

1984 by George Orwell (1949)	
Approved for use in Honors English III	Juniors should be able to read texts that fall in the 940-1210 lexile score. Lexile Score: 1090L
Summary: <i>1984</i> is a dystopian novel that explores what could happen under a totalitarian regime. It is one of Orwell's most famous works, and it is one of the most famous examples of satire in 20 th century literature. The story follows Winston Smith as he begins to question everything he knows. He starts to subtly rebel against the government, and his journey to achieve independence and free thought encompasses the plot of the novel.	Connection to the Curriculum: <i>1984</i> gives students who choose to read this book another example of satire (<i>The Crucible</i> being their previous experience with satire). Students have to consider the importance of perspective, particularly since the novel is told in 3 rd -person limited point of view. They must also evaluate the power of diction, as that is one major strategy the government uses to control its citizens. As with any other book they read, they must also read carefully to decipher what they think the author's intended meaning is, and they must use academic articles about the book to support their interpretation.
Common Core State Standards Addressed:	
<u>Reading:</u> CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.	
<u>Writing:</u> CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.C: Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.	
<u>Language:</u> CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.	
A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book and watch the movie in its entirety.) <i>1984</i> is one of George Orwell's best known works, and is alluded to frequently today because of its dystopian portrayal of life lived under constant surveillance and nearly complete government control. There is some alcohol use, but it occurs infrequently. The main character has an intimate relationship with his younger lover, but the descriptions of their intimacy are not particularly explicit. This book contains a lot of violence which is meant to help Orwell make his point about the impact of government control and the detrimental shape it can take. More information can be found at <i>Common Sense Media</i> : https://www.commonsensemedia.org/book-reviews/1984	Assessment: Students will write a literary analysis on this text, and they will support their analysis with evidence from this novel. They must provide additional support for their analysis by including literary criticisms (articles written by academics about the novel).
If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student's English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.	

<i>A Confederacy of Dunces</i> by John Kennedy Toole	
Approved for use in English III Honors	Juniors should be able to read texts that fall in the 940-1210 lexile score. Lexile Score: 800L
<p>Summary: <i>A Confederacy of Dunces</i> is the story of Ignatius J. Reilly, an obese, lazy glutton of a man. He considers himself a novelist, but his mother—worrying that he is a lazy good-for-nothing—insists he find a real job when they fall on financial trouble. His exploration of the 9-5 world becomes his crusade against a world of dunces, and many of the conflicts stem from Ignatius’ belief that he can make the world better if everyone just listens to him.</p>	<p>Connection to the Curriculum: This Pulitzer Prize-winner exposes students to a comedic work that comments the sense of self that many Americans have: “I know what’s right; everyone else is wrong.” Ignatius will require students to look beyond the protagonist; they must learn to consider the other characters’ perspectives and weigh them against Ignatius’ in order to fully evaluate and understand Toole’s message. By the end of the novel, the students will have to determine the best way for an individual to interact with the rest of the world, especially if he hopes to change it. This novel has been written about by critics, and students will also have to read and discuss one such article.</p>
<p>Common Core State Standards Addressed:</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.</p> <p><u>Writing:</u> CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.C: Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.</p> <p><u>Language:</u> CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.</p>	
<p>A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book or watch the film in its entirety.) <i>A Confederacy of Dunces</i> chronicles the story of an American slob, and as such, it includes a lot of mature content. There are moments of intimacy described throughout the book, and they are portrayed as strange and inappropriate. These are meant to be humorous moments that highlight the characters’ inadequacies and foolishness. Ignatius’ mother has a drinking problem, and many scenes take place in a strip club and bar. Strong language is used throughout the novel. If this novel were ever to be made into a film, it would most certainly be rated R.</p>	<p>Assessment: Students will write a literary analysis on this text, and they will support their analysis with evidence from this novel. They must provide additional support for their analysis by including literary criticisms (articles written by academics about the novel).</p>
<p>If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student’s English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.</p>	

