

# English 12- Literature and Composition

The goal of this course is to teach students how to apply literary theory, rhetoric, and analysis to address problems they'll encounter as they enter young adulthood.

## **Generalities that apply to all units, texts, and films**

To avoid taking up space with repeated information, please apply this knowledge to each entry.

### *How the class will discuss sensitive topics*

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the unit. The English department feels that the literary merit of these works more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

### *Standards*

Beneath each unit, I have included the standards that accompany those works. The reader can find the full list of standards at the end of document.

## **1. Personal Narrative Unit**

To gauge the students' reading comprehension and writing skills, as well as to emphasize writing traits like using concrete details over the abstract, we'll begin with personal narratives. The students will then write their own personal narratives and submit them as college entrance essays.

Standards:

- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Speaking and Listening SL 1.a-d
- ELA 2017 Grade 12 - Writing W.3 -10
- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Reading Literature RL. 1-6, 9-10

**"Girl"** by Jamaica Kincaid

### **Summary**

Kincaid recounts advice from her mother on how to be a good girl.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: Slut and Abortion**

The narrator's mother warns her not to "become the slut you are bent on becoming" and says she'll teach her daughter how to make a potion "to throw away a baby before it becomes a baby."

## **How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics**

The mother gives her daughter gendered advice, and we'll discuss why the mother thinks the advice is essential, but how the narrator's portrayal of the mother negates that advice.

## **Why This Book?**

Kincaid writes a personal essay about her own life through her mother's words, almost entirely in second person. Yet, through her mother's advice, and the way it's worded, we see the narrator's daily struggles. The uniqueness of the essay's structure, as well as the depth of experience in such short form, can help inspire students when they write their college entrance essays.

## **“Notes of a Native Son”** by James Baldwin

### **Summary**

James Baldwin reflects on his life, the life of his father, and the racism that turned his father bitter and had the potential to affect the son as well.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: Racism**

Baldwin reflects on the effects of racism on his father, remembers denying racism as a child, and then explains some encounters with racism in his early adulthood.

## **How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics**

We'll discuss how racism affects both father and son, why Baldwin reacts as he does in racist situations, and the role that racism plays in the narrative.

## **Why This Essay?**

This narrative demonstrates how to include flashbacks thematically, how to discuss discrimination, and how to cultivate voice in a personal essay.

## **“Death of the Moth”** by Virginia Woolf

### **Summary**

Virginia Woolf watches a moth flutter, struggle, and then die on her windowsill.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

## **Why This Essay?**

While short, this essay is complex. The narrator watches a moth die, which is seemingly simple. But she brings depth to the moment by weaving in physical life, seeing the moth's connection to a greater system, and then philosophizing death. This essay is a study in making the ordinary, extraordinary.

## “The Braindead Megaphone” by George Saunders

### Summary

Saunders reflects on the modern mind and media. Through the metaphor of a man with a megaphone at a party, he explains how the person with the loudest voice changes the discussions and thoughts of those around them, and not necessarily for the better.

### Potentially Sensitive Topics: None

Saunders discusses the break down of language with some references to his own life, but overall this is an intellectual endeavor: it’s abstract. There’s no violence, sexuality, or profanity.

### Why This Essay?

Saunders writes a less personal, personal narrative. This piece increases the range of examples for students, and it demonstrates how a personal narrative can address a societal anxiety.

## “Goodbye to All That” by Joan Didion

### Summary

Didion explains how she loved New York City as a young person and how she grew out of the city and relocated to Los Angeles.

### Potentially Sensitive Topics: References to Sexuality, Drugs, and a Racist Slur

#### *Sexuality*

While none of the sexuality is graphic, there is reference to it:

- When a man is promised a party with “new faces,” he walks in to find that “he had slept with five of the women and owed two of the men money.”
- As Didion explains being determined not to ask her parents for money, she says “I had the feeling that if I needed money I could always get it. I could write a syndicated column for teenagers under the name “Debbi Lynn” or I could smuggle gold into India or I could become a \$100 call girl, and none of would matter.”

#### *Drugs and a Racist Slur*

I don’t think they’ll understand this drug reference, and I have no intention of explaining it. Then, she uses the term “cracker.”

