

**William A. Shine—Great Neck South High School**  
**Course Expectation Sheet**

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

**COURSE: GREAT THEMES IN LITERATURE**  
(Revised 7/15)

In this one-semester course, seniors will have the opportunity to explore the recurrent themes, questions, and observations that have concerned humankind for centuries. This course is designed for the student who would like to explore literature in every genre that deals with themes central to an understanding of our human condition. These include but are not limited to: self-awareness, identity, conformity and rebellion, survival and death, alienation, love and hate.

**READING**

According to the Common Core reading standards, “To become college and career ready, students must grapple with works of exceptional craft and thought whose range extends across genres, cultures, and centuries. Such works offer profound insights into the human condition and serve as models for students’ own thinking and writing.... Through wide and deep reading of literature and literary nonfiction of steadily increasing sophistication, students gain a reservoir of literary and cultural knowledge, references, and images; the ability to evaluate intricate arguments; and the capacity to surmount the challenges posed by complex texts.”

To meet these goals, students

- will develop techniques of close reading and annotating
- ought to read a variety of challenging texts (both fiction and nonfiction) in addition to those assigned in class
- ought to use their reading to observe and develop more mature writing strategies

**WRITING**

According to the Common Core writing standards, “For students, writing is a key means of asserting and defending claims, showing what they know about a subject, and conveying what they have experienced, imagined, thought, and felt. To be college- and career- ready writers, students must take task, purpose, and audience into careful consideration, choosing words, information, structures, and formats deliberately. They need to know how to combine elements of different kinds of writing...to produce complex and nuanced writing. They need to be able to use technology strategically when creating, refining, and collaborating on writing.... They must have the flexibility, concentration, and fluency to produce high-quality first- draft text under a tight deadline as well as the capacity to revisit and make improvements to a piece of writing over multiple drafts when circumstances encourage or require it.”

To meet these goals, students

- will write regularly, both in class and at home
- will develop techniques for drafting and revising
- will practice skills of research, especially the synthesis of various credible sources

**RESEARCH**

According to the Common Core writing standards, students “have to become adept at gathering information, evaluating sources, and citing material accurately, reporting findings from their research and analysis of sources in a clear and cogent manner.”

To meet these goals, students

- will review the various kinds of sources that are appropriate for research
- will read and annotate secondary texts in order to identify primary claims and supporting evidence
- will compose an original thesis based on those readings
- will synthesize their sources and organize an original argument

- will develop the structure of the paper into a sentence outline
- will use MLA citation format
- will submit a final draft of the research paper through Turnitin

### **LANGUAGE**

According to the Common Core language standards, “To be college and career ready in language, students must have firm control over the conventions of standard English. At the same time, they must come to appreciate that language is at least as much a matter of craft as of rules and be able to choose words, syntax, and punctuation to express themselves and achieve particular functions and rhetorical effects. They must also have extensive vocabularies, built through reading and study, enabling them to comprehend complex texts and engage in purposeful writing about and conversations around content. They need to become skilled in determining or clarifying the meaning of words and phrases they encounter, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies to aid them. They must learn to see an individual word as part of a network of other words—words, for example, that have similar denotations but different connotations.... Skills related to conventions, effective language use, and vocabulary are [vital] to reading, writing, speaking, and listening; indeed, they are inseparable from such contexts.”

To meet these goals, students

- ought to learn vocabulary in the context of their reading
- ought to apply vocabulary precisely in their writing
- will practice various techniques to develop clarity and control of language and style

### **WRITING CONFERENCES**

Writing conferences provide students with the opportunity to discuss and improve their writing. Each student is expected to schedule appointments at a time that is mutually convenient for both student and teacher.

### **ASSESSMENT**

- Major tests will be given on English testing day.
- In-class essays that require minimal preparation may be given on any day.
- Unannounced quizzes may be given on any day.
- Class participation may count as much as 20% of the quarter grade.
- It is the responsibility of absent students to arrange a time to make up missed work and tests.
- Students will be responsible for all assignments on the date they are due unless prior arrangements have been approved by the teacher.
- All unapproved late submission of work will be penalized by reduction in grade.

### **EXTRA HELP**

Students are encouraged to attend extra help sessions on the day before English testing day.

### **ATTENDANCE PHILOSOPHY**

Attendance is part of a student’s participation grade, which may count as much as 20% of the grade for the quarter. Regular attendance and punctuality are expected. Cutting is not permitted. If students intentionally absent themselves from a class without a legitimate reason, they will not be entitled to make up any assignments or exams missed during that period. Intentional absences are a clear message that students are not interested in doing their best. Excessive illegal absences or any cutting will result in parental notification and will have a negative impact on how class participation will be factored into quarter and final grades.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Integrity of the academic process requires that credit be given where credit is due. Accordingly, it is unethical to present the ideas, representations, or words of another as one’s own or to permit one’s own

work to be used by someone else without customary and proper acknowledgement of sources. In addition to such plagiarism, the following acts violate the academic integrity policy:

- copying or paraphrasing information from the Internet or out of a book
- copying information from a friend, classmate or sibling
- “collaborating” with classmates on assignments for which no collaboration is assigned
- sharing information about test or quiz questions and answers with classmates who will have a similar assessment later

When students submit work that is not their own, they will receive no credit for that work and will have no opportunity to make up that work. Students who willingly share their work with others are also subject to penalty.