A <i>Thousand Acres</i> by Jane Smiley (1991)	
Approved for use in Honors English III	Juniors should be able to read texts that fall in the 940-1210 lexile score. Lexile Score: NA
Summary: Pulitzer Prize-winning <i>A Thousand Acres</i> is often considered a retelling of Shakespeare's <i>King Lear</i> , connecting to many of the same major topics: madness, gender roles, appearances vs. reality, generational conflict, and hierarchical structures. It is the story of farmer Larry Cook and his three daughters, Caroline, Rose, and Ginny. As Larry descends into madness, he divides his 1000 acres among his three daughters, and much of the conflict arises from Larry's inability to let go of his farm and his control over his daughters.	Connection to the Curriculum: The story exposes students to a modernized retelling of Shakespeare, asking students to consider the continuing importance of such issues as gender roles and generational conflict. Students will have to interpret the meaning of this novel, and they will have to carefully examine the diction, symbols, flashbacks, and conflict. They will also read an academic article about this novel, which will help them understand how experts in literature understand this novel and its importance to American literature.
Common Core State Standards Addressed:	
<u>Reading:</u>	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.	
<u>Writing:</u>	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.C: Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.	
<u>Language:</u>	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.	
A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book and watch the movie in its entirety.) <i>A Thousand Acres</i> includes mature content in its retelling of <i>King Lear</i> . It is revealed that Larry sexually abused his daughters, and the descriptions of these scenes can be disturbing. There are other descriptions of consensual intimacy in the novel. These scenes are meant to help readers understand the incredibly complex, difficult relationships the daughters have with their father and their romantic partners. There are also scenes of violence throughout the novel, and like the scenes of intimacy, are meant to help readers understand the complexity of the relationships among the characters. Profanity is also used. More information can be found about the film version at <i>IMDB</i> : http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0120323/parentalguide?ref_=tt_ql_7	Assessment: Students will write a literary analysis on this text, and they will support their analysis with evidence from this novel. They must provide additional support for their analysis by including literary criticisms (articles written by academics about the novel).
If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student's English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.	

Dead Poets Society directed by Peter Weir (1989) Honors

Approved for use in Honors English III and English III

Summary: *Dead Poets Society* takes place in 1959 at Welton Academy, a private prep school for boys. A group of boys are inspired by their English teacher, Mr. Keating, to love poetry and think for themselves. The film details their experiences during one school year at Welton Academy, focusing specifically on how poetry inspires and changes the students.

Connection to the Curriculum: *Dead Poets Society* is a connection film: students read poetry that appears in the film; then, they apply their interpretations of the poems to the film. Poets like Walt Whitman, Lord Byron, and Shakespeare are featured. They will have to explain how diction, structure, and overall meaning add depth to the story of the film, helping viewers gain a better understanding of the characters and the overall meaning of the film.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.11-12.R.I.2: Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.6: Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

CC.11-12.W.2.b: Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

CC.11-12.R.L.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book and watch the movie in its entirety.) *Dead Poets Society* is a highly emotional film, its most intense emotional moment occurring after the suicide of one of the characters (which occurs off-screen). Other content in the film, such as profanity like "damn" and the s-word, the boys smoking or drinking, is meant to show viewers how the boys cope with and rebel against the very high expectations their parents have for them. More information can be found at *Common Sense Media*

(<https://www.common Sense Media.org/movie-reviews/dead-poets-society>) and the *IMDB Parents' Guide* (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0097165/parentalguide?ref =tt ql 7>)

Assessment: Students will write an analysis of this film, comparing it to a poem that appears in it. They will have to use evidence from the film and from the poem in order to show and prove their interpretation is an accurate one.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student's English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.

***Dead Poets Society* (1989)**

Approved for use in Honors English III and English III

Summary: *Dead Poets Society* tells a story about the impact of an imaginative and unorthodox teacher on a conservative prep school for boys in the late 1950's. This movie takes place at Welton Academy, a fictitious private prep school in Vermont which values tradition and obedience. Todd, a transfer student, meets his roommate, Neil, and several of Neil's friends. Classes seem to be dull and tedious until they meet Welton's newest teacher, Mr. Keating. Mr. Keating, a former Welton honors student, uses unique methods to teach his students about different concepts including "carpe diem." After hearing of Mr. Keating's Dead Poets Society, Neil, Todd, Knox, Charlie, Cameron, Pitts, and Meeks reconvene DPS meetings. As the movie continues, the characters react to Keating's teaching in several different ways with many varying results. These characters begin to find themselves evaluating their lives and conditions in new ways, perhaps influenced by the new perceptions they've adopted.

