

Foundations Class

Learning Objectives

Reading, Vocabulary and Literary Studies

In addition to their independent reading, students will be assigned a wide variety of smaller reading passages, including history, fairytales, the short story, myths, fables, allegory, and poetry. Some of the works have been adapted for younger readers, such as the works by Shakespeare, Chaucer and Spenser. Students will study vocabulary found in the individual works and complete vocabulary exercises. Students will hone their reading skills through reading comprehension questions. Students will take notes on and study the biographies of the authors and, if appropriate, the period and genre of the written works. Authors include the following (list not all-inclusive).

- Nathaniel Hawthorne
- William Henry Lee (son of Robert E. Lee)
- Livy
- the Grimm Brothers
- William Bradford
- Hans Christian Andersen
- Charles Lamb
- Guy de Maupassant
- Geoffrey Chaucer
- William Shakespeare
- Edmund Spenser
- Isaac Watts
- William Blake
- William Wordsworth
- Samuel Taylor Coleridge
- John Keats
- George Gordon Byron
- Percy Bysshe Shelley
- Alfred Tennyson
- Robert Browning
- Christina Rossetti
- Robert Burns
- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- John Greenleaf Whittier

- James Russell Lowell
- Emily Dickinson
- Robert Frost
- Herodotus

Students will learn vocabulary found in the passages and complete the exercises that follow. The study guide instruction includes introductory passages that discuss the etymology of certain words on the word list. The exercises, designed to help students understand the nuances of words and enable students to use them in context. Students will complete the following exercise types:

- analogies
- synonyms and antonyms
- context suggestions
- fill-in-the-blank

Students will study literary techniques terms and apply them not only to the story read but also to other works of literature. Students will be tested on the literary terms at the end of the year. Literary terms and concepts include

- hero, antagonist, protagonist
- climax, anticlimax
- *tempus fugit*
- eponym, epithet
- drama, tragedy, comedies, histories, romances
- situational irony, dramatic irony, recognition
- oral tradition, myth, fairytale, fable, fantasy, legend
- biography, memoir, autobiography
- Arcadia
- Old English (Anglo-Saxon), Middle English, Modern English
- analogy, anecdote
- litotes
- farce
- Miltonic
- dramatic monologue
- Kinds of poetry: epics, ballads, lyrics
- literal and figurative language; metaphor; allegory; personification; oxymoron; allusion; hyperbole
- Byronic hero

- Romanticism, Elizabethan, Jacobean
- irony, foreshadowing, pathos
- catachresis
- narrative poetry
- anachronism
- parody
- polysyndeton, asyndeton
- mock epic, satire
- archetype
- pathetic fallacy
- tone
- Fireside Poet
- Realism

Book Reports

Students will be assigned three books to read during the year, which are as follows:

Jack London, *The Call of the Wild*.

Elizabeth Gray, *Adam of the Road*.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *A Wonder Book for Boys and Girls*.

For two of the assigned books, the reports will be written, not oral. The book report format sheet is found online and can be downloaded. For the third assigned book, students will present an oral report; the directions of this report will be given in class. If students have read the above books, or they prove too challenging, any of the following books, (arranged from easy to difficult) may be substituted:

Alice Dalgliesh, *The Courage of Sarah Noble*.

Astrid Lindgren, *Pippi Longstocking*.

Marguerite de Angeli, *The Door in the Wall*.

Johanna Spyri, *Heidi*.

L. M., *Anne of Green Gables*.

Anna Sewell, *Black Beauty*.

Rachel Field, *Calico Bush*

Elizabeth George Speare, *Bronze Bow*.

Washington Irving. *Rip Van Winkle*. Retold and Illustrated by John Howe. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1988.

Baroness Orczy. *Scarlet Pimpernel*.

Jules Verne, *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*.

J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*.

Writing Assignments

In addition to the three book reports, students will complete five to seven essays of different length for the year. The essays will be listed on the syllabus.