- I could go to a party and meet someone who called himself Mr. Emotional Appeal and ran The Emotional Appeal Institute or Tina Onassis Blandford or a Florida cracker who was then a regular on what the called “the Big C,” the Southampton-El Morocco circuit (“I’m well connected on the Big C, honey,” he would tell me over collard greens on his vast borrowed terrace), or the widow of the celery king of the Harlem market or a piano salesman from Bonne Terre, Missouri, or someone who had already made and list two fortunes in Midland, Texas.

## How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics

### *Sexuality*

The narrator herself never engages in these acts mentioned, but the whole point of her mentioning them is that they were immature thoughts that she grows out of.

### *Drugs and a Racist Slur*

In this paragraph, she's explaining how she never really knew anyone, how people were 2-dimensional characters. I'm not going to explain the drug reference, but we'll discuss how seeing people this way is shallow and how she grows beyond it.

## Why This Essay?

Didion explains the stages of her young adulthood and frames it in a place. This essay models a different type of organization of the personal narrative.

## 2. Rhetoric and Body Image Unit

In this unit, students will learn how to apply rhetorical analysis to advertisements, and how those advertisements manipulate people into purchasing products to allay insecurities. And, while advertisements create insecurities to create business, those advertisements also enforce negative body image. At the end of the unit, students will write rhetorical analyses of a print advertisement.

Standards:

- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Speaking and Listening SL 1.a-d, SL 2-6
- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Writing W.1 a-e, 4-10
- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Reading Informational Text RI. 1-10
- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Reading Literature RL. 1-6, 9-10

## “Thank You for Arguing” by Jay Heinrichs

### Summary

*Thank You for Arguing* is a non-fiction work about rhetoric. Heinrichs demonstrates classic rhetorical tools with examples from pop-culture, real-life anecdotes, and stories from his own life.

### Potentially Sensitive Topics: None

The students will not be reading the entire book, and the passages that I've selected to teach them tools to master *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* don't have inappropriate content.

### Why This Book?

Rhetoric can be difficult to understand, and not only does Heinrichs explain it well while acknowledging the founders of rhetoric and including relatable examples for modern students.

# ***The Illusionists*** by Elena Rossini

## **Summary- [Source](#)**

Sex sells. What sells even more? Insecurity. Multi-billion dollar industries saturate our lives with images of unattainable beauty, exporting body hatred from New York to Beirut to Tokyo. Their target? Women, and increasingly men and children. *The Illusionists* turns the mirror on media, exposing the absurd, sometimes humorous, and shocking images that seek to enslave us.

## **Potentially Sensitive Topics: Sexuality in Advertisements, Racism**

Because the documentary analyzes how advertisements exploit insecurities to sell products, it shows advertisements with scantily clad men and women. It also explains how racism interacts with insecurities that encourage people to buy skin lightening and darkening creams.

However, we did purchase a copy of the film that was edited for schools, so the film makers removed profanity and other more mature content from the original documentary.

## **How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics**

We will discuss them as ways to undermine self-esteem because the most insecure people make the best consumers. Furthermore, we'll discuss how societal changes like body positivity, anti-racism, and inclusivity campaigns can counteract the influence of these images. We'll also discuss how people can change the market with what they choose to purchase.

## **Why This Documentary?**

This documentary has won a plethora of awards for its well-rounded analysis of the influence of advertising, from global effects to individual ones. It gives rhetorical analysis real-world applications from self-esteem to unethical business practices.

## **3. Gaze and Social Media Unit**

This unit will be the students' introduction to literary theory. In literary analysis, the gaze has influence over the observed. We'll discuss two methods of observation: the spectacle and the panopticon. The spectacle is like a circus in that many people watch a few performers. The panopticon is the opposite in that it allows one person to view many people.

Today, people are under constant observation: cameras, work, social outings, and social media. With our online presences, people can peruse our profiles and judge us at any moment. This changes our behavior. The students will read examples of the negative effects of both types of observation, read Carter's examples of how to break that cycle, and write their own persuasive essays about how people should interact with social media.

