***Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe (1958)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *Things Fall Apart* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 10th grade World Literature curriculum.

1. **PLOT SUMMARY**

Chinua Achebe’s novel *Things Fall Apart* takes place in Nigeria during the British colonization of Africa. Achebe presents an insider’s perspective on tribal life and how the tribe of the protagonist is losing control of their traditions and land. The reader follows Okonkwo as he rises and falls as a leader in his community. Thematically, this complex text challenges the reader to evaluate the impact of colonization on individuals and community while providing insight into Ibo culture. Structurally and stylistically, the folktales and proverbs woven throughout the plot provide an opportunity to explore how the text serves as both a product of Nigerian culture and a culture bearer.

**II. RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

As with each text studied in this course, our study of *Things Fall Apart* is grounded in an examination of the book’s historical and cultural contexts; when we encounter the Christian missionaries and colonizers in the text, students will be studying European imperialism in their World History class. Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe published this text just as his country was moving from colonial rule toward independence from Great Britain. Achebe is considered the “grandfather of African literature,” and this text is well established in the literary canon. The book has sold more than 10 million copies, has been translated into at least 45 languages, was placed on *Time* magazine’s 100 best English-language novels from 1923-2005, and has been taught in both high school and college classrooms for generations (Garner).

*Things Fall Apart* will serve as the first class novel study after our folklore unit in which students will explore and compare folktales from around the world. We will connect those stories to the folktales and proverbs in Achebe’s novel, digging deeper into the role of these stories within cultures and communities. We will also analyze Okonkwo as the protagonist while comparing and contrasting Achebe’s work with dominant European narratives of colonization, such as those of Rudyard Kipling’s poem “The White Man’s Burden” (1899) and Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1899). Achebe composed his novel in response to such narratives that portrayed Africa as Europe’s antithesis and its people as caricatures, wanting to instead write a story that depicted Africa “quite simply as a continent of people -- not angels, but not rudimentary souls either -- just people, often highly gifted people and often strikingly successful in their enterprise with life and society” (Achebe). This goal makes the overtly masculine and violent protagonist Okonkwo confusing to students, who find it difficult to separate his savage actions from the “savage” caricature in the narratives Achebe was trying to dispel. Students’ work with this topic will culminate in a debate over whether Achebe achieved his purpose.

**III. COMMON CORE STANDARDS**

**Reading Literature**

* Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (9-10.RL.1)
* Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. (9-10.RL.2)
* Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme. (9-10.RL.3)
* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. (9‐10.RL.4)
* Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it, and manipulate time create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise. (9-10.RL.5)
* Analyze how points of view and/or cultural experiences are reflected in works of literature, drawing from a variety of literary texts. (9-10.RL.6)
* Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work. (9‐10.RL.9)
* By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, drama, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 10. (10.RL.10)

**IV. ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS**

Possible sensitive topics contained in *Things Fall Apart:* violence.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. Okonkwo’s violence, which includes beating his wives and killing his adopted son with a machete, is crucial to explore in light of Achebe’s goals for the text. In aiming to portray Africans as people rather than the “brutish” caricatures Achebe encountered in so many Western narratives about colonization, why is Okonkwo still so violent, and even brutish? Answering that question--in a grounding of how culture and community impact individuals--is the goal of this novel study.

The English Department feels that the literary merit of the novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. Students are encouraged to express their beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If a student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

**Documentation**

Garner, Dwight. “Bearing Witness, With Words.” *The New York Times,* 22 Mar. 2013, www.nytimes.com/2013/03/23/books/chinua-achebe-examined-colonialism-and-masculinity.html.

Achebe, Chinua. "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness'" *Massachusetts Review*. 18. 1977. Rpt. in Heart of Darkness, An Authoritative Text, background and Sources Criticism. 1961. 3rd ed. Ed. Robert Kimbrough, London: W. W Norton and Co., 1988, pp.251-261

***Black Panther,* Ryan Coogler (2018) PG-13**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *Black Panther* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 10th grade World Literature curriculum.

