

# The Literature of War

## 2009-2010

Mr. van der Woude

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**Office Hours:** By appointment at lunch or after school

**Location:** L4

### Course Description:

An odd result of humanity's eternal propensity for armed conflict is the astonishing beauty of the literature emanating from war. This semester-long course will explore the multifarious faces of war from horror, to adventure, to loyalty, to valor, and even to cowardice. Ultimately, in its degradation and beauty, the best war literature offers us a searing view of humanity. The intensity of human experience is the heart of the matter this course seeks to uncover. Reading and analytical writing assignments will be regular components of this course.

### English Department Academic Content Standards:

*The primary goal of the English department is to help students read well and communicate effectively. Upon graduation from Immaculate Heart High School students will:*

1. Read critically and recognize literal and implied meaning in varied classic and contemporary texts, assigned and independently selected.
2. Write coherent and focused essays that convey a well-defined perspective and tightly reasoned argument. The writing demonstrates students' awareness of audience and purpose. Students will progress through the stages of the writing process as needed.
3. Write clearly and use formal conventions of the English language: grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, word choice, paragraphing, and figurative language.
4. Speak effectively and employ formal and informal conventions of the English language that are appropriate to a variety of purposes and audiences.
5. Respectfully discuss topics, evaluate alternative points of view, and recognize questions and issues raised in the works they read.
6. Recognize trends and developments in literature as an art form, including literary movements, styles, and conventions.
7. Find, evaluate, and synthesize information for specific purposes, using a variety of properly cited sources.

8. Apply knowledge of word origins to determine the meaning of new words encountered in reading materials and use those words accurately.

## **Benchmarks and Performance Standards:**

*Students who have successfully completed British Literature will:*

- Demonstrate in writing and discussion a greater maturity in the understanding of literary texts, and how an author's point of view, voice, diction, and tone communicate meaning (Content Standards 1,2,5).
- Further refine the writing of effective expository essays that adhere to the conventions of the five-paragraph essay but are more creative and less formulaic (Content Standards 2,3).
- Further refine logical development and progression of ideas in writing and discussion (Content Standards 2,3,5).
- Participate in more demanding class discussions, oral presentations, and creative projects that encourage them to confidently articulate their points of view based on a deeper understanding of the text (Content Standards 1, 4, 5).
- Demonstrate familiarity with the major periods and authors found in British Literature (Content Standard 6).
- Use and properly cite appropriate text and Internet sources (Content Standard 7).
- Informally critique books of their own choosing for personal pleasure and enrichment (Content Standard 1).

## **Required Materials:**

The English Department requires that you bring to class before the end of the first week of school **your own unmarked copies** of all the texts listed here. You must also ensure that you purchase the **specified edition** of each text. Please consult the Varsity Books website for each book's ISBN---an identifying number that will help you distinguish between different editions of the same text.

*All Quiet on the Western Front*, Remarque  
*The Things They Carried*, O'Brien  
*Last Night I Dreamed of Peace*, Tram

*MLA Handbook* (7<sup>th</sup> Edition) **\*\* NEW \*\***  
*Pens w/ Blue or Black Ink*  
*No. 2 Lead Pencils*

One more full-length work (TBA at semester's beginning)

Selected readings from Homer, Crane, Salter, English War poets, etc.

## **Classroom Expectations:**

- **Participation:** Participation in class discussion is an integral component of the literary classroom. It is beneficial to you and your classmates in terms of basic comprehension, in-depth analysis and more. Refer to the English Department rubric for class discussion to understand what is expected of you. Your final grade in this area may be raised ½ a grade for excellence in participation. It may be lowered ½ grade for deficiency.
- **Make-Up Work:** All written assignments must be completed on time to pass this class. If you have a legitimate need for an extension, please see me before the due date and we will work something out. Keep on top of things and train yourself to see conflicts ahead of time. Keep unnecessary absences to a minimum. You are responsible to find out about and make up what you have missed.

- **Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s WORDS or IDEAS without giving proper credit. This includes paraphrasing a source without giving due credit. As you know, plagiarism is a serious breach of academic integrity and any assignment containing plagiarism earns a zero.
- **Other classroom rules:** There are a number of additional classroom rules that I will explain in class at the appropriate time(s). In general, a student ought to refer to the IHHS Student Handbook for codes of conduct. Adherence to the Handbook’s rules of behavior will serve the student well in almost every conceivable case.

## Types of Assignments:

- **Writing:** You will respond in writing to each of the major and some of the minor works we study. You will also write timed in-class essays. You will work on various projects and presentations that involve writing. All essays must be word-processed.

You must upload all essays and any other specified assignments to the website: [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). You will need to set up a user profile using a valid email account. You will also need the appropriate class ID number and enrollment password designated for your class period.

Period	Class ID	Enrollment Password
6	TBA	TBA

- **Homework:** You should plan on spending about an hour per day reading, writing, revising work, or completing homework for this class. Some days will be heavier than others----especially if you do not plan ahead on long-term assignments. Do plan ahead! You will have regular homework assignments involving reading, writing, and other activities.

## Grading Policy:

Grades are computed on a point system with, for example, essays worth 100, tests, 50; projects, between 20-80; and homework, between 5-20. The semester grade will be computed by tallying the total of earned semester points and the final exam. As noted above, participation can raise or lower this grade by one half (e.g., B to B+ or B-).

## Course Chronology:

First Quarter	Second Quarter
<i>All Quiet on the Western Front, Remarque</i> <i>The Things They Carried, O’Brien</i> Selected readings on war literature including: Homer ( <i>The Illiad</i> ), Shakespeare ( <i>Henry V</i> ), Stephen Crane ( <i>The Red Badge of Courage</i> ).	<i>The Things They Carried, O’Brien</i> <i>Last Night I Dreamed of Peace, Tram</i> Selected readings on war literature including: James K. Salter ( <i>The Hunters</i> ), the so-called “War Poets” of England, and contemporary essays by Iraq War veterans.