Standards:

- ELA 2017 Grade 12-- Speaking and Listening SL 1.a-d, SL 2-6
- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Writing W.1 a-e, 4-10
- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Reading Informational Text RI. 1-10
- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Reading Literature RL. 1-6, 9-10

## “Daughter” by Erksine Caldwell

### Summary

A farmer murders his daughter because the family is starving, and he cannot stand her suffering any longer. The town gathers at the jail to hear his story, and eventually, they realize that a corrupt landowner caused the starvation. They then take justice into their own hands.

### Potentially Sensitive Topics: Filicide, Poverty

The murder is not told in scene but put together after the fact. Thus, the violence is not graphic, but it's obviously upsetting that a father ends the life of his starving daughter.

### How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics

The students will discuss who is responsible for the child's death and see the responsibility of both the father and the landlord. We'll also discuss how circumstance can push people to extremes, and if the crowd is right to release the father from jail.

### Why This Story?

In this unit, students learn how observation can change behavior and how it's connected to punishment. In the other texts, the spectacle negatively affects characters. In this text, it gives a more thorough judgment and punishment.

## “Shooting an Elephant” by George Orwell

### Summary

In Orwell's true short story, he recounts a time he had to shoot an elephant as a member of the English imperial police in India. A male elephant is in must, or heat, and goes on a rampage that kills a man. Orwell finds the elephant, which is now peacefully grazing (must only lasts for a few minutes). He doesn't need to shoot the elephant. In fact, it would be a huge loss to the elephant's owner if he did. However, the native population is watching him, and they expect him to act as an imperial officer. Due to the peer pressure, Orwell shoots the elephant. However, he doesn't know where to shoot the animal, and even after multiple shots, it dies in a slow agony.

### Potentially Sensitive Topics: Animal Abuse, Racism, Death

#### *Animal Abuse*

The elephant's death is graphic, but it's also this imagery that makes Orwell's actions so reprehensible.

#### *Racism*

Orwell acknowledges that he's torn between resenting imperial England and feeling fear and aggression toward the native peoples. We see instances of resentment, mostly heckling, one instance of spitting from both sides.

#### *Death*

The elephant steps on a man, and Orwell describes the corpse in detail. It's about three lines, but those lines are striking.

## How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics

Orwell recognizes the duality of his position as an imperial police officer who resents the British empire's control. He analyzes his racial bias, why he acts as he does, and he doesn't simply excuse his behavior. In fact, he holds himself accountable in this memoir. We'll discuss the complexity of his feelings and how the author overcomes them.

As for the deaths, their severity reveals the brutality of imperialism and the extent of the power of peer pressure. We'll discuss why Orwell wrote the scenes this way, and how the imagery gives significance and respect to these lost lives.

## Why This Story?

As the students learn about how observation can control people, it's also important to highlight how that interacts with history, societal structure, and other issues like racism. Orwell's story does just that while highlighting the complexity, but not excusing his behavior.

## **1984** by George Orwell

### Summary- [Source](#)

In George Orwell's *1984*, Winston Smith wrestles with oppression in Oceania, a place where the Party scrutinizes human actions with ever-watchful Big Brother. Defying a ban on individuality, Winston dares to express his thoughts in a diary and pursues a relationship with Julia.

### Potentially Sensitive Topics- None

The students will only read chapter one, which sets up the world and demonstrates how the panopticon can extend through technological surveillance.

### Why This Book?

1. It's a famous book that has shaped the subconscious of our culture.
2. It allows the students to see how what was initially a physical structure, the panopticon, changed and gained power through technology. We're constantly surveilled through security cameras, traffic cameras, location features on our phones, and our social media accounts. This book gives students the opportunity to analyze those effects and combine them with what they've learned in past units.

## ***Nights at the Circus*** by Angela Carter

### Summary

In Carter's *Nights at the Circus*, a winged woman named Fevvers stars as the main attraction in the circus. The novel itself is her biography, provided by Fevvers, her caretaker Lizzie, and the journalist Jack Walser.

## Potentially Sensitive Topics: Suicide, Homicide

The students will only read two chapters of the novel.

### *Suicide and Homicide*

The first explains how men come to be clowns, typically after the lowest moments in their lives. For Buffo the Clown, the lowest moment of his life was when his wife and child died on the same day. For a little boy in the care of the clowns, it's when his mother murders his father.

