**Syllabus: English 9: Literature of Western Civilization, Part 1**

**Rancho Christian School**

**Mrs. Mueller**

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Welcome to our survey of the literature of Western Civilization. This year, we will embark on a journey of discovery that will take us from the high adventure of ancient Greeks, to the drama stage and the timeless beauty of Shakespeare. I have a passion for literature which will become evident as we study varied and fascinating works. In our examinations, we will also be reading with a distinctly Christian focus, again and again asking the question- how does this help us to find God’s will for our lives and to love Him with our whole heart? Through writing and discussion, we will get to know one another well by the year’s end. I look forward to finding out how God has blessed each of you with unique gifts, talents, and viewpoints. As we work together there are basic rules and procedures that we’ll be following this year. This syllabus helps to make those clear.

**Assignments Overview (subject to change):**

**Vocabulary:** Students will be given word lists from various sources, including, but not limited to, SAT preparatory vocabulary words, unknown or unusual words found in the reading texts, words or concepts appropriate to the literary/historical period being studied, etc. Students will be expected to correctly define, spell, and use these words in a sentence. Quizzes will be given roughly every two to four weeks.

**Timed Writing:** To prepare you for the advanced coursework at the junior and senior level, we will be practicing this routinely. Students need not prepare for these writings, simply pay attention in class, participate in lectures, read the texts on time, and bring book and notes to class. Writing days will occur roughly monthly.

**Formal Essay Writing:** Readers are writers, and the best way to engage with the text being studied is to write about it. We will be working with many essay types, with our ultimate focus being the argumentative and research essays. We will also be striving toward a more organic structure in our formal writing.

**Various Other Writing**: Students will be asked to do shorter forms of writing or illustration, alone or with others, in an effort to delve more deeply into the texts, and to foster more thoughtful and productive discussion.

**Reading Assignments/Discussion:** This class is built around participation. Effective and meaningful discussion demands the thoughts and opinions of each and every student. Therefore, it is imperative that students complete the assigned reading on time to be able to participate. Further, since this class in a true survey class, we will be covering a lot of literary ground. Students must keep to the reading schedule to avoid falling behind. In order to ensure this process, reading quizzes will be given, with or without notice, at the discretion of the teacher.

**Reading Responses:** While these responses would typically fall into the “homework” category as far as grading, their usefulness extends far beyond the confines of mere “homework”. This is an opportunity to engage with the text and the author in real time, as opposed to reflecting on the reading at a later date. In these responses we will employ a more close reading technique, commenting on specific quotes, making connections between passages of the same text, as well as connecting the primary text to other works being studied. These responses will serve as reading notes (able to be used on timed writings) as well as valuable preparatory thoughts for paper writing.

**Culminating Projects:** Each quarter students will prepare some kind written/creative project at the end of the major novel that has been read. Most of the time this project will be connected to the history course as well.

**Curriculum Overview (subject to change):**

Literature and Society are inextricably linked, and in light of this, it is imperative that these subjects be studied in tandem. In an effort to ensure this seamless integration, the English and History classes will be in sync regarding time periods being studied. In addition, we will be working in tandem with your Bible class to fully integrate Christian thought into our curriculum.

**Major Readings:**

* The Epic of Gilgamesh by Anonymous
* Odyssey by Homer
* Paradise Lost by Milton
* The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer
* Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare
* Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare

**Grading:**

The quarter grades in this class will be weighted as follows:

Homework 20%

Classwork 20%

Tests/Essays/Projects 40%

Quizzes 20%

The semester grades will be weighted as follows:

Quarter One 40%

Quarter Two 40%

Final Exam 20%

**Student Preparedness:**

**Paper Headings:** Please put your name, the date, the period you have this class, and the title of the assignment on the upper LEFT hand corner of each and every paper, unless otherwise instructed. Further, if the assignment requires a title or heading, it should be centered at the top of the first page, immediately below the name, etc.

**Materials:** Students will come to class prepared with a pen (blue or black), a binder with loose leaf paper, their electronic device (charged up and ready to use, look for the “DEVICE ON” sign at the front of the classroom to know when you need to have it ready to go), their class notebook, and any homework, project, and/or reading assignment that is due. A student who is unprepared in any way will receive a check. Three checks in a week will garner the student an automatic detention.

**Absences**: There will be a notebook on the back counter of the class where you will go to when you have missed a day(s) of class. Check this for notes, handouts, and other info about what you missed. Nearby will be a calendar for you to sign up to make up any quizzes or tests that you may have missed. You are accountable to check this binder and sign up on the calendar. You have an opportunity to practice responsibility-take advantage of it! There will also be late work forms that you will grab when you have late or absent work. You must attach this to the assignment you are turning in, with the reason why the assignment is late or missing. Late work will not be accepted without this form!!! Follow the handbook policy for turning in absent work.

**Courtesy and Discipline:** Much of classroom success stems from the courtesy afforded to the teacher and fellow students. This courtesy is shown in our speech, actions, and attitudes (ie. raising our hands to speak, using appropriate language, not eating/drinking/chewing gum/displaying cell phones/etc.) and Student Handbook rules will be strictly enforced. Endeavor to use the restroom before and after class in all but the most dire emergencies.