1. **PLOT SUMMARY**

The 2018 Marvel film *Black Panther* has many parallels to *Things Fall Apart*, which is the novel we will be comparing the film to. It takes place in the fictional Wakanda, an isolated African nation that has posed as a third-world country while secretly advancing their technology far beyond the rest of the world with an extremely valuable and rare natural resource. Protagonist T’Challa becomes king after his father’s death, but his spot on the throne is challenged. As secrets about T’Challa’s father are revealed, Wakanda’s isolation and secrecy are also threatened. The challenger’s father was murdered by T’Challa’s father. After witnessing the struggles of people of African descent around the world, he felt that Wakanda had a responsibility to share their power and technology to help them. This desire to help grew into a hunger for revenge in his son. *Black Panther* explores two important themes: what could have happened to African nations had they been free to grow and develop without slavery or colonialism, and what role “advanced” nations can and should fulfill within the larger world. Students will watch and analyze this film in comparison to *Things Fall Apart*, specifically comparing the role of violence in the two cultures, the development of the protagonists, and how each story addresses colonialism.

**II. RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Upon *Black Panther*’s release in spring 2018, teachers around the U.S. began creating and sharing curriculum, eager to use the film to spark conversations about not only race and representation but also colonialism and oppression. The Harvard Graduate School of Education interviewed various educational experts on the topic, one of whom was Domonic Rollins, a diversity and inclusion officer. Rollins explained:

Some educators lament that it is hard to teach about racial inequity and inequality, since slavery, the Holocaust, and the Civil Rights era seem like a distant memory to many young people. *Black Panther* creates the perfect entry point into lessons on racial discrimination, as these ideas are explicit throughout the film. Educators can draw out the actual themes from the movie and make the connections to our history. This is especially necessary for white students, for whom teaching about this history of racial inequality is more difficult at times because racial inequality is not interwoven into their lived experience. (qtd. in Berliner)

The Marvel film brings abstract, distant ideas that students struggle to grasp into our modern world, and it presents them in a way students can relate to. The film was popular with young adults, earning seven nominations for MTV Movie Awards and earning more than $200 million dollars on its opening weekend. Bringing a recent film like this into the classroom helps bring to life the major themes and historical connections in the canonical *Things Fall Apart*. Further, *Black Panther* provides a rich visual experience of “the real grandeur, complexity and depth of Africa and African diasporic cultures” (qtd. in Berliner). The film will help students better understand the most essential parts of the novel.

Students will view and discuss the film in class, comparing it to *Thing Fall Apart* and making connections to what they learn in World History. We will compare the protagonists of both stories, exploring what makes each likeable (or not) as well as how and why the writers developed those characters. We will also analyze the role colonialism plays in each text. For the film, students will consider Wakanda’s “burden” to share technology and knowledge in comparison to the “white man’s burden” described by Rudyard Kipling in his poem. Students will end this unit with a summative writing assessment that asks them to compare and contrast the novel and film, creating an argument that focuses on characters, colonialism, or representation in literature.

**III. COMMON CORE STANDARDS**

**Reading Literature**

* Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (9-10.RL.1)
* Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. (9-10.RL.2)
* Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme. (9-10.RL.3)
* Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it, and manipulate time create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise. (9-10.RL.5)
* Analyze how points of view and/or cultural experiences are reflected in works of literature, drawing from a variety of literary texts. (9-10.RL.6)
* Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment. (10.RL.7)

**IV. ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS**

Possible sensitive topics contained in *Black Panther:* violence.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the film. The violence in this film is typical of a Marvel superhero film, which we will discuss in comparison to *Things Fall Apart*. What role does violence play in each story, how does that affect the reader/viewer, and why? Most of the violence in this film occurs during fight scenes, and while blood is shown, it is not gratuitous or gory. Common Sense Media recommends the film as “great for families,” especially children over 12 years of age.

The English Department feels that the literary merit of the novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. Students are encouraged to express their beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If a student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

**Documentation**

Berliner, Lucia. “Black Panther in the Classroom: Approaching the Movie as a Cross-Media Literacy Booster and a Launching Pad for Conversations about Race, Gender, and Colonialism.” *Usable Knowledge: Connecting Research to Practice,* Harvard Graduate School of Education, 08 Mar. 2018, www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/18/03/black-panther-classroom

Chen, Sandie Angulo. “Black Panther.” *Common Sense Media*, www.commonsensemedia.org/movie-reviews/black-panther.

***The Joy Luck Club*, Amy Tan (1989)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *The Joy Luck Club* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 10th grade World Literature curriculum.