Being a clown allows them to adopt a new identity to efface the old one, but that identity soon effaces the original one, and the men become two-dimensional caricatures who can only exist in the context of the circus. As a result, they often consider and complete suicide. We never see that suicide in the chapter the students read, it's simply mentioned that clowns are often unhappy enough to do it.

### *Homicide*

In the second chapter, a character named Countess P creates a prison like a panopticon. All the prisoners have killed abusive husbands, and Countess P believes that being under constant observation will make the women repent. None of the descriptions are graphic.

## How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics

In each section, the class will discuss how observation affects identity and how observing someone gives the observer influence. We'll also discuss how the circus performers and prisoners reverse that power dynamic, and in turn, how the students themselves can maintain their identities under observational tools like social media.

At no point is harm to the self or others glorified. We'll examine it as a symptom of identity warfare and something guard oneself against. We'll also discuss how to support others who are overwhelmed by low self-esteem in these cases.

## Why This Book?

In this unit, the students will look at how observation influences both the observer and the observed. No other work has both the spectacle and panopticon in it. Furthermore, the characters suffer under the structures and then overcome the influence of the gaze.

## 4. Diversity Unit

In this unit, students will apply Edward Said's "Other" to diversity and discrimination in the present. We'll begin with the two most prominent types of discrimination: sexism and racism. And in each section, students will identify traditional methods of discrimination through narrative, and then they'll read empowering narratives that counter those.

The unit will end with a social justice project in which the students apply technical writing practices, research, and literary theory to create a website. That website will identify a specific type of discrimination in a specific situation that the student chooses.

Standards:

- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Speaking and Listening SL 1.a-d, SL 2-6
- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Writing W.1 a-e, W2 a-f, W3 a-e, W. 4-10
- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Reading Informational Text RI. 1-10
- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Reading Literature RL. 1-7, 9-10

## **“The Yellow Wallpaper”** by Charlotte Perkins Gilman

### **Summary**

In "The Yellow Wallpaper," a woman suffers from post-partum depression. Her husband is a doctor who prescribes bedrest, and the prescription drives her to madness.

**Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

### **Why This Story?**

In a unity about diversity, it's important to be able to understand diverse view points and to listen when you don't. "The Yellow Wallpaper" demonstrates what happens when you don't truly listen to someone because you falsely believe you're an expert on their experiences.

## **“The Men We Carry in Our Minds”** by Scott Russell Sanders

### **Summary**

Sanders writes about his perspectives on men and women as a young boy growing up in a rural community. From his perspective men are toilers or soldiers with sad, hard lives while women lead easy ones. However, he soon learns about the struggles of those women, and about the privileges of men from different classes, and thus, allies the men from his class with other women.

**Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

### **Why This Essay?**

If we're having a discussion about feminism, we should also look at how men are oppressed through their gender roles and how that relates to women's struggles.

## **“Ain't I a Woman?”** by Sojourner Truth

### **Summary**

Sojourner Truth highlights the differences between how black and white women are treated.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

Truth points to the differences with physical labor, chivalry, and intelligence. There are no sensitive topics in her speech.

### **Why This Speech?**

Feminism needs intersectionality, and Truth's speech is an example of how women of different races have different struggles. This opens the discussion to other types of intersectionality in feminism like class, age, ability, and transsexuality.

## **“The Courtship of Mr. Lyon”** by Angela Carter

### **Summary**

It's your typical Beauty and the Beast tale: the father is stranded on his way home, finds hospitality in a beast's mansion, and steals a rose for his daughter. The beast demands that the father bring the daughter to the mansion to make amends. The daughter stays in the father's places and discovers that the beast is a gentle soul. The father thrives, and the daughter leaves the beast to return home. She promises to return to the beast and forgets her promise. When she does finally return to the beast, he's dying, and the promise of her love saves his life and restores his human form.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics**

None. This very closely follows the Disney version of this story. There's no violence, sexuality, or profanity.

### **Why This Story?**

The students will do an intertextual comparison between this story, a traditional version of *Beauty and the Beast*, and “The Tiger's Bride,” a non-traditional revision. The intertextual comparison will allow students to identify how particular literary choices create characters with more agency, and the class can discuss how revisions can empower the traditionally disempowered.

