

## High School English A

**Course Description:** This course will focus on expanding students' abilities in literary analysis, complex grammar structures, and diversified writing for ninth and tenth grade. We'll read/discuss four novels, one Shakespearean play, and a selection of short stories and poetry, both classic and contemporary. Students are expected to write several essays in the fall, as well as one research paper (MLA format) in the spring.

**Goals/Objectives:** The primary goals are to (1) increase students' exposure to various themes and devices in literature and strengthen their ability to understand them, and (2) fortify their writing abilities with cohesive structure and style.

**Prerequisites:** Students should have taken at least one writing class beforehand and have a working knowledge of how to construct a five-paragraph essay *without help*. We will briefly review this process at the start of the fall semester, but the basic foundations of essay writing should already be present. Students also need to know how to format papers in Google Drive or Microsoft Word, as this is how work will be submitted.

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The syllabus is subject to change, particularly if I see a need to switch directions, slow down, or speed up. I communicate regularly on the class page, which you (student and/or parent) should check between class meetings:

**[jennicreates.com/tc-classes/english-a/](http://jennicreates.com/tc-classes/english-a/)**

**Password: thursdayconnection**

Feel free to contact me at any time: (423) 503-7971 / [jennie@jennicreates.com](mailto:jennie@jennicreates.com)

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**Required Materials:** *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White; a gmail account with Google Drive (papers can be submitted this way); Novels can be purchased or borrowed. Short stories and poems will be provided.

### Novels

*Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

*Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury

*We Have Always Lived in the Castle* by Shirley Jackson

*The Great Divorce* by C.S. Lewis

### Play

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare

### Poems

"Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes

"A Dream Within a Dream" by Edgar Allan Poe

"Morning in the Burned House" by Margaret Atwood

"No Man Is An Island" by John Donne

"The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost

"Do Not Go Gentle into that Goodnight" by Dylan Thomas

"Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou

“Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost  
“When You are Old” by William Butler Yeats  
“To a Mouse” by Robert Burns

### Short Stories

“A Good Man is Hard to Find” by Flannery O’Connor  
“The Interlopers” by H.H. Munro  
“Eve’s Diary” by Mark Twain  
“A Matter of Prejudice” by Kate Chopin  
“Harrison Bergeron” by Kurt Vonnegut  
“The Bet” by Anton Chekhov  
“The Devil” by Guy de Maupassant  
“A Jury of Her Peers” by Susan Glaspell

### Fall Essays (minimum three pages/1200 words)

Character Analysis (*We Have Always Lived in the Castle*)  
Response (*Fahrenheit 451*)  
Cause/Effect (*Frankenstein*)

### Spring Research Paper (minimum six pages/2000 words)

Literary Research Analysis

- Research author and his/her body of work
- Analyze similar works for their continuity and parallel themes
- Select an era and discuss works from that time
- Topic of your choice that meets the requirements of the class

### **Expectations/Homework:**

There are four primary elements to this class.

**1) Assigned reading:** Students will be required to keep pace with the class as we move through three novels in the fall and various works in the spring. Because everything overlaps, falling behind on reading means falling behind on everything else.

**2) Personal responses\* to assigned reading:** Students are required to create a Google Document and share the link with me. This will serve as a personal journal to respond to each week’s reading assignment. It will also help me correspond with each student individually to ensure he/she understands what’s going on in the story and to encourage independent critical thinking. These personal responses are in lieu of reading quizzes.

**3) Elements of Style worksheets:** As we move through the style guide, students will complete worksheets at home to make sure they understand how the book functions and to engage in various exercises to improve their writing.

**4) Academic papers:** Students will complete three essays in the fall and one research paper in the spring. Students should already have an understanding of how to construct a basic five-paragraph essay.

**All work will be typed in Times New Roman, 12 pt, double-spaced.**

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\*Personal responses are **substantive responses** to weekly prompts related to the assigned reading and will be completed on one continuous Google Document so I can reply and interact individually with the student. **Responses are due by Wednesday at 3 p.m.**

**What is a substantive response?** Responding to reading assignments is necessary to ensure understanding. Responses are not opinions on the story, nor a restating of facts. Rather, it is an exercise in critical thinking that uses facts from the reading to support the student's ideas.

