 **American Literature Syllabus**

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| **Teacher:** Miss Janet Vrba | **Semester:** Spring 2020 |
| **Room #:** B8 | **Email:**  [janet.vrba@cobbk12.org](mailto:janet.vrba@cobbk12.org) |

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**Course Description**

American Literature is a course covering the various aspects of the literary contributions of writers residing in the Americas. It will include reading and interpreting mostly nonfiction texts in addition to short stories, poems, novels, and plays. Because Georgia has adopted the Georgia Standards of Excellence, American Literature will involve performance tasks. These tasks require that texts be interpreted and assessed in a way that ensures students are critically thinking about the texts and their implications for a real world community.

Composition will focus on constructing thorough arguments and narrative writing. For arguments, students will be expected to develop claims that rely heavily on comparing the pro and con positions of texts, citing the texts, choosing a position and defending it against possible counterclaims. For narrative writing, students will be exposed to compose original work that has dialogue, clear & specific narration, engaging language and appropriate structure. Whether it is narrative writing or argumentative writing, it is expected that their writing will have appropriate style and mastery of English conventions.

**Units of Study**

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| **Unit** | **Major Papers** |
| **I. The American Dream** | 1Synthesize 3 – 5 sources and your own observation to defend, challenge, or qualify the statement that *America still provides access to the American Dream*.  2Write a narrative in which a family attempts to attain the American Dream. |
| **II. The Crucible & The Power of Persuasion** | 1Write and present an original, persuasive speech that addresses a contemporary issue.  2Write a narrative that details what happens to Abigail Williams when she leaves Salem. |
| **III. Narrative Reading & Writing** | Write a creation myth. |
| **IV. American Forums and Satire** | Create a satire, political cartoon or script that ridicules a contemporary issue. |
| **V. Career Essay** | Students will research a chosen career and write an essay in preparation for their 12th Grade English Course and Cardinal Capstone. |

**Required Materials**

Each day you are required to have:

**(1)** a pencil **(2)** 3-ring notebook for your class notes **(3)** lined paper for daily work **(4)** 4 colored highlighters (yellow, blue, pink, green)

**Standards Based Grading**

Grading categories in my gradebook will reflect Georgia Standards of Excellence, meaning that the points on a performance task or unit assessment will be divided into the categories/standards that the task or assessment covers.

**Grading Policy**

Your grades will be calculated as follows:

**30% Reading & Literature** (Mainly Multiple Choice Exit Tickets)

**30% Writing** (Constructed Responses, Arguments, Narrative Writing)

**10% Speaking, Listening** (Group projects/presentations, responses to visual performance and participation in dramatic performance & debates)

**10% Language** (Grammar & Vocabulary Quizzes)

**20% Georgia Milestones End Of Course Exam for American Literature**

*\*Grades can be checked on ParentVue or StudentVue*

**Classroom Expectations:**

***We are a learning community.*** Therefore, in order to maximize learning opportunities and experiences for everyone, ***we must collectively and consistently follow an established set of rules to foster a safe and effective learning environment for everyone***. This contract outlines my expectations for our learning community/classroom.

1. **Be on time.** Be in your seat when the bell rings. Showing up to class ***on time*** is learning a life skill that every future employer expects of his/her employees.
2. **Be respectful to your teacher, classmates, and yourself.** Inappropriate language is disrespectful. Please raise your hand to speak and LISTEN to your teacher and classmates. Listening is an important skill to practice and acquire.
3. **Be prepared.** When you come to class, have a pencil/pen, notebook paper, 3-ring notebook, and highlighter(s) for class so you are ready to write and participate in class work and activities.
4. **NO PHONES OUT OR IN USE.** Please put phones away into your backpack. If I decide we will use the technology, such as, Google Translate, I will clearly communicate this instruction. Otherwise, texting and using your phones during class disrupts your learning as well as the learning of others. I will enforce Cell Phone Jail for inappropriate use of cell phone in class.
5. **Do Your BEST.** ☺ I am looking for effort. Learning a new language and literature requires high cognitive functions – a definite workout for the brain. I am not looking for perfection but I want to see that you are engaged and giving your best effort each day. Woody Allen coined a term that I believe is true, ***“80% of success is showing up.”* Those who attend class regularly will learn and do well.**

**Beginning Class/Tardies**

Class begins when the bell rings. All students should be in their seats and waiting for my directions. If for any reason you are not in your seat when the bell rings, you will be marked tardy. OHS Tardy Policy is posted on the wall by the door. 1-3 tardies will result in parent contact. You will receive a 30 minute detention when you have accrued 5 tardies. Any more tardies will result in further consequences including loss of privileges.

**Tutoring / Computers**

I am available to tutor before or after school by appointment. This means you need to communicate with me that you need help and I’ll schedule time and day to meet with you in my Room B8 before school at 7:45 a.m. or after school at 3:30 p.m. The Media Center is also open before school at 7:45 a.m. and after school 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. so students may use computers.

**Leaving Class/Restroom**

Class time is valuable. I expect you to go to the restroom or take care of personal matters before or after class. There is plenty of time between classes to take care of your business. I understand that special circumstances do arise, and in these situations I will permit a student to leave class provided it is a true emergency. No students are allowed to leave the first 15 minutes or the last 15 minutes of class.

**Make-up/Absences**

You must have an excused absence in the ATTENDANCE OFFICE in order to make up work. If you do not have one, you will receive a 0.

If you have an excused absence from attendance, the following policy on late work will be adhered to:

Minor Assignments—Can make up within 6 Weeks grading period

Major Assignments—Within 6 Weeks grading period full credit

If the assignment is late after the current 6 weeks grading period, a 15% penalty will be assessed

If the assignment is late 12 weeks or more a 30% penalty will be assessed

**TEACHER CONTACT INFO:**

I look forward to working with our students and their parents this academic school year. Please email me with your concerns. You can reach me at: [janet.vrba@cobbk12.org](mailto:janet.vrba@cobbk12.org).

**My teacher blog webpage is:** [**http://4jvrba.edublogs.org/**](http://4jvrba.edublogs.org/)

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|  | Wait your turn to speak and use positive language. | * Come in quietly. * When late to class, place tardy slip on front table, go quietly to your seat and begin work. | * Attempt the learning activity before asking for help. | * Complete Ticket out the Door or closing activity and turn in to teacher. | * Encourage your group members to complete their parts of the assignment. |
|  | Attempt new learning activities. | * Take notes when prompted. * Summarize the important or key information. | * Explore various ways of solving problems. * Accept appropriate help from classmates. | * Review learning target and check your understanding. * Participate in class discussions. | * Listen to your partner or group members’ ideas. |
|  | Arrive to class on time with materials ready. | * Start every day with independent reading. * Start your warm up and be prepared to answer questions. | * Complete assignments in a timely manner. * Seek assistance or ask teacher questions when you need help. | * Complete any assessment, ticket out the door, etc. * Turn in your completed assignments in the basket labeled with your block in the front of the room or teacher. | * Use the checklist or rubric to check your progress on the assignment. |
|  | Only use your phone when prompted. | * Honor Dead Time  (First 15 minutes) | * Listen to directions. * Keep talking to a low level. | * Honor Dead Time  (Last 15 minutes) * Pick up trash and clean your area before you leave the room. | * Complete your group assignments by due date or time. |