## **“The Tiger's Bride”** by Angela Carter

### **Summary**

A girl's father bets his daughter's hand in marriage in a game of cards. He loses. The beast marries the daughter and takes her to live in his isolated castle.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: Mention of Nudity**

The beast wants to see his bride unclothed after the marriage. Finally, she does disrobe, but Carter focuses not on imagery in this part, but on the significance of disrobing in front of another person.

### **How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics**

We'll discuss the significance of clothing and what it does for our identities.

## Why This Story?

The students will do an intertextual comparison between this story, a non-traditional revision, and “The Courtship of Mr. Lyon,” a traditional version of *Beauty and the Beast*. The intertextual comparison will allow students to identify how particular literary choices create characters with more agency, and the class can discuss how revisions can empower the traditionally disempowered.

## “I Have a Dream” by Martin Luther King Jr.

### Summary

In this iconic speech, Martin Luther King Jr. illustrates the racial inequality in the United States and a future in which that inequality does not exist.

### Potentially Sensitive Topics: Racism

While Martin Luther King Jr. does discuss racism, it’s not violent, sexual, or profane. He images focus on equality in experience and highlight the regional expanse of racism.

### How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics

We’ll analyze the speech rhetorically and discuss what made it such a powerful force for unity.

### Why This Speech?

1. It’s iconic and the most unifying speech about racism in America’s history.
2. It’s also a rhetorical masterpiece that has touched people from all backgrounds. Knowing how King achieved that and managed to speak the experience of an oppressed people in a way that everyone understood will help students apply those methods to social injustices in their own lives.

## “Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?” And Other Conversations about Race by Beverly

Daniel Tatum

### Summary- [Source](#)

*Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* by Beverly Daniel Tatum is a comprehensive guide that explores several main points and the distinct complexities of race-related topics. Tatum discusses where the idea of race came from, what prejudices and privileges are at work in society, and how an appreciation for one’s culture is essential to one’s well-being.

### Potentially Sensitive Topics: Racism

The entire book is about racism, but at no point is it profane, sexual, or graphically violent. It provides a researcher’s perspective on race, and while being personal, it has no inappropriate parts.

## **How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics**

Tatum does a fantastic job of discussing racial concerns, identity, and the structural manifestations of racism. We will talk about the topics as she does: with respect and consideration.

## **Why This Book?**

This book provides a comprehensive perspective on racial inequality that is both historical and modern and that discusses racial identity for many in America.

## **“A Dream Deferred”** by Langston Hughes

### **Summary**

Hughes asks what happens when we put off our dreams.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

### **Why This Poem?**

Many students do not see examples from writers of a variety of ethnicities in their schooling. Since this unit is about diversity in America, writers of various races are included.

This poem allows us to discuss how discrimination limits opportunity and then affects identity.

## **“I, Too, Sing America”** by Langston Hughes

### **Summary**

Hughes is sent to another room to eat, but says that he'll grow strong and beautiful. After that, he'll eat at the table with the company, and they'll be ashamed of not allowing him to eat there before.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

### **Why This Poem?**

Many students do not see examples from writers of a variety of ethnicities in their schooling. Since this unit is about diversity in America, writers of various races are included.

This poem pairs well with “I Have a Dream,” but it also mentions the future shame of the oppressor, which Hughes predicted before it happened.

## **“Mother Tongue”** by Amy Tan

### **Summary**

Tan reflects on how her Chinese mother speaks English, how it falsely represents her mother's comprehension, how school was difficult for her because the English spoken in her home was different, and how she codeswitches in aspects of her life.

## **Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

### **Why This Essay?**

Many students do not see examples from writers of a variety of ethnicities in their schooling. Since this unit is about diversity in America, writers of various races are included.

Tan's essay allows us to examine the stereotype that Asians are good at math. She, a writer, explains that English was evaluated in a way that was difficult for a non-native speaker to understand and that those evaluations didn't reflect her comprehension or ability.

## **“The History of Red”** by Linda Hogan

### **Summary**

Hogan recounts the history of life.

## **Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

### **Why This Poem?**

Many students do not see examples from writers of a variety of ethnicities in their schooling. Since this unit is about diversity in America, writers of various races are included.

This poem allows students to hear a Native American creation story and how it affects this writer's identity.