Connection to the Curriculum: Due to this movie's themes, it provides a variety of educational possibilities: cross-curricular connections with American History, studying literary styles and philosophies of belief, and making personal connections to the lives and issues of students. The movie relates to the Transcendentalist unit, allowing students to connect non-fiction texts to film. Additionally, the film references poetic ideals from varying time periods.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a movie is to personally watch the movie in its entirety.) *Dead Poets Society* uses profanity, violence, sensuality, brief nudity, and alcohol use. Some scenes are emotionally intense, including a scene alluding to a suicide. For more information, please visit <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/movie-reviews/dead-poets-society> and http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0097165/parentalguide?ref=tt_stry_pg.

Assessment: Students will write an essay, comparing this film to works within the Transcendentalist unit, focusing mainly on the ideas of Emerson and Thoreau. Students will also compare and analyze the ideas within the movie to ideas present within the literature of the unit, including various poems. The essay and the analysis allow them to fully demonstrate their mastery of the Common Core Standards listed above.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student's English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.

Miracle in the Andes by Nando Parrado (2006)

Approved for use in English III Honors

Juniors should be able to read texts that fall in the 940-1210 lexile score.

Lexile Score: None available

Summary: *Miracle in the Andes* Nando Parrado’s memoir of his rugby team’s 1972 plane crash in the Andes Mountains. His goal is to help readers understand what it was really like on the mountain, explaining their ethical and spiritual choices regarding cannibalism. His message is ultimately a positive one: even when everything seems lost, the love we have for ourselves, our friends, and especially our families will bring us home.

Connection to the Curriculum: This memoir exposes students to non-fiction. It also helps them understand how to cope with, understand, and form opinions about controversial issues—a major focus of the semester. They will also evaluate the text as they would any other reading assignment: they will analyze Parrado’s diction, plot structure, and perspective. Students will form these opinions by citing information from the memoir and, if they so choose, from research they find online or elsewhere.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3: Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of a text.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.C: Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book or watch the film in its entirety.) *Miracle in the Andes* details the hardships Parrado and his team endured in order to survive their 72 days stranded in the harsh environment of the Andes Mountains. Spanish and English profanity—namely the f- and s-words—appear in some portions of the text. This story is probably best known for the team’s cannibalism, but Parrado carefully explains the difficult ethical and spiritual decisions he and his teammates faced surrounding it: they truly had no other means of survival. More information can be found at *Common Sense Media* about the film version, *Alive*:
<https://www.common sense media.org/movie-reviews/alive#>

Assessment: Students will write an analysis of this text, and they will support their analysis with evidence from this novel. Their focus will be what Parrado wants readers to know and learn through his experiences on the mountain and his journey home.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student’s English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.

<i>Pride and Prejudice</i> by Jane Austen	
Approved for use in English III Honors	Juniors should be able to read texts that fall in the 940-1210 lexile score. Lexile Score: 1100L
<p>Summary: <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> follows Elizabeth Bennet, the second of five daughters living in 19th century England. Elizabeth struggles with navigating the expectations of society in England, particularly regarding marriage. Her struggles are brought to the forefront when Mr. Bingley and his friend Mr. Darcy arrive in town, and the various relationships that unfold following their arrival force Elizabeth and her sisters to grow and change. Elizabeth’s relationship with Darcy drives the novel forward.</p>	<p>Connection to the Curriculum: This text exposes students to 19th century British society. Students must also learn to read carefully so they can pick up on the dry humor of Mr. Bennet and Elizabeth Bennet. As they read, students must consider how first impressions and societal expectations influence how we interact with one another. By the end, they will have to decide what an individual must do in order to overcome the influence of pride and prejudice stemming from those first impressions and societal expectations. This novel has also been written about by critics, and students will have the opportunity to read a scholarly article about this book.</p>
<p>Common Core State Standards Addressed:</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.</p> <p><u>Writing:</u> CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.C: Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.</p> <p><u>Language:</u> CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.</p>	
<p>A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book or watch the film in its entirety.) <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> is a love story with some dry humor sprinkled in. Some of the characters engage in somewhat scandalous behavior—one character runs away with a criminal, claiming she is in love with him, much to her family’s chagrin. These types of events, though, are meant to make readers think about the ways in which social expectations can sometimes clash with personal desires. More information can be found at <i>Common Sense Media</i>: https://www.common Sense Media.org/book-reviews/pride-and-prejudice</p>	<p>Assessment: Students will write a literary analysis on this text, and they will support their analysis with evidence from this novel. They must provide additional support for their analysis by including literary criticisms (articles written by academics about the novel).</p>
<p>If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student’s English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.</p>	

The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao by Junot Díaz (2007)

Approved for use in Honors English III

Juniors should be able to read texts that fall in the 940-1210 lexile score.
Lexile Score: 1010L

Summary: *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* tells the story of the Oscar De León and the curse that has plagued his Dominican-American family for generations. The story goes back and forth in time—from Oscar to his sister to his mother to his grandfather—in order to explain how the De Leóns became the cursed De Leóns. The family ultimately serves not only as an example of contemporary American life, but also as an example of the impact dictators like Trujillo have on families.

