19th-, and 20th-century examples. Attention will also be given to the biographies of the playwrights and the ideas and names of the various literary periods.

The study of the essay will include analyzing the theme, technique and various other aspects of classic essays and applying what is learned in writing formal essays. Students will review the elementary principles of good writing (using active voice, making revisions, omitting needless words, etc.). In addition to learning the various essay formats, student will study terms pertaining to formal composition, such as thesis statement, voice, mood, style, irony, and tone. Student will study these terms in relation to works that he reads and his own writing when applicable. Instruction will include discussing the importance of sensory detail, concrete images, and specific examples.

The speech and speech-writing part of the course is both an historical look at and technical/practical approach to the study of rhetoric. Students will exam famous speeches from the Greeks to modern day political rhetoric and apply what they learn to their own writing. Students will have an opportunity to learn not only by reading historic speeches but also by listening and watching audio and video recordings. In addition to studying the basic principles that govern all kinds of writing, students will learn the essential elements of making and delivering speeches by studying rhetoric and the use of figures of speech. Students will study, read examples of and implement the learned rhetorical devices, such as antistrophe, rhetorical question, reasoning by questioning, antimetabole, anadiplosis, asyndeton, anaphora, epitheton, enthymeme, scesis onomaton, anesis, aposiopesis, epizeuxis, symploce, antithesis, sententia, maxim, and, epigrams, climax, or, gradation, word play, emphatic pause, suspension, etc.

Students will also study figures of speech and their appropriate use in speech making, such as metaphors, litote, etc. Students will also learn the importance of poise, gestures, and the regulation of the voice's pitch and volume. Several speeches will be written and given in front of the class and at least one speech will be presented in front of an audience on speech night. Student will read various professional speeches as models. (See below.)

Reading

The following is a list of works that will be read and talked about in the course. *This list is often changed from year to year.*

Dramas

- William Shakespeare, *King Lear*
- Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- Thornton Wilder, *Our Town* and *Skin of Our Teeth*
- Richard Sheridan, *School for Scandal*

Essays

- Essays by Joseph Addison, including “Valetudinarians” and “Reflections on the Tombs at Westminster Abbey”
- *Essays of Elia* by Charles Lamb (Selected Essays)
- Selected *Notes and Sketches* by Charles Dickens
- Selected essays from *Adventures and Enthusiasms* by Edward Verrall Lucas
- Selected essays from *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau, including “Where I Lived, and What I Lived For,” “The Village,” “Brute Neighbors,” and “Solitude”
- “Slouch” by Eliot Gregory
- Selected essays by G. K. Chesterton, including “A Piece of Chalk,” “The Fool,” and “On Lying in Bed”
- Selections from *Mince Pie* By Christopher Morley
- “Coffee Houses” By Thomas Babington Macaulay
- Selected essays from *Literary Lapses* by Stephen Leacock
- “A Word for Autumn” by A. A. Milne
- “On the Fear of Death” by William Hazlitt
- “Death of an Old Dog” by William Henry Hudson
- “A Modest Proposal” by Jonathan Swift
- “The Mowing of a Field” by Hilaire Belloc

Oratory

- Public Speaking By Booker T. Washington
- Fictional Political Speeches selected from William Shakespeare’s plays
- *Gorgias* By Plato
- “The Encroachments of Philip” by Demosthenes
- “Give Me Liberty Or Give Me Death” by Patrick Henry
- First Inaugural Address By Abraham Lincoln
- “Acres of Diamonds” by Russell H. Conwell
- “Evil Empire,” “Brandenburg Gate” and Inaugural Address by Ronald Reagan
- Inaugural Address and Berlin Wall Speech by John F. Kennedy
- Duty, Honor, Country By Douglas MacArthur
- “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” by Frederick Douglass
- Gettysburg Address by Abraham Lincoln
- “Oration Against Antony” by Marcus Tullius Cicero
- “Bunker Hill Monument” by Daniel Webster
- “War with America” by William Pitt, Earl of Chatham

Political and Propaganda Speeches

- George W. Bush, Axis of Evil Speech, State of the Union Address
- Stalin, On the Death of Lenin
- Richard Nixon, “Checkers” Speech
- Ted Kennedy, Chappaquiddick speech
- Hillary Clinton, Democrat Convention speech, 1996
- Barry Goldwater, “Defense of Liberty is No Vice”
- Lyndon B. Johnson’s speech at the University of Michigan on the “Great Society”

Narrative Poems and Dramatic Monologues

- Dramatic Monologues By Robert Browning
- “Torquemada” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- “Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- “Balin and Balan,” “Gareth and Lynette,” and “Enoch Arden” by Alfred Tennyson
- “Michael: A Pastoral Poem” by William Wordsworth

Writing and Public Speaking

Students will write four critical papers, five formal essays (including narrative, musing, and definition) and one speech. Student will study the importance of using the “3D’s” (sensory detail, description and dialogue) in their speeches. Student will go over the speech writing process, such as brainstorming, outlining, etc. and deliver the speech in front of a large audience at the end of the year without notes.