## **“Heritage”** by Linda Hogan

### **Summary**

Hogan reflects on her identity as a woman of mixed race.

## **Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

### **Why This Poem?**

Many students do not see examples from writers of a variety of ethnicities in their schooling. Since this unit is about diversity in America, writers of various races are included.

## **“Afro-Latina”** by Elizabeth Acevedo

### **Summary**

Acevedo describes her experience growing up as both African American and Mexican American.

## **Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

### **Why This Poem?**

Many students do not see examples from writers of a variety of ethnicities in their schooling. Since this unit is about diversity in America, writers of various races are included.

Acevedo is one of two authors on this list who is of mixed heritage, and thus, her perspective is necessary to the unit.

### **“Accents”** by Denice Frohman

#### **Summary**

Frohman describes how her mother speaks. Her mother speaks with an accented English of which she is proud.

#### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

### **Why This Poem?**

Many students do not see examples from writers of a variety of ethnicities in their schooling. Since this unit is about diversity in America, writers of various races are included.

### **“Brief History”** by Jose Soto

#### **Summary**

Soto recounts experiences from kindergarten through twelfth grade, particularly how his words got him in trouble and how he felt in relation to whiteness.

#### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

### **Why This Poem?**

Many students do not see examples from writers of a variety of ethnicities in their schooling. Since this unit is about diversity in America, writers of various races are included.

## **5. Marxism Unit**

It says Marxism, which can be alarming, but I’m teaching Marxist literary theory, not Marx’s beliefs about societal structure. Marxist literary theory analyzes how class structure, industry, and the market type affect identities, ideologies, opportunity, working conditions, and other superstructures.

To do this, students will learn about the American market from the industrial revolution on. We’ll end with a book and documentary about what the market looks like now and where it’s trending. Ideally, this knowledge will help students consider future careers, what healthy workplaces look like, and how they can do work that positively impacts both local and global populations.

To demonstrate comprehension and skills, the students will write a tech-writing-style report about an industry they'd like to enter. In that industry, they'll analyze how it affects workers' identities and bodies, why the industry's structure exists, and if it can be improved.

Standards:

- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Speaking and Listening SL 1.a-d, SL 2-6
- ELA 2017 Grade 12 - Writing W. 1-2, W. 4-10
- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Reading Informational Text RI. 1-10
- ELA 2017 Grade 12- Reading Literature RL. 1-6, 9-10

## ***The Grapes of Wrath*** by John Steinbeck

### **Summary- [Source](#)**

Tom Joad and his family are forced from their farm in the Depression-era Oklahoma Dust Bowl and set out for California along with thousands of others in search of jobs, land, and hope for a brighter future.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

The students will only read segments of the novel to understand parts of the migration and how it affected people's identities.

### **Why This Book?**

*The Grapes of Wrath* is an American classic that examines how those who were not part of the industrial revolution were still affected by the mechanization of labor.

## ***The Dustbowl*** by Ken Burns

### **Summary- [Source](#)**

The film chronicles the environmental catastrophe that, throughout the 1930s, destroyed the farmlands of the Great Plains, turned prairies into deserts, and unleashed a pattern of massive, deadly dust storms that for many seemed to herald the end of the world.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: Death and Suffering**

Farmers during the Dust Bowl suffered a great deal, and there are images of this in the film.

### **How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics**

Compared to the images a modern audience has seen, these black-and-white, grainy pictures are not quite as graphic. I intend to have to discuss the significance of these photos to help students understand that regulations on industry have vastly improved working conditions and that what seems like an abstract concept affects real lives.

### **Why This Documentary?**

Visuals help students to understand the severity of a situation and the real people affected by the migration. The documentary complements *The Grapes of Wrath* by providing a broader perspective.

## ***The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire*** by Jamila Wignot and Mark Zwonitzer

### **Summary**

From PBS and American Experience - The Triangle Fire chronicles the fire that tore through the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City killing one hundred and forty-eight young women and forever changed the relationship between labor and industry in the United States. (Summary from [IMDB](#))

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: Death**

There are pictures of people who threw themselves out of windows to avoid burning to death.

