

Masconomet Regional High School Course Syllabus

Course Title: English 12: The Graphic Novel

Course Number: XXXX

Department: English

Grade Level and Phase: 12H/CP

Length of Course: Year

I. Course Description:

Grade 12 English, The Graphic Novel, is an Honors/College-preparatory course designed to meet the comprehensive needs of a senior. This course occurs in a collaborative learning community where the instructor facilitates active, constructive, language arts-based experiences to promote positive attitudes toward reading, personal expression, and life-long learning. After composing college essays, students in The Graphic Novel course will explore the comics medium as a mode of communicating story using the various texts as a way to acquire, practice, and master traditional and new literacies, including visual and critical media literacy. Through genre study, students will consider graphic novels as literature, analyze formal structure as it relates to content, trace the development of theme including gender, race, sexuality, justice, existentialism and heroism, and research the history and growth of the popular culture phenomenon called comics. Students will look closely at the special effects created in sequential art narrative and further appreciate the medium by constructing a variety of graphic narratives both independently and collaboratively. Utilizing an array of web 2.0 tools and other electronic media, students will continue to develop composition skills through reader-response based journal writing, critical research projects, essays of analysis, and creative writing practice with a focus on honing basic grammar skills and development of style in preparation for college-level work. As with the other variations of English 12, the essential question for this course is: What is human nature and how do we know?

II. Central Objectives:

Students who pass this course will:

1. Understand art, media and various modes of human expression and communication.
2. Critically use, view, and analyze a variety of media.
3. Demonstrate a detailed understanding of the grammar and vocabulary of the comics medium.
4. Demonstrate the ability to collaborate and construct shared meaning with peers.
5. Use technology to learn and practice language arts and 21st century literacy skills.
6. Utilize print and electronic resources from the Internet and library databases to foster research and in the composition of some papers.
7. Hone critical reading skills.
8. Hone critical and creative writing skills.
9. Improve grammar and style in their writing.
10. Expand vocabulary.
11. Practice meta-cognitive reflection and regularly exercise self-evaluation.
12. Analyze literature making connections to self, others, and the world.
13. Demonstrate an understanding of global perspectives.
14. Compare graphic and literary forms of art.
15. Address and respond to the central question: What is human nature and how do we know?

These objectives support the following **Learning Expectations from the Masconomet High School Mission Statement: A1, A3, A4, S1, and C1.**

III. Learning Activities include but are not limited to:

Classroom (and online) discussion
Cooperative group work
Student presentations
Internet and library research
Film study
Sustained silent reading
Grammar study
Note taking

Journal writing
Portfolio building
Peer revision/editing
Collaborative writing projects
Creative writing
Writing a variety of compositions
Listening
Formulating critical questions

Studying literature in context
Studying genre: fiction, poetry, non-fiction,
memoir, fantasy
Studying imagery
Media study

Media presentations
College application essays
Independent outside reading
Artistic projects
Blogging

Each of these learning activities supports the **Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Framework**.

IV. General Expectations:

You have selected this course because of your curiosity or interest in the graphic novel. You will be expected to read, write, view and critique film, and come to class prepared to give your critical opinion and assessment of human nature through the literature under study. You are also expected to choose the course level at the start of the class, knowing that you will be required to complete the assignments based on your decision. This course will be a preparation for college, so to fulfill that goal successfully your willingness to work hard, work collaboratively with others, and think critically and creatively is expected.

V. Evaluation:

Approximate Grading:
Composition Projects (product): 40%
Class work (participation online and face to face): 40%
Quarterly portfolios: 20%

VI. Materials:

Core Texts:
Maus: A Survivor's Tale by Art Spiegelman
Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi
A Life Force by Will Eisner
A Contract with God by Will Eisner
Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative by Will Eisner
American Born Chinese by Gene Luen Yang
V for Vendetta by Alan Moore
Batman: The Dark Knight Returns by Frank Miller
Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art by Scott McCloud.

Supplementary Texts:

Asterios Polyp by David Mazzucchelli
Funny in Farsi by Foroozah Dumas
Excerpts from *Literature: Reading Fiction, Poetry and Drama, 6th edition*, Robert DiYanni, ed.
"Unmasked" by Chris Ware
"Under the Influence" by Scott Russell Sanders
"Two Kinds of People" by Rachel Masilmani
Excerpts from Mary Karr's *The Liars' Club* and *Lit*
The Arrival by Shaun Tan
Scholarly essays
Non-fiction blogs, news articles and online resources
Poetry
Film

VII. Scope and Sequence:

Because the content and skills do not need to be learned in a sequential fashion, the scope and sequence varies with individual class sections. All students passing this course will have met the objectives listed above and the central question will remain the same.