- Narrative Essay
- Descriptive essay
- Expository essay
- Comparison Essay
- Process Essay

In preparation for these written assignments, students will do the following:

- read models for imitation
- learn the format of the particular essay and its practical importance for readers
- learn how to develop a paragraph with a main idea and supporting detail
- learn the importance of detail, dialog and description, especially in narrative writing
- learn the importance of creating a natural style that comes from close observation and imitation of great past writers
- begin to develop their “voice”
- learn the importance of neatness, carefulness, proofreading, and following grammar and usage conventions

Poetry, Poetry Memorization and Poetics

Students will write at least one poem during the school year with meter, stress and rhyme. Students will be memorizing a stanza of poetry and a quotation every week, and recite a poem at the end of the school year in front of an audience. Students will also complete a chapter in poetics (found in the grammar and poetics textbook) every week. Students will learn the following terms, concepts and skills:

- meter, including monometer, dimeter, trimeter, tetrameter, pentameter, hexameter, heptameter, octometer
- kinds of rhyme: perfect rhyme, imperfect rhyme; masculine and feminine rhyme; internal rhyme; caesura rhyme; end rhyme; eye rhyme; identity; assonance; consonance; alliteration;
- stress, including iambic, trochaic, spondaic, anapestic, and dactylic

- syllables
- meter, free verse
- scansion
- prose
- blank verse
- catalectic and acatalectic
- sprung rhythm
- enjambment and end stop
- stanza forms: couplet, triplet, quatrain, sestet, octave; sonnet,
- synonyms and antonyms
- figures of speech: simile, metaphor, hyperbole, understatement, synecdoche, metonymy, personification, apostrophe
- imagery

Grammar

A lesson in grammar will be assigned every week. The grammar lessons are found in the grammar and poetics textbook. Students will learn the following terms and concepts:

- The Parts of Speech
- Verbs: principal parts, tense, progressive form, voice, mood
- Modifiers: adjectives and adverbs
- Pronouns: personal, relative, interrogative, demonstrative, intensive, reflexive, indefinite, reciprocal
- Conjunctions: coordinating, subordinating, correlative, conjunctive adverbs
- prepositions and prepositional phrases
- verbals and verbal phrases
- Functions of the noun: subjects, predicate nominatives, direct objects, indirect objects, objects of preposition, nouns of direct address, appositives
- Verbal phrases
- Clauses: relative, adverb, noun
- Usage Issues: Subject-verb agreement, vague and ambiguous pronouns, case, pronoun agreement, pronoun shift, use of “you,” parallel structure, comparisons, misplaced modifiers, run-ons and fragments
- Punctuation: quotation marks, italicized words, apostrophes, capitalization, semicolons, colons, hyphens, dashes, commas

Spelling

A lesson in spelling (found on the web site) will be assigned every week. Students will be quizzed on the spelling words every week in a quiz, spelling bee or dictation. Students will review the phonics lessons of previous years, including

- the short and long vowels
- the sounds of letter combinations: er, ow (as in *cow*), ea (as in *bead*), ou, ew, oi, ai, ee, y, ar, or, aw, oa, igh, ir, ay, oo (as in *book*), ow (as in *snow*), al, oy, ind, soft c, old, ea (as in *bread*), ough, oo (as in *root*), le, mb, kn, wr, tion, wh, ies, ss, age, cious, tch, tr, dr, dge, or, ph, qu, silent t, ture, ur, soft g (as in *giant*), oar, ey, silent h, ous, ue
- commonly misspelled words
- homophones
- contractions

Note-taking, Outlining, Organization and Neatness

Students will have weekly lessons on note-taking. The lessons will involve taking down notes on lectures about grammar, literature and literary devices, poets, poetry and poetics. The practice of note-taking will instruct the students on

- taking responsibility for their belongings
- organizing their thoughts
- carefulness and neatness
- quick and legible handwriting

The students will be graded on each of the above areas mentioned.

Oratory

Students will learn the technical aspects of writing and delivering speeches and read various essays and speeches as models. Students will learn the following:

- importance of subtly communicating a central idea in a speech through details
- the importance of holding an audience's attention through narrative and other techniques
- importance of the effective organization of material
- the role that the volume, pitch and inflection has in holding the interest of an audience
- the role of gestures and poise