



Tohoku International School

Secondary School Course Syllabus

Course Title: English Language and Literature	Teacher: Robert Zehmke Email: rzehmke@tisweb.net
Grade Level(s): Grades 9 - 10	Time Frame: 37 weeks
Brief Course Description: <p>This course is intended to help students become better thinkers, speakers, readers and writers in English. The course will help them explore the growing up they are going through using many forms of fiction from a variety of World Literature sources; this year predominantly but not exclusively from Asia. There will be a lot of emphasis on collaboration and group work in class; expanding the students' spoken English, as well as preparing the students for success in secondary academic programs. Focus will be placed upon developing the ability to communicate clearly and effectively. Additionally, students will demonstrate an understanding that every text comes from a specific point of view that must be recognized, questioned, assessed, and evaluated. And finally, students in this course will practice open-mindedness within an international context.</p> <p>Some of the themes we will be studying are humans' relationship with nature and spirituality; growth and coming of age; as well as our identities as individuals within the societies we live in and how contexts define us to an extent.</p> <p>We will be primarily focusing on short stories from Asia, poems, and song lyrics. We will also be studying novels and the interpretations of these novels through other media such as film and popular culture.</p> <p>Students will be expected to write in a variety of genres, e.g. academic research and creative writing.</p>	
Course Philosophy: <p>The study of English with a focus on world literature allows students to be exposed to many different genres, points of view, and specific areas for language arts improvement. Engagement in the reading and analysis of both the structural and rhetorical aspects of literary works, ranging from short stories and novels to Shakespeare and poetry, allows students to improve their speaking, reading, writing and--most important--their critical thinking skills. Students will display these thinking skills through a variety of projects, both individual and collaborative. Communication in English is essential in every academic subject area at TIS, and the aim is for measurable growth for all students. English is a subject that should be engaged with and, most importantly, enjoyed and in TIS the subject aims to ensure that.</p> <p>As a teacher, I believe that a student who truly exemplifies the 5 TIS stars should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Knowledgeable about the world through what they read and hear● Open-minded to using and applying language and considering different perspectives● A clear communicator in all forms written and spoken● Responsible in their use of appropriate English and nurturing their enjoyment of English● A risk-taker in sharing their ideas and knowledge in public settings	
Course Objectives: <p>By the end of this course students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Begin to understand, reflect upon and evaluate different genres of literature● Understand that all texts advance a certain point of view that must be recognized, questioned, assessed, and evaluated,● Be able to compose effective descriptive essays as well as creative fiction writing	

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9-10 English (continued)

- Improve their spoken English and their abilities to communicate effectively
- Compile a year-long writing portfolio that will result in a published 'book' to be shared

Units of Study

Short Stories	Students will read a variety of short stories related to Japan and write their own story.
Novel Study	Students will read the novel <i>Shiokari Pass</i> and learn analytical writing skills
Poetry & Lyrics	Students will read, analyse and write a variety of poems and song lyrics
Novel Study	Students will read the novel <i>The Whale Rider</i> and practice their drama skills
Play Study	Students will read the play <i>Othello</i> by Shakespeare and reinterpret the story into a comic format.
Portfolio	Students will finalise their portfolio and focus on exam skills and preparation.

Assessments

Students will be assessed on their class work---collaborative group projects and individual reading and writing efforts----as well as studies pursued at home. Assessments will be formative and ongoing, and they will be meant to help students improve their learning as well as giving them a measured result of their growth.

Course Weightings

Course Work –50%

This involves primarily homework or assignment questions given during the week, as well as long-term projects such as essays, book reports, etc.

Unit Project – 20%

At the end of each unit, students will be expected to complete a project that demonstrates their understanding of the concepts taught in class. This may take the form of an essay, portfolio, production or creative work. Each piece of assessment for a unit builds on what was assigned before. Other course assignments leading up to the end of a unit will serve to develop the necessary skills for successful completion of this final assignment.

Quizzes, Tests, Semester Exam – 20%

Students should expect to have one major test at the end of each unit of study in this course. Quizzes dealing with vocabulary will also be a regular part of course work and can be expected on a bi- or tri- weekly schedule. Students will be given **at least** one week's notice prior to a test and all details of a test will be discussed in class and shared on Google Classroom.

The final evaluation tool for this course will be an end of semester exam during which students apply what they have learned throughout the semester. Class time will be spent in the final part of the second semester to practice exam skills and prepare.

Learning Skills – 10%

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Attendance, organization, homework completion and the ability to take initiative and work independently as individuals as well as cooperatively in groups all play a role in student success.

Additional Notes:

Journaling and Reading

During certain stages of the year, students will be expected to read silently, keep a reading journal, take notes while they read and visit the school library to select suitable books to read.

Independent Reading

This year students are encouraged to read silently at home and keep a record or Reading Journal of the books they have read; while also presenting book reviews both oral and written at various intervals of the school year.

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