

Literary Studies 11 – Course Outline (Spring 2025)



Course Description

This course explores how literature reflects, challenges, and shapes our understanding of the world. Through novels, speeches, short stories, and modern texts, students will analyze how language and storytelling express power, identity, and belief. We'll compare historical works like *Lord of the Flies* and *Animal Farm* to contemporary media and examine how writing responds to social and technological change. Critical thinking, discussion, and reflection will be emphasized over memorization. By the end of the course, you'll not only read texts — you'll learn to question them, argue with them, and make meaning from them. The First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) ground the course's reflective and respectful classroom culture.

Units of Study

Unit 1: Power, Fear, and Human Nature

We begin the course with *Lord of the Flies* and *Animal Farm* — two novels that explore what happens when structure breaks down and power takes over. You'll learn to read comparatively (what we call "synoptical reading"), connecting themes across texts while developing strong analytical writing skills. This unit is all about thinking hard, reading closely, and writing clearly.

Unit 2: Persuasion, Protest, and Public Voice

What makes a message stick? In this unit, we look at how advertising, speeches, and social media influence us — and how we can use language to influence others. From Churchill to MLK to Greta Thunberg, you'll read and watch famous speeches, analyze rhetorical techniques, and even try creating persuasive work of your own.

Unit 3: *Hamlet* (You're Gonna Love It)

Yes, it's Shakespeare. Yes, it's in iambic pentameter. But it's also murder, madness, betrayal, and existential dread — the original teen drama. In this unit, you'll study *Hamlet* as literature and performance, and you'll end the course by reimagining one of his famous soliloquies through an AI-enhanced visual storytelling project.

Evaluation

Literary quizzes (weeks 2-6)	10%
Essay Draft + Socratic Defense	30%
Ad Creation & Speech Analysis Presentation	10%
Visual Storytelling + Presentation	10%
Participation & Discussion	20%
Final Exam (skills-based)	20%
Total	100%

Final Exam Overview

The final exam will focus on **skill application and critical engagement** with texts studied throughout the semester. It will include:

Literary Terms & Concepts:

Multiple choice and short answer questions testing your knowledge of key literary and rhetorical terms used throughout the course (e.g., symbolism, motif, tone, irony, ethos/pathos/logos).

Comparative Analysis:

A paragraph-based response comparing *Animal Farm* and *Lord of the Flies* through a shared theme (e.g., power, fear, control). You'll be asked to analyze one passage from each text and apply literary terms to show your thinking.

Close Reading (Speech-Based):

A previously unseen excerpt from a famous speech will be provided. You'll be asked to annotate and analyze the use of rhetorical techniques and persuasive language.

Creative Application (Hamlet Twist):

A scenario-based creative writing prompt tied to *Hamlet*. You may be asked to reframe part of a soliloquy in a modern genre, interpret Hamlet's inner conflict using a metaphor, or respond to a contemporary dilemma "as Hamlet." The goal is to show understanding of character, tone, and theme — not just memorize lines.

The emphasis will be on **thoughtful interpretation, clarity of expression, and the ability to apply what you've learned**, not rote memorization. A study guide will be provided in advance.

AI Use Policy

AI tools (like ChatGPT or Gemini) may be used with teacher guidance for brainstorming, clarification, visual generation, and prompt engineering—but never as a replacement for student thinking. Final essays, reflections, and poetry must demonstrate student originality and voice. Students will be assessed on their ability to use AI as a thinking partner, not a shortcut.

First Peoples Principles of Learning

This course acknowledges the FPPL by emphasizing story as a way of knowing, encouraging reflection, and creating space for diverse perspectives and lived experiences. Through literature, speeches, and dramatic works, students explore how language carries identity, questions power, and contributes to personal and collective understanding.