### **How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics**

Compared to the images a modern audience has seen, these black-and-white, grainy pictures are not quite as graphic. I intend to have to discuss the significance of these photos to help students understand that regulations on industry have vastly improved working conditions and that what seems like an abstract concept affects real lives.

### **Why This Documentary?**

It puts faces to victims of deregulation in the industrial revolution, which the students can then connect to the Indian and Chinese works in "The True Cost" later.

## ***The Jungle*** by Upton Sinclair

### **Summary- [Source](#)**

The Jungle is a 1906 novel written by the American journalist and novelist Upton Sinclair (1878–1968). Sinclair wrote the novel to portray the harsh conditions and exploited lives of immigrants in the United States in Chicago and similar industrialized cities.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: None**

The students will only read a section about how important a character's body is to his work.

### **Why This Book?**

The industrial revolution shaped the American workforce, and this chapter of this novel allows students to analyze the relationships between work and bodies under this model.

## ***Generation Start Up***

### **Summary- [Source](#)**

GENERATION STARTUP captures the struggles and triumphs of six recent college graduates who put everything on the line to build startups in Detroit. Filmed over 17 months, it provides an honest, visceral and uplifting look at what it takes to launch a company and navigate life after college. The film is most of all a celebration of young people who have the courage, determination and resilience to follow a dream

and work hard to build something meaningful. Detroit and its rapid transformation provide a backdrop for their personal stories. This powerful film will foster thoughtful discussion and reflection and inspire viewers to take positive action in their own lives.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: Profanity**

One person occasionally curses as he describes his frustrations and hopes in building his start-up.

### **How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics**

I don't plan to address the cursing because it's infrequent and not directed at people.

### **Why This Documentary?**

*Generation Start Up* addresses the decline in entrepreneurship in modern America while showing students how to begin their own businesses. It also demonstrates how start ups can be environmentally responsible, give back to their communities, and be health conscious. Many students are uncertain of what their career options are, and this documentary provides an often-unconsidered option. As for the unit, we'll be discussing how work has changed. This work let's us look at the future and discuss how we can make better working environments for ourselves and others.

## ***The True Cost*** by Andrew Morgan and Michael Ross

### **Summary**

This is a story about clothing. It's about the clothes we wear, the people who make them, and the impact the industry is having on our world. The price of clothing has been decreasing for decades, while the human and environmental costs have grown dramatically. The True Cost is a groundbreaking documentary film that pulls back the curtain on the untold story and asks us to consider, who really pays the price for our clothing?

Filmed in countries all over the world, from the brightest runways to the darkest slums, and featuring interviews with the world's leading influencers including Stella McCartney, Livia Firth and Vandana Shiva, The True Cost is an unprecedented project that invites us on an eye-opening journey around the world and into the lives of the many people and places behind our clothes.

### **Potentially Sensitive Topics: Death and Disease**

The documentary shows the effects of the fast fashion industry on the people who make those clothes. This includes harsh factory conditions, birth defects, disease, and news stories from Indian clothing factories that collapsed.

### **How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics**

We'll discuss why people work in these conditions and how the clothing market demands it. We'll also discuss how distance and a lack of observation allows the purchaser to unwittingly participate in this cruelty, and how we can be responsible consumers.

## Why This Documentary?

This documentary provides a stark contrast to the American workplace stories that they'll have read. It's important to understand how the American marketplace affects workplaces internationally. It also connects to all the other kinds of theory and rhetorical analysis that they learned in the other units.

# The Rise of the Creative Class

by Richard Florida

## Summary

*The Rise of the Creative Class* reconceptualizes class structure into the working class, the service class, and the creative class. These classes reflect not income levels, but a type of work. Florida then explains how those classes grew out of values and industries, and how they affect our identities, workplaces, and societies.

## Potentially Sensitive Topics

None. This book has no instances of people engaging in violence, the -isms, profanity, or sexuality.

## How the Class Will Frame and Discuss Those Topics

We will discuss all topics as the book does: by presenting multiple perspectives, acknowledging their validity, incorporating research and analysis, and addressing false narratives of superiority.

## Why This Book?

### *Preparing Students for Work*

Before the seniors leave high school, we will analyze narratives about class and work. Both heavily influence identity, self-esteem, and our perception of others.

