



Course Syllabi

Course Title: Literary Interpretation

Instructor Email:

Course Number: ENGL 20201

Office Hours:

Instructor Name:

Office Location:

Course Description:

Close analysis of representative texts (poetry, drama, fiction) designed to develop art of lively, responsible reading through class discussion and writing of papers, including a documented research paper. Attention to literary design of critical method.

Course Prerequisites:

P: ENGL 13100 or 14000 with a Grade of C- or Better.

Course Access:

Google classroom will be used as our classroom management tool.

Course Goal:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

Analyze complex literary and informational texts through close reading, identifying how an author's choices in language, structure, style, and literary elements develop meaning, purpose, and thematic complexity.

Develop clear, evidence-based arguments in writing and discussion by crafting focused thesis statements, integrating relevant textual evidence, evaluating multiple perspectives, and communicating ideas with precision and clarity.

Interpret literature within historical, cultural, social, and intellectual contexts, examining how texts reflect, challenge, and shape human experiences, identities, and values across diverse cultures and time periods.

Apply literary criticism and research skills by distinguishing between primary and secondary sources, using scholarly research to deepen analysis, and documenting sources accurately using MLA style.

Evaluate and compare diverse works of literature and other forms of artistic expression, analyzing recurring themes, character development, narrative techniques, symbolism, and the ways authors invite multiple interpretations.

Communicate informed and original interpretations of literature through analytical, argumentative, and creative responses that demonstrate critical thinking, effective use of literary terminology, and an appreciation for the complexity of human expression.

Student Learning Objectives:

1. Read critically, summarize, apply, analyze, and synthesize information and concepts in written and visual texts as the basis for developing original ideas and claims.
2. Develop, assert and support a focused thesis with appropriate reasoning and evaluate evidence.
3. Recognize and describe humanistic, historical, or artistic works or problems and patterns of the human experience.
4. Apply disciplinary methodologies, epistemologies, and traditions of the humanities and the arts, including the ability to distinguish primary and secondary sources.
5. Analyze and evaluate texts, objects, events, or ideas in their cultural, intellectual or historical contexts.
6. Analyze the concepts and principles of various types of humanistic or artistic expression.
7. Create, interpret, or reinterpret artistic and/or humanistic works through performance or criticism.
8. Develop arguments about forms of human agency or expression grounded in rational analysis and in an understanding of and respect for spatial, temporal, and cultural contexts.
9. Analyze diverse narratives and evidence in order to explore the complexity of human experience across space and time.
10. Analyze literary texts, with particular emphasis on close reading.
11. Demonstrate understanding of texts from diverse global cultural contexts, taking into account the historical, social and political contexts in which they are produced and consumed.

12. Analyze the interaction of literature, language, culture, and identity.
13. Demonstrate an understanding of critical literary terminology.
14. Express their understanding of texts in written and oral form.
15. Use textual evidence to support their views, effectively incorporating primary and secondary sources in their writing and class discussion.
16. Use library databases to access scholarly sources for research.
17. Cite accurately primary and secondary sources using MLA format.

Learning Resources & Texts

Glaspell, Susan. *Trifles: A Play in One Act*. Baker's Plays, 2010.

Kafka, Franz, and David Wyllie. *The Metamorphosis*. Classix Press, 2009.

Monk Kidd, Sue. *The Secret Life of Bees a Novel*. PENGUIN BOOKS, 2022.

Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft. *Frankenstein, or, the Modern Prometheus*. New American Library, 2000.

Van Pelt, Shelby, and Michelle Crowe. *Remarkably Bright Creatures: A Novel*. Ecco, an Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2025.

Assignments

Student learning will be assessed through a variety of reading, writing, discussion, research, and analytical activities designed to measure achievement of the course learning outcomes. As a dual-credit college literature course, the primary emphasis is on critical reading, analytical writing, evidence-based argumentation, and scholarly research. In addition, instruction and assessments will develop the close reading, literary analysis, and writing skills expected in advanced literature courses and on the AP Literature and Composition Exam.

Major literary works studied during the course include *The Metamorphosis*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *Frankenstein*, and *Remarkably Bright Creatures*, along with selected poetry, short fiction, essays, and supplemental nonfiction. Throughout the year, students will also complete several short research projects and a culminating research capstone that synthesizes literary analysis with scholarly research.

Writing is the foundation of this course. Major essays will require students to develop original, well-supported arguments through close reading and the effective integration of textual evidence. Students will engage in the writing process by drafting, participating in peer review, revising, and editing before submitting final work. Research assignments will incorporate scholarly sources accessed through library databases and will follow current MLA documentation guidelines.

Students will complete multiple short research projects throughout the year to strengthen their skills in locating, evaluating, and synthesizing scholarly sources. These assignments will culminate in a final research capstone that demonstrates the ability to develop an original literary argument supported by both primary texts and secondary scholarship.

Because meaningful discussion is essential to literary study, students are expected to come to class having completed assigned readings and prepared to participate in thoughtful discussion. Active engagement in Socratic seminars, collaborative analysis, and writing workshops contributes to both individual learning and the success of the class community.