Connection to the Curriculum: *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* exposes students to American families that are far different from the stereotypical nuclear one. Not only is Oscar Dominican, but he is also nerdy, urban, and romantic. His experiences—as well as those of his other family members—expose students to individuals who live life very differently from what we typically expect, and whose history is incredibly complex and heartbreaking. Students will analyze the message of this novel, evaluating and interpreting the diction, symbols, and narration in order to arrive at meaning.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.C: Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book and watch the movie in its entirety.) *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* has a lot of mature content, all of it intended to give readers a better understanding of the characters and the historical context in which they find themselves. The content is meant to teach readers more about the characters' motivations and personalities. Some of the violence is intense: some characters are murdered; some experience domestic abuse. There is strong language throughout the novel, including the f-word and the n-word. The characters also abuse drugs and alcohol at some points. There are scenes of intimacy, some of which are described in rather explicit detail.

Assessment: Students will write a literary analysis on this text, and they will support their analysis with evidence from this novel. They must provide additional support for their analysis by including literary criticisms (articles written by academics about the novel).

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student's English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.

The Color Purple by Alice Walker

Approved for use in English III Honors

Juniors should be able to read texts that fall in the 940-1210 lexile score.

Lexile Score: HL670L

Summary: *The Color Purple* is an epistolary novel (a story told through letters) about Celie, covering 20 years of her life. She describes the abusive relationships she has with men, including her father and her husband. Her life is filled with hardships, and it is only after she meets and becomes close to Shug Avery that she finds the wherewithal to stand up to her abusers and discover her inner strength and beauty.

Connection to the Curriculum: This Pulitzer Prize-winner requires students to cope with difficult situations, including how a person deals with and learns important lessons from abusive relationships. They must also evaluate and analyze symbols (such as the meaning of the color purple) in order to understand the deeper meaning of the novel. *The Color Purple* been studied from its publication, and there are multiple academic articles written about it; students will have to find, read, and discuss one of these articles.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.C: Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book or watch the film in its entirety.) *The Color Purple* has explicit content. It details Celie's experiences of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. She also describes her intimate relationship with another woman: Shug Avery. Strong language—particularly the “n” word—is used throughout the novel. These experiences help Celie understand who she is, ultimately helping her find a strong sense of self. More information can be found at *Common Sense Media*: <https://www.common Sense Media.org/book-reviews/the-color-purple#>

Assessment: Students will write a literary analysis on this text, and they will support their analysis with evidence from this novel. They must provide additional support for their analysis by including literary criticisms (articles written by academics about the novel).

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student's English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.

***The Crucible* by Arthur Miller (play: 1953; film: 1996)**

Approved for use in English III and English III Honors

Summary: *The Crucible*, written by Arthur Miller, is a fictionalized account of the 1692 Salem Witch Trials. Following an adulterous affair with respected farmer John Proctor, Abigail Williams and her friends are caught in the midst of a love-conjuring ceremony. In order to protect herself—and to perhaps regain John Proctor’s affection—Abigail begins accusing Salem residents of witchcraft. Proctor eventually intervenes on the behalf of the innocent. The play itself is often interpreted as a parable of McCarthyism and an analysis of the destructive power of mob mentality.

Connection to the Curriculum: This play explores the destruction that occurs with the abuse of power and the lack of individual responsibility. It will give students the opportunity to determine how conflicts escalate under specific circumstances, and it will require them to carefully analyze the conflicts individuals must face against others, their society, and even themselves. At the end of the play, the students will have to determine how far a person can or must go in order to correct a wrong.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book or watch the film in its entirety.) *The Crucible* tells the story of the Salem Witch Trials, but some elements, such as John’s extramarital affair with Abigail Williams, are fictionalized. The story ends with the hanging of some characters. The film is rated PG-13 for brief nudity and sexual behavior; some violence; profanity (“damn” and “hell” in the context of the characters’ religious beliefs). The Parents’ Guide on IMDB has a more detailed list of the content of this film:
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0115988/parentalguide?ref_=tt_stry_pg

Assessment: Students will compare this film to *The Majestic*, a film about a man blacklisted as a communist in 1951. The essay that students write about these two films allows them to fully demonstrate their mastery of the Common Core Standards listed above.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student’s English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.