**I. PLOT SUMMARY**

Amy Tan’s *The Joy Luck Club* is a multi-generational story that follows the lives of four Chinese women and their daughters. The women gather to share stories about their childhoods, relationships, marriages, and immigration to America. Tan’s novel challenges the reader to evaluate the differences in culture, religion, and societal and generational beliefs of different time periods. Thematically, the novel pushes students to consider the role of culture in immigration and of storytelling within families and communities in creating and preserving culture. Structurally, students will analyze how and why Tan switches point of view and setting in each chapter, weaving together what seem to be separate stories into a one larger, more meaningful message about parents and their children coming to understand each other.

**II. RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

As with each text studied in this course, our study of *The Joy Luck Club* is grounded in an examination of the book’s historical and cultural contexts. When we read this text in World Literature, students will have had a refresher on Chinese culture in World History and be learning about some push and pull factors for immigration. Unlike most immigration stories, which focus on the harsh conditions that push migrants out of their home countries and the perils they face to find a new home, Tan’s characters have already made their journeys. In today’s heated political climate, it’s critical to bring in stories of successful immigrants, especially ones that students can relate to. Most teenagers struggle to understand and relate to their parents, especially as many of them are learning to drive and eagerly seizing new freedoms. The generational culture clashes in the book are familiar to teenagers from all backgrounds, even today.

Students focus their analysis on the structure of Tan’s novel. Shifting points of view and jumps through time and place push students to consider why each story is placed where it is in the book. The novel is divided into 4 parts, each of which is introduced with a symbolic parable that connects the 4 stories within the part (each from a different character’s perspective). How does the placement of the story affect character and plot? How do the stories connect to the parables that introduce them? How do the symbols develop and reflect Chinese culture in the book? For this novel study, students will work in groups to focus more intently on one mother-daughter pair, writing and presenting a collaborative analysis to the rest of the class.

**III. COMMON CORE STANDARDS**

**Reading Literature**

* Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (9-10.RL.1)
* Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. (9-10.RL.2)
* Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme. (9-10.RL.3)
* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. (9‐10.RL.4)
* Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise. (9-10.RL.5)
* Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature. (9-10.RL.6)
* Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment. (9-10.RL.7)
* By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently. (10.RL.10)

**IV. ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS**

Possible sensitive topics contained in *The Joy Luck Club:* violence, brief references to sex, and profanity.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel. The violence (a daughter cuts the flesh of her arm to make a soup for her mother, proving true devotion in an attempt to save her life) and brief references to sex will be discussed in light of how they reflect the culture of the mothers and daughters. Students will analyze why the author included this content--how does it describe the culture, and how does it develop the tension between the characters?

The English Department feels that the literary merit of the novel more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. Students are encouraged to express their beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If a student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

***The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini (2003)**

**AND**

**Film Adaptation (**[**Mark**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1749112/?ref_=tt_ov_dr) **Forster, 2007)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *The Kite Runner* and its film adaptation—each as a whole—and deemed them worthy for the 10th grade World Literature curriculum. However, the suggestive scene from chapter seven of the novel will be omitted from any class screening of the movie (which will only take place if time allows).

**I. PLOT SUMMARY**

Khaled Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner* is a story about two young boys growing up in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation of 1978. Through a series of flashbacks interwoven with present day, Hosseini tells the story of Amir and his servant/best friend Hassan and how their choices have devastating effects on both of their lives. Hosseini presents not only a world under Taliban rule, but also a picture of Afghanistan’s golden age, filled with honor and beauty. The voel is ripe with examples of privilege, prejudice, and—most of all—the power of choice.

**II. RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

As with each text studied in this course, *The Kite Runner* unit is grounded in an examination of the book’s historical and cultural contexts, which is particularly relevant given the U.S.’s involvement in Afghanistan after the events of September 11, 2001. For students to understand today’s headlines about the Middle East, it’s crucial for them to understand not only how the Taliban rose to power but also that Afghanistan and its surrounding countries were not always war-torn regions, but were once prosperous empires. Because the protagonist comes of age during Afghanistan’s golden age, readers get a taste of the country and culture in its prime. We read beautiful, captivating descriptions of not only the landscape and architecture, but also of the people and traditions. And because Amir returns to his home country after the Taliban has seized control, readers also experience the stark contrast of the terror many people experience in the Middle East today.