Students should expect a college-level workload that emphasizes careful reading, thoughtful analysis, scholarly research, frequent writing, and consistent revision. While the course fulfills the learning outcomes and academic expectations of a dual-credit college English course, it also provides extensive preparation for success on the AP Literature and Composition Exam through regular practice with close reading, literary interpretation, analytical writing, and multiple-choice literary analysis.

Grading Scale:

Regardless of your overall course average, you must complete all major literary analysis essays and the final research capstone project to earn credit for the course. Completion includes participating in each stage of the writing process, including drafting, revision, peer review, and submission of the final product.

Growth as a reader, writer, and critical thinker is a central goal of this course. Throughout the year, I will evaluate your progress in close reading, literary analysis, analytical writing, and the effective use of textual evidence. Major writing assignments and research projects will be assessed using detailed rubrics that emphasize thesis development, sophistication of analysis, organization, textual support, style, and command of language. Students are encouraged to review these rubrics before and during the writing process.

Because this is a dual-credit college literature course that also prepares students for the AP Literature and Composition Exam, the greatest emphasis is placed on thoughtful literary interpretation, evidence-based analysis, and polished analytical writing. Your overall grade reflects both the quality of your final work and your engagement in the writing process. Throughout the year, students will regularly practice AP-style literary analysis through poetry, prose fiction, and novel analysis; timed writing; multiple-choice reading practice; Socratic seminars; presentations; and other activities designed to strengthen close reading, critical thinking, and written communication. While these assignments are essential to developing the skills necessary for success in both college coursework and the AP exam, they carry less individual weight than the major essays, research projects, and capstone assessment.

Assignments should be submitted through Google Classroom unless otherwise directed. If technical difficulties prevent you from accessing Google Classroom, email your work to my WV email (martinam@westview.k12.in.us) as soon as possible and submit it through Google Classroom once access is restored. When emailing drafts for feedback, include specific questions or areas of concern so that I can provide targeted and meaningful feedback.

Category	Weight
Major Writing Projects	55%

Writing Process: drafts, writer's memos, peer review, conferences, revisions, plans, reflections etc.	20%
Skills Practice/ Assessments: timed essays, rhetorical analysis, synthesis, argument, multiple choice, grammar, vocabulary etc.	15%
Discussion/ Communication: Socratic Seminars, presentations, reading, discussions, participation etc.	10%

Course Evaluation:

At the end of the semester, you will have an opportunity to evaluate this course and your instructor. The Department of English & Linguistics will send you the information and link to the online evaluations via Google Classroom. Your participation is an integral part of the course, and your feedback is vital to improving education at PFW. I strongly urge you to participate in the evaluation system.

I will also include self-reflection and evaluation as part of your final reflection response for the course.

Academic Misconduct / Plagiarism / AI:

Academic Misconduct, including plagiarism (using other people's ideas/words and not giving them credit thus implying the work is your own original work) or using your own work from a previous course without the express permission of the instructor, is taken very seriously at any learning institution. It is taken very seriously in this class. Please be aware of what behaviors constitute academic misconduct (See Bulletin, Code of Students Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct Part II. A.) If caught cheating or plagiarizing, a student may receive no credit on the assignment and may result in an F for the course. Any instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Care and your Department Chair and may result in expulsion from the University. Additional potential consequences can be found under: potential consequences (See Bulletin, Code of Students Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct, Part III. A.: i.e., failure of the assignment, failure of the course and/or dismissal from the university) of such behavior.

Academic integrity is essential to this course. The purpose of every assignment is to help you develop your own reading, writing, critical thinking, and communication skills. While artificial intelligence (AI) can be a valuable learning tool, it should support your learning; not replace your thinking.

Throughout this course, we will occasionally use MagicSchool AI Student Rooms and other instructor-approved AI tools to brainstorm ideas, review concepts, practice rhetorical analysis, receive feedback on drafts, or prepare for assessments. When AI is used appropriately, it can help you become a stronger reader and writer.

Appropriate Uses of AI:

When specifically permitted by the instructor, you may use MagicSchool AI or other approved AI tools to:

- Brainstorm topics or ideas before writing.
- Ask questions about readings or writing concepts.
- Practice rhetorical analysis or AP-style multiple-choice questions.

- Receive feedback on organization, clarity, grammar, or style.
- Generate study guides, review materials, or quiz questions.
- Help understand vocabulary or difficult passages.
- Reflect on your writing through guided questions.

Using AI in these ways is intended to support your learning process; not to complete assignments for you.

Unless explicitly authorized, you may not use AI to:

- Generate complete or partial essays, discussion posts, or written assignments that you submit as your own work.
- Copy, paraphrase, or lightly edit AI-generated text and present it as your original writing.
- Complete quizzes, tests, in-class writing, or other assessments.
- Create citations or research without verifying their accuracy.
- Replace your own analysis, ideas, or critical thinking with AI-generated responses.