***The Crucible* by Arthur Miller (play: 1953; film: 1996)**

Approved for use in English III and English III Honors

Summary: *The Crucible*, written by Arthur Miller, is a fictionalized account of the 1692 Salem Witch Trials. Following an adulterous affair with respected farmer John Proctor, Abigail Williams and her friends are caught in the midst of a love-conjuring ceremony. In order to protect herself—and to perhaps regain John Proctor’s affection—Abigail begins accusing Salem residents of witchcraft. Proctor eventually intervenes on the behalf of the innocent. The play itself is often interpreted as a parable of McCarthyism and an analysis of the destructive power of mob mentality.

Connection to the Curriculum: This play explores the destruction that occurs with the abuse of power and the lack of individual responsibility. It will give students the opportunity to determine how conflicts escalate under specific circumstances, and it will require them to carefully analyze the conflicts individuals must face against others, their society, and even themselves. At the end of the play, the students will have to determine how far a person can or must go in order to correct a wrong.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book or watch the film in its entirety.) *The Crucible* tells the story of the Salem Witch Trials, but some elements, such as John’s extramarital affair with Abigail Williams, are fictionalized. The story ends with the hanging of some characters. The film is rated PG-13 for brief nudity and sexual behavior; some violence; profanity (“damn” and “hell” in the context of the characters’ religious beliefs). The Parents’ Guide on IMDB has a more detailed list of the content of this film:
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0115988/parentalguide?ref_=tt_stry_pg

Assessment: Students will compare this film to *The Majestic*, a film about a man blacklisted as a communist in 1951. The essay that students write about these two films allows them to fully demonstrate their mastery of the Common Core Standards listed above.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student’s English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.

***The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald (1925; 2013 film)**

Approved for use in Honors English III and English III

Juniors should be able to read texts that fall in the 940-1210 lexile score.
Lexile Score: 1070L

Summary: *The Great Gatsby*, set in New York in the 1920s and narrated by Midwesterner Nick Carraway, explores the story of Jay Gatsby. In order to gain the love of Daisy, who rejected him because of his lack of money and status, Gatsby becomes wealthy through questionable means. Daisy, at the time of the novel, is married to Tom Buchanan, a very wealthy but immoral playboy. Through the exploits of the characters, Fitzgerald debunks the myth of the American Dream and ultimately reveals how greed leads to the moral decay of society.

Connection to the Curriculum: *The Great Gatsby* is a classic novel that exemplifies Modernism: the rejection of the literary conventions of the 19th century and opposition to conventional morality, taste, tradition, and economic values. Fitzgerald's disillusionment with the concept of the American Dream runs throughout the novel, and his treatment of the main characters provides significant insight into the moral decay of the Jazz Age. The complexity of the plot structure is a vehicle for teaching foreshadowing, flashback, irony, symbolism, and point of view. Students will compare this novel to Baz Luhrmann's 2013 film adaptation, drawing comparisons between the two and determining why Fitzgerald's novel still seems so relevant today.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.7: Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text.

Writing:

CC.11-12.W.2.b.: Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

CC.11-12.R.L.1.: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book and watch the movie in its entirety.) Gatsby's extravagant lifestyle is developed, and his lack of care in his decision-making is revealed. The plot contains reference to an extramarital affair between Tom Buchanan and Myrtle Wilson. Additionally, there is mild violence involving the death of some characters, including a murder and suicide. These instances are integral parts of the plot development and are critical discussion points in terms of character motivation. The movie is rated PG-13 for some violent images, sexual content, smoking, partying, and brief language. More information about the novel can be found at *Common Sense Media*: <https://www.common sense media.org/book-reviews/the-great-gatsby>. More information about the novel can be found at *IMDB Parents' Guide*:

http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1343092/parentalguide?ref_=tt_stry_pg.