Students will delve into the text to analyze the themes of ethnic prejudice, honor, betrayal, guilt, and redemption. As fifteen- and sixteen-year-olds, sophomore students are going to be dealing with increased social pressure, and they will be making important decisions and facing the consequences of those decisions. While *The Kite Runner* does tell a beautiful story of friendship, the core message of the text is that our choices can define us, for better or worse. For most of the book, Amir struggles with guilt over a poor choice he made as a child; but as an adult, he faces unbelievable odds to redeem himself for that mistake. Students come away with a better understanding of how their actions affect not only themselves but those around them, and not only now, but in the distant future as well.

Students will be introduced to literary criticism in this unit--specifically to historicism, formalism, psychoanalytic criticism, and sociological criticism. They will explore the text through one of these lenses in a critical essay.

**III. COMMON CORE STANDARDS**

**Reading Literature**

* Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (9-10.RL.1)
* Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. (9-10.RL.2)
* Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme. (9-10.RL.3)
* Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise. (9-10.RL.5)
* Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature. (9-10.RL.6)
* Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*). (9-10.RL.7)
* By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently. (10.RL.10)

**Writing**

* 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.
  + Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
  + Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.
  + Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
  + Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
  + Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
  + 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). (9-10.W.2)

**IV. ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS**

Possible sensitive topics contained in *The Kite Runner:* profanity, sexual content, attempted suicide, and violence.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion toward an understanding of why this material is included in the novel and its film adaptation. In this text specifically, the sexual content is a product of the antagonist’s quest for power and domination. The scene is a critical turning point for the protagonist, Amir, who witnesses the rape of his friend. Students will be warned about the potentially upsetting nature of this scene; it will not be shown during screening of the film adaptation. Amir’s lack of action plagues him with guilt and opens the door to important classroom discussions about choices and consequences, including how and when to speak up for others (and how to access resources to help themselves and others in traumatic situations).

The English Department feels that the literary merit of the novel and its film adaptation more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. Students are encouraged to express their beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If a student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

**Documentation**

Brown, Amanda Christy. “Teaching ‘The Kite Runner’ with The New York Times.” *The New York Times*, 8 Jan. 2015. learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/01/08/teaching-the-kite-runner-with-the-new-york-times/

***A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* by Ishmael Beah (2007)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* by Ishmael Beahas a whole and deemed it worthy for the 10th grade World Literature curriculum.

**I. PLOT SUMMARY**

*A Long Way Gone* recounts the author’s true childhood experiences during the civil war in Sierra Leone. After being separated from his home, family, and friends, and after running for the war for as long as he could, Beah becomes a soldier for the Sierra Leone Army fighting against the rebels, the Revolutionary United Front. Under the influence of drugs and manipulation by adults, Beah is forced into violence, but he eventually is rescued by UNICEF. He is successfully rehabilitated and becomes an advocate for children in wartorn areas. Thematically, this beautifully written account of a child soldier reveals the traits that make us human and how that humanity can be lost under the influence of violent leaders. Structurally, students will explore personification of nature and flashbacks as devices Beah uses to enhance the storytelling of his personal experience.

**II. RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

We begin our exploration of this text by examining the conditions in Sierra Leone that led up to the country’s civil war, and students will be encouraged to make connections to the Iranian Revolution we explored in the previous unit. Beah’s story offers students a first-hand recent account of the persistent tragedy of child soldiers. While this is a difficult subject to face, it’s a reality that most teens their age are forced into elsewhere in the world. It’s an issue most students become particularly passionate about because this book is the first time they hear about it, yet it’s a massive, widespread problem.

Beah recounts his transition from a child running from war into a vicious soldier and through rehabilitation with brutal honesty. *A Long Way Gone* allows students to recognize the importance of their own childhood innocence, to question the identification of a clear enemy, and to explore the resilience of the human spirit. In this unit, we will focus on literature’s role in spreading awareness and fostering resilience. We will explore how Beah’s story and the way he tells it spreads the message about this important issue as well as how his personal story can inspire resilience.

**III. COMMON CORE STANDARDS**

**Reading Literature**

* Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (9-10.RL.1)
* Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. (9-10.RL.2)
* Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme. (9-10.RL.3)
* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone). (9‐10.RL.4)
* Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise. (9-10.RL.5)
* Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature. (9-10.RL.6)
* Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*). (9-10.RL.7)
* Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare). (9‐10.RL.9)
* By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently. (10.RL.10)

**IV. ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS**

Possible sensitive topics contained in *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* by Ishmael Beah:violence, drug use, profanity, and references to sexual violence.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the memoir—to show readers the brutal reality of war as it affects children and young adults around the world and encourage them to work to prevent it. For example, drugs are introduced as a method used to brainwash and numb the children into the compliant, violent soldiers the commanders need. Class discussions will focus on why it is important that we hear Beah’s story and the unpleasantness it includes: so we can prevent other children from having to endure it.

