Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow

Course Description

This full-year course is designed for students who have achieved well in English and demonstrate a high level of interest and motivation in the study of literature. The course features a chronological approach to the study of British literature. In addition to a great deal of reading, there is an emphasis on writing skills, critical thinking, and vocabulary development. Course readings will include *Beowulf, The Canterbury Tales, Hamlet,* novels of the 19th century, selected poems and nonfiction pieces, and a variety of scholarly essays.

Reading & Writing Skills

READING

MA Curriculum Frameworks Standards RL.1-7, 10

- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence

- Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text

- Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story, poem, or drama

- Determine the figurative or connotative meaning(s) of words and phrases

- Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

- Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant

- Read and comprehend a variety of complex texts that represent a cross-section of perspective, genre, and time period.

WRITING

MA Curriculum Frameworks Standards W1-5, 8-10

- Write arguments

- Write informative/explanatory texts

- Write narratives

- Produce clear and coherent writing

- Develop and strengthen writing as needed

- When conducting research, gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources

- Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support written analysis, interpretation, reflection, and research.

Language, Speaking, & Listening Skills

SPEAKING & LISTENING

MA Curriculum Frameworks Standards SL.1-4, 6

- Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions

- Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media

- Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric

- Present information, findings, and supporting evidence

- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks

LANGUAGE

MA Curriculum Frameworks Standards L. 1-6

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling

- Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts

- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases

- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings

- Acquire and use accurately academic and domain-specific words and phrases

Units	Essential Questions	Key Activities MAY include...
Frankenstein (summer reading)	• What is monstrosity? • What personal benefits does being in nature provide? • What makes a piece of literature relevant past its own time period?	
Beowulf	• How does the desire to leave a legacy shape the way one lives? • How does one gauge the effect of legacy? To what extent is legacy within one's control? • To what extent does the modern world value legacy? • What defines a true hero? • What is the nature of monstrosity? • What determines the nature of good and evil?	• Close reading • Vocabulary study • Socratic seminars • Analytical essays • Narrative writing • Media analysis • Creative projects • Research • Scene reenactments
The Canterbury Tales	• How does story form affect our understanding and appreciation of it? • What do stories reveal about the context in which they are created? • How do social roles influence and shape our own lives?	
Hamlet	• Is revenge ever justified? If so, to what extent? • Does fate or free will play a larger role in one's decisions? • Is it possible to overcome the circumstances of our upbringing? Why or why not? • How does family loyalty affect relationships? • How does acknowledgement of the death affect the way one lives?	
1984	• How can literature facilitate understanding the issues of modern times? • To what extent does language and its limitations play in allowing individuals to understand and express one's identities and culture? • What does it mean to be free?	
Lord of the Flies	• How much do societal norms, rules, and morals influence how one behaves? • What qualities are essential in a good leader, and how does power affect leadership? • How do gender expectations influence one's own identity?	
Grammar Bootcamp	• How does using correct grammar and punctuation improve effective writing? • How is grammar a reflection of the writer? • How is grammar used as a source of power?	
Encyclopedia of an Ordinary Life "Letter essays"	• What makes the ordinary extraordinary? • What does effective personal narrative writing look like?	

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Curriculum Guide Overview

Curriculum Guide
Curriculum guides are public documents aligned with the Massachusetts Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks. They focus on the set of standards that students will learn within certain disciplines at appropriate grade levels. Each area of the curriculum is divided into general strands (broad categories) under which the standards fall. When we discuss "standards-based education" we mean that students are measured against their proficiency and growth towards meeting these standards. Curriculum Guides are intended for teachers, parents, and the wider school community as an overview document of the course of study for the year.

Curriculum Map
Curriculum maps are internal documents utilized as planning tools for teachers. Curriculum maps keep a focus on the end-of-year standards and chart a course for the teaching and learning over the year. They are typically organized in a grade-level overview organized by month or marking period. Curriculum maps typically include; standards and expectations for the grade/content, essential skills/concepts, methods of assessment, and major content resources. Maps are never "done" as ongoing work of educators include revisions, additions, and revisits to the maps. They provide an overview for the year while also allowing educators to see a vertical picture of how the content develops as students progress through each grade.

Standards
The standards used as the foundation of our curriculum come directly from the Massachusetts Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks. State standards may be viewed here:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/

Essential Questions
Essential questions are questions that are not answerable with an easy answer or a simple instruction. The purpose of essential questions is to provide opportunities for inquiry into the learning and act as an umbrella to anchor the unit/lesson.

Activities
Activities identified in Curriculum Guides are not intended to be exhaustive, nor are they intended to be prescriptive. The activities identified may function as formative and summative assessments. Other activities may be included. Complexity of activities varies by course level.

Close Reading
Close reading is observation, interpretation, and critical analysis of a text that focuses on significant details or patterns in order to develop a deep and relevant understanding. Close reading involves annotating, note-taking, and a concentrated effort.

Analysis
Analysis is examining the parts of visual or written text in order to understand the whole text and author's purpose. Analytical writing requires defending an original argument (thesis) and supporting it with evidence and insight in order to make meaning and arrive at understanding.

Socratic Seminar
A formal discussion, based on a text, in which students ask open-ended questions. Within the context of the discussion, students listen closely to the comments of others, thinking critically for themselves, and articulate their own thoughts and responses to others. Teachers structure Socratic seminars in a variety of ways depending on the needs of the lesson and class.
(Definition modified from NCTE ReadWriteThink, http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/socratic-seminars-30600.html)