Assessment: Students will evaluate Luhrmann's adaptation of the novel, using at least one review from a credible newspaper or journal to support and prove their opinions. This assessment allows students to prove they have mastered the Common Core State Standards included above.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student's English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.

***The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald (Published in 1925; Film in 2013)**

Approved for use in English III

Summary: The Great Gatsby, set in New York in the 1920's and narrated by Midwesterner Nick Carraway, explores the story of Jay Gatsby. In order to gain the love of Daisy, who rejected him because of his lack of money and status, Gatsby becomes wealthy through questionable means. Daisy, at the time of the novel, is married to Tom Buchanan, a very wealthy but immoral playboy. Through the exploits of the characters, Fitzgerald debunks the myth of the American Dream and ultimately reveals how greed leads to the moral decay of society.

Connection to the Curriculum: The Great Gatsby is a classic novel that exemplifies Modernism: the rejection of the literary conventions of the 19th century and opposition to conventional morality, taste, tradition, and economic values. Fitzgerald's disillusionment with the concept of the American Dream runs throughout the novel, and his treatment of the main characters provides significant insight into the moral decay of the Jazz Age. The complexity of the plot structure is a vehicle for teaching foreshadowing, flashback, irony, symbolism, and point of view.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.11-12.RI.2.: Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.6: Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

CC.11-12.W.2.b.: Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

CC.11-12.R.L.1.: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Speaking:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book and watch the movie in its entirety.) Gatsby's extravagant lifestyle is developed, and his lack of care in his decision-making is revealed. The plot does contain reference to an extramarital affair that has occurred between Tom Buchanan and Myrtle Wilson. In addition, there is mild violence involving the death of some of the characters, including a murder and suicide. These instances are part of the plot development and are critical discussion points in terms of character motivation. The movie includes violence, sexual innuendo, racial prejudice, and alcohol use. For more information about the novel, please visit <https://www.commonensemedia.org/book-reviews/the-great-gatsby>. For more information about the movie, visit <https://www.commonensemedia.org/movie-reviews/the-great-gatsby> or http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1343092/parentalguide?ref =tt_str_y_pg.

Assessment: Students will complete periodic quizzes and a comprehensive test. They will also conduct a character analysis presentation and design a movie poster/campaign for the novel. The assessments may change due to time limitations. These assessments fully demonstrate their mastery of the Common Core Standards listed above.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student's English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.

The Majestic directed by Frank Darabont (2001)

Approved for use in English III and English III Honors

Summary: *The Majestic*, written by Michael Sloane and directed by Frank Darabont, tells the story of Peter Appleton, a B-movie screenwriter living in Los Angeles in 1951. After being blacklisted, Peter gets into a catastrophic accident that wipes his memory. He's taken in by the denizens of Lawson, California because they mistakenly believe he is a long lost war hero. Through his relationships with the Lawson citizens, and specifically with a woman named Adele, Peter begins to become someone else, someone who can possibly stand up to those who blacklisted him. All he has to do is regain his memory.

Connection to the Curriculum: This film, like *The Crucible*, explores the destruction that occurs with the abuse of power and the lack of individual responsibility. It will give students the opportunity to determine how conflicts escalate under specific circumstances, and it will require them to carefully analyze the conflicts individuals must face against others, their society, and even themselves. At the end of the film, the students will have to determine how much a person's reputation shapes his or her identity.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book or watch the film in its entirety.) *The Majestic* tells the story of one man's journey to find himself while he's mistaken for someone else. The film is rated PG for language and mild thematic elements. The protagonist consumes alcohol irresponsibly, and he drives while inebriated. *Common Sense Media* has specific details about the content of this film:
<https://www.common Sense Media.org/movie-reviews/the-majestic>

Assessment: Students will compare this film to *The Crucible*, a film about the 1692 Salem Witch Trials. The essay that students write about these two films allows them to fully demonstrate their mastery of the Common Core Standards listed above.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student's English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.

The Majestic directed by Frank Darabont (2001)

Approved for use in English III and English III Honors

Summary: *The Majestic*, written by Michael Sloane and directed by Frank Darabont, tells the story of Peter Appleton, a B-movie screenwriter living in Los Angeles in 1951. After being blacklisted, Peter gets into a catastrophic accident that wipes his memory. He's taken in by the denizens of Lawson, California, because they mistakenly believe he is a long lost war hero. Through his relationships with the Lawson citizens, and specifically with a woman named Adele, Peter begins to become someone else, someone who can possibly stand up to those who blacklisted him. All he has to do is regain his memory.

