

English 11 Syllabus ~ Literature of the Overlooked and Misunderstood

Course Description: English 11 — Literature of the Overlooked and Misunderstood — uses literature to explore the backgrounds of overlooked and misunderstood peoples and cultures within the United States. In reading books by people of backgrounds often overlooked, students will have the opportunity to learn about global cultures that exist within US borders as well as having the opportunity to immerse themselves in the traditional literature of these peoples.

Academic Objectives and Outcomes: Throughout the course students will ask themselves questions like “why is this history/group/culture misunderstood or overlooked”, “what is the presence of global cultures in the United States”, and “what does it mean to be an American”. In doing so, students will be able to place themselves within a greater context and, therefore, develop and broaden their critical thinking and analysis skills. Students are expected to compose personal, meaningful, and comparative responses reflective of their critical thinking. By engaging in open discussion, comparing texts, and producing substantive writing, students will continue to develop academic skills required for college.

Main Skills Developed:

- Textual comparison
- Writing driven by analysis
- Professional writing voice — how to write like an academic

Cross Grade Level Approach — All 11th and 12th graders (including honors students) will explore the same content, but the academic objectives will vary by grade and level. Constructing the upper level English courses in this format allows for students to grow their academic skill sets at their level, while simultaneously allowing for a unique sense of community.

Texts:

- *There There* by Tommy Orange
- *The Buddha in the Attic* by
- *When the Emperor was Divine* by
- *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Course Assignments and Grading: Students will be graded on two different categories: short writing assignments and essays. Students will not be graded on participation, though participation is reflected in their written work. Short writing assignments can be expected

weekly or every other week. The aim is to have less “busy work” assignments and more substantial/meaningful assignments that are aimed at growing the course’s main skills.

Breakdown:

- Short Writing Assignments: 40%
- Essays: 60%

Student Inclusive Grading: For this course, students will be a part of their own grade. At the beginning of the year the class will discuss what different grades mean to them. With my input, we will construct grading scales that will be used throughout the school year. For each writing assignment, students will also submit a self grading sheet, which will impact the final grade.

Policies and Procedures: Students will be expected to abide by the following policies and procedures:

- **Google Classroom:** Google Classroom is the only acceptable place to submit work. All assignments should be submitted through that platform, NOT emailed/shared.
- **Late work:** Late assignments are accepted within the quarter. Learn how to manage your time. If you get behind, you create unnecessary stress for yourself.
- **Attendance:** Though students will not receive daily attendance points, writing assignments will be constructed around what took place within the classroom, making attendance crucial to a successful completion of this course.
- **Cell Phones:** Practice stepping away from technology by keeping your cell phone away during class.
- **Masks:** Students are required to wear masks during class. No exceptions.

Contact and Connections

- Google classroom code: lho7us2
- Students and guardians can contact me via email: jnicholson@santacruzcoe.org