**A substantive response includes:**

- Identifying and interpreting the author's intentions
- Dissecting the motives of the character
- Projecting what might happen based on a current passage
- Explaining deeper messages and meanings within the text

#### Example

**Prompt:** In *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*, C.S. Lewis creates four main and distinct characters in Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy. Why do you think Lewis designated one child as rebellious early in the story?

**Poor response:** Because he wanted to make the story interesting.

**Better response:** Lewis created a diverse cast of kids so there would be tension in the story and it would be more interesting. The story wouldn't be as good if everyone had the same personality.

**Best response:** By designating Edmund as rebellious, Lewis sets up the symbolic story with a "Judas" already in motion. He shows Edmund's discontent early in the story so readers understand that he will be the one to betray Aslan. The White Witch sees Edmund as an easy target on account and preys on him to achieve her goals.

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**Note:** I have high expectations for all of my students, but as a homeschooling mother I understand there are plenty of variables that affect a student's capabilities. If there is a problem with an assignment, contact me BEFORE it is due. I have no problem extending grace to a student BEFORE a due date. There is less grace to be extended ON or AFTER a due date. :)

Fall 2018	Topic Covered	Homework
1 Aug. 16	Intro to class/expectations, Intro to <i>Elements of Style</i> Intro to <i>We Have Always Lived in the Castle</i>	Ch. 1-2 of <i>Castle</i> , <b>Response</b> on Google Doc Write a five-paragraph essay on your three favorite books/stories and submit via email by Tuesday night
2 Aug. 23	Discussion, Intro to Character Analysis	Ch. 3-5 of <i>Castle</i> , <b>Response</b> Read Part I of <i>Elements</i> Select character from novel/start making notes <a href="#">Grammar/Writing Worksheet</a>
3 Aug. 30	Discussion	Ch. 6-8 of <i>Castle</i> , <b>Response</b> Part II of <i>Elements</i> <a href="#">Grammar/Writing Worksheet</a>
4 Sept. 6	Discussion about plot points and character analysis	Ch. 9-10 of <i>Castle</i> , <b>Response</b> Parts III and IV of <i>Elements</i> Draft Outline of Character Analysis with thesis statement and supporting topic sentences <a href="#">Grammar/Writing Worksheet</a>
5 Sept. 13	Discussion, GC of Outlines, Works Cited	Part V of <i>Elements</i> Write rough draft of Character Analysis Submit via email by Tuesday night
6 Sept. 20	<b>Rough Drafts returned,</b> Intro to <i>Fahrenheit 451</i>	Read Part One, <b>Response</b> Finalize <b>Character Analysis</b> <a href="#">Grammar/Writing Worksheet</a>
7 Sept. 27	Discussion, Intro to Response Essay	Read Part Two, <b>Response</b> Select from essay questions and begin research <a href="#">Grammar/Writing Worksheet</a>
8 Oct. 4	Discussion	Read Part Three, <b>Response</b> Draft Outline for <b>Response Paper</b> <a href="#">Grammar/Writing Worksheet</a>
9 Oct. 18	GC on Outline	Write rough draft of Response Essay Submit via email by Tuesday night
10 Oct. 25	<b>Rough Drafts returned</b> Intro to <i>Frankenstein</i>	Read the Letters and Ch. 1-3, <b>Response</b> <a href="#">Grammar/Writing Worksheet</a>
11 Nov. 1	Discussion	Ch. 4-8 (Finish Vol. I), <b>Response</b> <a href="#">Grammar/Writing Worksheet</a>
12	Discussion	Read Volume II, <b>Response</b>

Nov. 8		Grammar/Writing Worksheet
13 Nov. 15	Discussion Intro to Cause/Effect Paper	Read Volume III, <b>Response</b> Brainstorm C/E Paper topics; Bring notes for GC Grammar/Writing Worksheet
14 Nov. 29	Discussion	Write rough draft of Cause/Effect Paper Submit via email by Tuesday night
15 Dec. 6	<b>Rough Drafts Returned,</b> Introduce Shakespeare and Spring Semester expectations	Finalize Cause/Effect Paper Submit via email by Tuesday night
16 Dec. 13	Papers/Grades returned Game for extra points	