All final writing submitted in this course must represent your own thinking, voice, and writing. You are responsible for every sentence you submit. The goal of this policy is not to discourage the use of AI but to ensure that you continue to develop the independent reading, writing, and thinking skills that this course is designed to teach. When you are unsure whether AI is appropriate for an assignment, ask before using it.

Student Support Services

Purdue University Fort Wayne is committed to your academic and personal success. Visit the Student Support Services page for a list of student support services, including academic services, technology services, health and wellness, and support from administrative offices. For help with technology, including Brightspace, visit the IT Services Student Technology Support page.

If you observe and/or are made aware of student behavior that leaves you feeling concerned, worried, and/or alarmed, trust your instincts and say something. The CARE Team can assist with the student of concern, whether that's you or someone you are referring. Report the concern through the online CARE referral form. Please note that this form is not for emergencies. If you know of a student who is injured, is injuring themselves or others, or is threatening injuries to themselves or others, please call 911 immediately.

Your emotional wellness and mental health are important. If you have a mental health disorder, are struggling with your mental health, your stress overwhelms your ability to cope with it, or you find yourself needing emotional support, please talk to someone. If you or someone you know is in a mental health crisis situation, call 911 or go to the local emergency room. Otherwise, please reach out to our Center for Student Counseling (CSC). All currently enrolled PFW and IUFW students have access to free counseling at the center. To make an appointment to talk with a counselor call 260-481-6200 or email csc@pfw.edu.

Course Schedule

Assignments/ Units

The Literature of Me and Introduction to Literary Analysis: Students begin the year by exploring how literature reveals identity, perspective, and the complexity of human experience. Through short fiction, creative writing, close reading, Socratic discussion, and an introduction to Existentialism, students develop foundational analytical skills while examining characterization, symbolism, point of view, and narrative structure. The unit culminates in a literary movement research project that prepares students to analyze *The Metamorphosis* through historical and philosophical context.

Intro to Poetry: This unit introduces students to poetry as a form of literary expression through careful close reading and analysis. Students examine how poets use structure, imagery, symbolism, sound, point of view, and figurative language to develop meaning and theme while strengthening their ability to support interpretations with textual evidence.

Frankenstein and the Power of Context: Through Shelley's *Frankenstein*, students deepen their literary analysis by examining characterization, Romanticism, symbolism, foils, narrative structure, and author's craft. Class discussions, debate, and analytical writing encourage multiple interpretations, while an independent research project explores the historical, philosophical, scientific, or cultural contexts that shape our understanding of the novel.

The Art of the Short Story: Students analyze a variety of modern short stories to explore how authors create meaning within a compressed narrative form. Emphasis is placed on characterization, irony, conflict, symbolism, theme, and author's choices while students practice comparative literary analysis and discussion.

Drama and Perspective: Beginning with Susan Glaspell's *Trifles*, students examine dramatic literature through close reading and performance. They analyze characterization, stagecraft, symbolism, and dramatic irony while considering how perspective, gender, and social expectations influence interpretation.

Contemporary Literature and Open Literary Analysis: Using *Remarkably Bright Creatures*, students prepare for college-level literary analysis by exploring theme across multiple sources. Students conduct scholarly research using literary criticism, historical documents, and cultural texts to develop evidence-based interpretations that connect literature to broader human experiences and prepare for open literary response writing.

March Madness: Poetry Exploration Students expand their appreciation of poetry through a wide-ranging exploration of diverse poets, styles, and movements. Through discussion, analysis, and collaborative activities, students refine their close reading skills while comparing how poets communicate universal ideas through distinct voices and artistic choices.

The Secret Life of Bees: Symbols and Meaning In the final unit, students investigate how recurring symbols shape meaning within literature. Through close reading and independent research, students explore the historical, religious, cultural, and critical significance of a chosen symbol before evaluating how Sue Monk Kidd transforms that symbol to develop the theme and deepen readers' understanding of the novel.

Writer's Portfolio and Reflective Essay: In this culminating assignment, you will create a portfolio that showcases your growth as a literary scholar, analytical writer, and critical reader throughout the course. Your portfolio will include selected analytical essays, literary responses, research projects, AP-style literary analyses, and other work that best demonstrates your development in reading, interpreting, and writing about complex literature.

Accompanying your portfolio, you will write a reflective analysis that examines your growth as a reader and literary critic. Rather than simply describing the assignments you completed, you will evaluate how your ability to analyze complex texts, develop original interpretations, construct evidence-based arguments, and engage with literary criticism has evolved over the year. Your reflection should consider the challenges you encountered, the revisions and feedback that shaped your work, and the ways your understanding of literature, language, and the human experience has deepened. Support your reflection with specific examples from your portfolio, demonstrating how your analytical thinking, use of textual evidence, and command of literary terminology have become more sophisticated over time.

Your portfolio should illustrate not only the quality of your work but also your development as an insightful reader, thoughtful interpreter, and confident communicator. Serving as the culmination of your AP Literature and Dual Credit experience, this project reflects your readiness to engage with literature and academic writing at the college level.