Connection to the Curriculum: This film, like *The Crucible*, explores the destruction that occurs with the abuse of power and the lack of individual responsibility. It will give students the opportunity to determine how conflicts escalate under specific circumstances, and it will require them to carefully analyze the conflicts individuals must face against others, their society, and even themselves. At the end of the film, the students will have to determine how much a person's reputation shapes his or her identity.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book or watch the film in its entirety.) *The Majestic* tells the story of one man's journey to find himself while he's mistaken for someone else. The film is rated PG for language and mild thematic elements. The protagonist consumes alcohol irresponsibly, and he drives while inebriated. *Common Sense Media* has specific details about the content of this film:
<https://www.common sense media.org/movie-reviews/the-majestic>

Assessment: Students will compare this film to *The Crucible*, a film about the 1692 Salem Witch Trials. The essay that students write about these two films allows them to fully demonstrate their mastery of the Common Core Standards listed above.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student's English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.

The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne (1850)

Approved for use in English III Honors

Juniors should be able to read texts that fall in the 940-1210 lexile score.

Lexile Score: 940L

Summary: In a small Puritan society, Hester Prynne has committed the ultimate sin of adultery. She is labeled with an “A” on her chest and shunned by the community, as is her daughter, Pearl. Through their trials, Hester and Pearl manage to survive and even mature. Arthur Dimmesdale, the minister, and Roger Chillingworth, Hester’s husband, however, are consumed by their personal secrets, which ultimately lead to their personal ruin.

Connection to the Curriculum: This text, an American classic, exposes students to American literature that says something profound about American life. It requires students to consider the importance of choices and their consequences. Students must also untangle the conflict between honesty and secrecy, and determine what happens when we deal with the consequences of our actions (as opposed to when we don’t). This text has also been written about by academics, and students will read and discuss one academic’s article.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.C: Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel or movie is to personally read the book or watch the film in its entirety.) Hawthorne reveals his concern of society’s judgment on sinners as the main character is forced to live in shame by wearing a symbol of the adultery she has committed. There is no explicit description of the adultery, as Hawthorne maintains a Puritan feel in the telling of the story.

Assessment: Students will write a literary analysis on this text, and they will support their analysis with evidence from this novel. They must provide additional support for their analysis by including literary criticisms (articles written by academics about the novel).

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student’s English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.

***The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien (novel: 1990)**

Approved for use in English III

Summary: *The Things They Carried* is a novel in the form of a collection of short stories following the experiences of Alpha Company in the Vietnam War. The stories are interwoven as chapters in such a way that they can stand alone, but are best understood as each short story/chapter builds to the next, filling in the gaps of memory and truth. Each of the soldiers carries with him the things that help him survive the war—from weapons and protective gear, drugs, love letters, a stocking, and a yo-yo. In these stories, the narrator Tim O'Brien explores the effects of war on the people involved. Most importantly, the novel explores the art of storytelling and how one can manage to tell the truth when the truth is sometimes shocking. O'Brien is telling these stories in order to explain how memory can sometimes be trusted and sometimes not, but ultimately, through memory and storytelling, he can save others and himself.

Connection to the Curriculum: Due to this novel's themes and structure, it provides a variety of educational possibilities: cross-curricular connections with American and World History, studying literary styles and the art of storytelling, and making personal connections to the lives and issues of students. The novel is also structurally interesting (in the form of short stories and also interlinked as a novel), providing students with a successful reading experience in an innovative piece of fiction.

Common Core State Standards Addressed:

Reading:

CCSS.11-12.RI.2.: Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.6: Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.B: Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

CC.11-12.W.2.b.: Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

CC.11-12.R.L.1.: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Speaking:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.) *The Things They Carried* was the winner of the *Chicago Tribune* Heartland Prize, a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 1990, and a finalist for the National Book Critics Award in 1990. The novel uses profanity and coarse words, including racial slurs, violence in the context of the reality of war, drug use, and sexual innuendo. For more information, please visit <http://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/things-they-carried>.

Assessment: Students will complete periodic quizzes and a comprehensive test. They will also conduct a character analysis presentation and design a movie poster/campaign for a chapter (story) within the novel. These assessments fully demonstrate their mastery of the Common Core Standards listed above.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call your student's English teacher from 7:40am-8:05am or from 2:45pm-3:40pm.