

## **Course Introduction**

Read not to contradict or refute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider.

—Francis Bacon

The word—spoken, written, thought—is full of powerful potential. The study of language and literature, then, becomes a study of works that have shaped our culture and our thinking. But not only that, working hard at the way we use language becomes a key to effective communication, powerful expression, and clear thinking. To this end, all English courses will emphasize clear and logical thinking, strong study in the conventions of language (grammar, syntax, mechanics, metaphor, vocabulary), reading, critical thinking, speaking, and listening. Students will learn to deal with the various writing situations with which they will be faced, and to do so with calm confidence. In the same way, students will learn to read well for various purposes. We hope to activate lifelong thinkers who demonstrate Christ’s wisdom, winsome speakers who articulate truth, thoughtful readers who use Scripture as a standard, humble disciples who love the Lord with their minds.

## **Course Description**

In Argumentation and American Ideology Honors, we will chronologically study the artistic use of words and the prominent ideologies of the Americans who lived before us, from Puritans to the postmoderns. Since your last course in this sequence focused on Rhetoric and Style, this course will first review rhetorical language in each text, and then, using that identification, you will be asked to consider what ideologies the language points to. Eventually, we will couple that skill with the deconstruction of the logic used in the text and an evaluation of the validity of the argument.

The honors curriculum challenges students to advanced-level critical analysis. As an example, students read passages from *The Scarlet Letter* and analyze the syntax through the lens of Fowler’s linguistic criticism—how language particularly relates to power. This discussion builds upon the prior years’ studies in grammar, close reading, and rhetorical strategies. This is not an isolated event; every unit examines author’s style with this level of detail; every unit examines nonfiction argument with Toulmin’s Model of Argumentation, extracting claims from the pieces and reorganizing the argument into an outline that helps students to identify the claim from subclaims; additionally, students further organize that argument into a syllogism. Last, students

first comb through the syllogism and then through the sub-claims with an eye for fallacious logic. This is challenging, advanced-level critical analysis is a part of every persuasive nonfiction discussion.

This is a year-long course consisting of 12 units. Upon successful completion students will receive 1 credit towards high school graduation.

## Purpose of the Course

- to be familiar with major American writers, works, and time periods
- to be able to place unfamiliar American works within the stylistic and ideological movements they best represent
- to identify and write logically valid arguments
- to evaluate others' arguments for logical validity and stylistic patterns
- to express both academic and personal thoughts in writing
- to present information to a group clearly and comfortably
- to increase a college-bound vocabulary

## Course Prerequisites

Students should have completed Rhetoric and Style before enrolling in this course.

## Course Overview

### Semester 1

- Ideologies & Argumentation
- Puritanism
- American Enlightenment
- Early American Ideology Paper
- The Romantic Novel (*The Scarlet Letter*)
- Romantic Poet Walt Whitman & A Look at Transcendentalism

## Semester 2

- Realism and Naturalism
- Modernism
- Second Semester Ideology Paper
- The Lost Generation
- Post Modernism
- Post-Modern Memoir

## Required Course Materials

Please access the list of course materials from the OC Online book ordering system and order your materials as soon as possible. Oftentimes, course materials are on back order and you may experience a delay in receiving them, causing students to fall behind in their online coursework. When ordering used or rented materials, be careful that online access codes are also current.

## Methods of Evaluation

Students will demonstrate mastery through the following formative and summative assessments:

- 40%      Assignments
- 10%      Participation (Discussion Posts, Live Classes)
- 10%      Quizzes
- 25%      Final Exam
- 15%      Unit Tests

## Additional Course Information

Detailed information regarding OC Online policies on proctored final exams, grading policy, late/missing assignment policy, weekly live classes, course expectations, and additional school policies can be found on the website.