

## 2020–2021 Syllabus

### Greek Influences on English Literature

**Tentative Date of Speech Night:** Friday, May 21, 2021

*Notices:* If students still have questions regarding their assignments, they should contact me a few days in advance of the next lesson so that I am given time to respond. The syllabus indicates what the lesson will cover as well as what assignments are due the following week. The syllabus may be altered slightly as we progress through the semester. Students, therefore, should look at specific assignments week by week posted on the web page.

## September

11

### *Assignment 1*

A Christian perspective of mythology; Acts 17; mythology and the influence on the English language and literature; the attributes of myth; Greek Myth: *how things got to be*, psychology, truths of life, moral tales, germs of history

- Bulfinch, chapters 2-4
- Hawthorne's "Paradise of Children"
- Hesiod's version from *Works and Days* (Pandora myth)
- Milton's "Loss of Paradise" from Book IX of *Paradise Lost*.
- Rudyard Kipling and Paul Bunyan stories

18

### *Assignment 2*

A discussion of the influence of Greek myth in Western Literature; the elements of Greek myth: *how things got to be*, *psychology*, truths of life, moral tales, germs of history

Myths that show human psychology: Orpheus, Niobe, etc.

Bulfinch, chapters 5-8

Swinburne, "The Garden of Proserpine"

Hawthorne's *House of the Seven Gables* ("Midas" myth)

Greek mythology vocabulary

Expository Essay Assignment

25

### *Assignment 3*

Introduction to Homer; the epic; history of the *Odyssey* in manuscript form, etc.

- Read Books 1-4 of *Odyssey* and complete worksheet

## October

**2**

*Assignment 4*

Discussion of *Odyssey*; germs of truth and Heinrich Schliemann

- Read Books 5-8 of *Odyssey* and complete worksheet

**9**

*Assignment 5*

Discussion of themes in *Odyssey*

- Read Books 9-12 of *Odyssey* and complete worksheet
- Tennyson's "Ulysses" and "Lotus Eaters"

**16**

*Assignment 6*

Discussion of themes in *Odyssey*; discussion of play and monologues

- Read Books 13-16 of *Odyssey* and complete worksheet

**23**

*Assignment 7*

Discussion of themes in *Odyssey*

- Read Books 17-20 of *Odyssey* and complete worksheet
- continue work on *Odyssey*

**30**

*Assignment 8*

Translations of *Odyssey*; Pope, Cowper and Fitzgerald

- Read Books 21-24 of *Odyssey* and complete worksheet

**November**

**6**

*Assignment 9*

Discussion of themes in the *Odyssey*

- Study for Test on *Odyssey*
- Critical Analysis Essay

**13**

*Assignment 10*

The elements of Greek myth: how things got to be, psychology, truths of life, moral tales, *germs of history*

Bulfinch, chapters, 11-13

Genesis 6-9 and Deucalion

**20**

*Assignment 11*

Niobe in music: Benjamin Britten The classical source of Greek myths; themes in Greek myth: “Know Yourself” and “Nothing in Excess”: injunctions against *hubris*; myths of change: Ovid’s *Metamorphosis*

- Bulfinch, chapters 14-17; chapters 23 and 24
- The myths of change: Orpheus, Narcissus, Niobe, Io, Pygmalion, etc.
- The Niobe rock image: Mount Sypilus, described by Pausanias in his work *Description of Greece*;
- Niobe in art: descriptive essay. Tell how the artist portrays the Niobe myth story

**27**

**Thanksgiving Break**

**December**

**4**

*Assignment 12*

Greek themes and characters; The elements of Greek myth: how things got to be, psychology, truths of life, *moral tales*, germs of history

Fables and Aesop

Bulfinch, chapters 18-22

Keats’ “Ode on Melancholy” and “Ode to a Nightingale”; Shelley’s “Hymn to Pan” and other poems TBA

**11**

*Assignment 13*

Introduction to Greek drama and tragedy; kinds of irony; origin of Greek tragedy; the three great tragedians

- *Oedipus Rex*

**18**

*Assignment 14*

Continue discussion of Greek Tragedy.

- Finish reading *Oedipus Rex*
- Read Nietzsche

**25**

**Christmas Break**

## January

1

### Christmas Break

8

#### *Assignment 15*

Thomas Hardy's poetry

- Read excerpts of poetry

15

#### *Assignment 16*

Discussion of the Influence of Greek tragedy on Thomas Hardy's novel: technique of dramatic and situational irony as well as theme of fate

- Read Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*, chapters 1–11

22

#### *Assignment 17*

Discussion of the Influence of Greek tragedy on Thomas Hardy's novel: technique of dramatic and situational irony as well as theme of fate

- Read Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*, chapters 12–23

29

#### *Assignment 18*

Discussion of the Influence of Greek tragedy on Thomas Hardy's novel: technique of dramatic and situational irony as well as theme of fate

- Read Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*, chapters 24–35

## February

5

#### *Assignment 19*

Discussion of the Influence of Greek tragedy on Thomas Hardy's novel: technique of dramatic and situational irony as well as theme of fate

- Read Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*, chapters 36–end
- Comparison Essay

12

#### *Assignment 20*

Introduction to Hamlet

- Read *Hamlet*, Act I; study vocabulary and text for quiz

**19**

*Assignment 21*

Quiz on *Hamlet*; discussion of plot, characters, exposition.

- Read *Hamlet*, Act II; study vocabulary and text for quiz

**26**

*Assignment 22*

Quiz on *Hamlet*; A discussion of themes for paper

- Read *Hamlet*, Acts III; study for quiz.

**March**

**5**

*Assignment 23*

Quiz on *Hamlet*

- Read *Hamlet*, Act IV

**12**

*Assignment 24*

Discussion on *Hamlet*; one or two acts of performance; review outlines for paper  
Read *Hamlet*, Act V; write outline for paper Final discussion on *Hamlet*,  
watch one or two acts of performance.

- practice final speech or monologue.
- Write essay on play according to guidelines; study for test.

**19**

*Assignment 25*

Speech Night Assignment

- Read assigned Speeches and write speech

**26**

*Assignment 26*

Speech Night Assignment

- Read assigned speeches and continue writing speech

**April**

**2**

**Easter Break**

**9**

*Assignment 27*

Speech Night Assignment

- Read assigned speeches and continue writing speech

**16**

*Assignment 28*

Biography of Camus; modern existentialism and interpretation of Greek themes and characters; a discussion of the Troy project

- “Demeter’s Daughter” song
- Camus’ Myth of Sisyphus
- Bulfinch, 26-29

**23**

*Assignment 29*

Read assigned essays and begin memorizing speech.

**30**

*Assignment 30*

Speech Night Assignment

- Revise speech

**May**

**7**

*Assignment 31*

Finish memorizing speech.

**14**

*Assignment 32*

Speech Night Speech Graded

- practice final speech or monologue
- Prepare for speech night next Friday

**21**

*Assignment 33*

Speech Rehearsal

- practice final speech or monologue

**28**

*Assignment 34*

Greek themes and characters; The elements of Greek myth: how things got to be, psychology, *truths of life*, moral tales, germs of history 32-36

- Tennyson’s “Tithonus” and questions; facts of life and death

**Books Needed:**

- Thomas Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (You may obtain any edition of the novel or read it online.)

- Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* (Make sure that you purchase or borrow from the library the translation by Stephen Berg and Diskin Clay.)
- Homer's *Odyssey* (Make sure that you purchase or borrow from the library the translation by Robert Fagles.)
- William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*. (Make sure that you purchase or borrow from the library the *The Pelican Shakespeare* edition.)