*The Rise of the Creative Class* gives students a well-rounded conceptualization of the history of work, how it affects society, how it affects individuals, how society determines a valuable workplace, and how workers shape enterprises. It's also rooted in the present economy, which can help seniors determine what kinds of job opportunities will be available to them when they finish schooling.

### *An Example of Research and Argument*

Furthermore, the text roots itself in research and addresses counter arguments and false suppositions based upon its arguments. For example, Florida focuses on the creative economy, but he also points out that the creative economy's rise doesn't mean that there's an end to large companies or industry. And, in fact, aspects of both can be applied to one another for improvement. The narrative disrupts the moralizing, dichotomous nature of current discourse that divides instead of uniting people.

### *Technical Writing Final Project*

How Florida presents both his research and thesis gives the students an example of how to craft their final report. He also structures the book with technical writing principles that the students can mimic for their final and in their future employment.

# ELA 2017, Grades 11-12 Standards

## Speaking and Listening

11-12.SL.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
11-12.SL.1.a	Come to discussions prepared having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
11-12.SL.1.b	Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.
11-12.SL.1.c	Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
11-12.SL.1.d	Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
11-12.SL.2	Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media and formats in order to make informed decisions and propose solutions, while evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies.
11-12.SL.3	Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, use of evidence, and use of rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
11-12.SL.4	Present information, findings, and supporting evidence in an organized, developed style appropriate to purpose, audience, and task, allowing listeners to follow the speaker's line of reasoning, message, and any alternative perspectives.
11-12.SL.5	Make strategic use of digital media in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence to keep the audience engaged.
11-12.SL.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 11-12 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)

## Reading Literature

11-12.RL.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.
11-12.RL.2	Determine two or more themes or 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 produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

	11-12.RL.3	Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and connect elements of a story or drama.
	11-12.RL.4	Determine the meaning(s) of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings, while analyzing the impact of specific choices on meaning and tone.
	11-12.RL.5	Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text contribute to its overall structure and meaning, as well as its aesthetic impact.
	11-12.RL.6	Using a variety of genres, analyze how the narrative point of view impacts the implicit and explicit meanings in a text
	11-12.RL.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.
	11-12.RL.8	(Not applicable to literature)
	11-12.RL.9	Drawing on a wide range of time periods, analyze how two or more texts treat similar themes or topics.
	11-12.RL.10	By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grades 11. By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grades 12.

### Reading Informational Text

11-12.RI.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.	
	11-12.RI.2	Determine and analyze the development and interaction of two or more central ideas over the course of a text to provide a complex analysis or objective summary.
	11-12.RI.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 the text.
	11-12.RI.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.
	11-12.RI.5	Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the author's choice of structural elements and text features.

	11-12.RI.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the effectiveness of the text.
	11-12.RI.7	Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in print in order to address a question or solve a problem.
	11-12.RI.8	Delineate and evaluate the rhetorical effectiveness of the authors' reasoning, premises, purpose, and argument in seminal U.S. and world texts.
	11-12.RI.9	Analyze foundational U.S. and world documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.
	11-12.RI.10	By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational text and nonfiction in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grades 11. By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational text and nonfiction in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grades 12.

## Writing

11-12.W.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.	
	11-12.W.1.a	Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
	11-12.W.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.
	11-12.W.1.c	Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
	11-12.W.1.d	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
	11-12.W.1.e	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

11-12.W.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
11-12.W.2.a	Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting, graphics, and multimedia when useful for comprehension.
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.
11-12.W.2.c	Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
11-12.W.2.d	Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and rhetorical techniques to manage the complexity of the topic.
11-12.W.2.e	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
11-12.W.2.f	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
11-12.W.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
11-12.W.3.a	Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
11-12.W.3.b	Use narrative techniques to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
11-12.W.3.c	Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and particular tone and outcome.
11-12.W.3.d	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
11-12.W.3.e	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
11-12.W.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)
11-12.W.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most

	significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grades 11-12.)
11-12.W.6	Use technology, including the internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
11-12.W.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
11-12.W.8	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
11-12.W.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
11-12.W.9.a	Apply grades 11-12 Reading standards to literature.
11-12.W.9.b	Apply grades 11-12 Reading standards to informational and nonfiction text.
11-12.W.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.