The English Department feels that the literary merit of the memoir more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. Students are encouraged to express their beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If a student is uncomfortable at any time, they should meet with the teacher to discuss their concerns.

***Kony 2012* by Invisible Children (2012)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated the *Kony 2012* documentaryas a whole and deemed it worthy for the 10th grade World Literature curriculum.

**I. PLOT SUMMARY**

*Kony 2012* is a short documentary film that became the most viral video in history when it was released on YouTube in 2012. The video intended to spread awareness about the atrocities committed by warlord Joseph Kony and spark a movement demanding his arrest. The non-profit organization Invisible Children, which created the video, explains the crimes committed by Kony and his rebel group, the Lord’s Resistance Army, through central Africa. Kony’s extensive recruitment of child soldiers is emphasized in the video and will help students to realize the issue exists beyond the pages of *A Long Way Gone* and affects thousands of children.

**II. RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

We will watch this documentary in class, along with excerpts from follow-up videos by Invisible Children, after reading *A Long Way Gone*. Students will analyze the video for its effectiveness and use of rhetoric, comparing it to Beah’s memoir. We will further connect both texts in a discussion of white saviorism. To complete the unit, students will choose an issue they are passionate about and choose a medium that will most effectively spread awareness about it.

**III. COMMON CORE STANDARDS**

**Reading Informational Text**

* Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (9-10.RI.1)
* Analyze how the author constructs an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them. (9-10.RI.3)
* Analyze in detail how an author’s ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter). (9-10.RI.5)
* Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose. (9-10.RI.6)
* Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person’s life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account. (9-10.RI.7)
* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning. (9-10.RI.8)
* By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational texts and nonfiction in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 10. (9-10.RI.10)

**Writing**

* Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
  + Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
  + Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns.
  + Use words, phrases, and clauses 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.
  + Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
  + Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. (9-10.W.1)

**IV. ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS**

Possible sensitive topics contained in *Kony 2012*:violence, disturbing images, and references to sexual violence.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the documentary—to show viewers the brutal reality of war as it affects children and young adults around the world and encourage them to work to prevent it. The English Department feels that the literary merit of the video more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. Students are encouraged to express their beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If a student is uncomfortable at any time, they should meet with the teacher to discuss their concerns.

***The Tempest* by William Shakespeare (1623)**

**AND**

**Film adaptation (Julie Taymore, 2010, rated PG-13)**

The English Department has carefully evaluated *The Tempest* and its film adaptation—each as a whole—and deemed them worthy for the 10th grade World Literature curriculum.

**I. PLOT SUMMARY**

*The Tempest* is set on a remote island where Prospero, the rightful Duke of Milan, plots revenge and plans to reclaim his dukedom using illusion and skillful manipulation. He conjures up a storm, the eponymous tempest, to lure his enemies to the island. Once there, they are subject to his whims through the spirits and slaves who are tasked with his bidding. Thematically, students focus on the themes of revenge and forgiveness in this play, making connections to the other texts we’ve read in this semester.

**II. RATIONALE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

*The Tempest* is unlike all other texts in the World Literature curriculum in that its study is not rooted in historical context, but rather thematic exploration. The entire play revolves around different characters’ desires for and plots to get revenge, but it ends with forgiveness. Further, the characters are each trapped in prisons, some literal and some more metaphorical. Students will explore those prisons--how and why they are created--as well as how Shakespeare develops the theme of forgiveness and connections they can make to other books we’ve read in the second semester.

As Shakespeare’s last play, and as a play within a play itself, *The Tempest* is often seen as Shakespeare’s farewell to the stage. Students will be encouraged to analyze that connection as we say farewell to our year together in our last unit of study.

**III. COMMON CORE STANDARDS**

**Reading Literature**

* Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (9-10.RL.1)
* Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. (9-10.RL.2)
* Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme. (9-10.RL.3)
* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone). (9‐10.RL.4)
* Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise. (9-10.RL.5)
* Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature. (9-10.RL.6)
* Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*). (9-10.RL.7)
* Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare). (9‐10.RL.9)
* By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently. (10.RL.10)

**IV. ADDRESSING SENSITIVE SUBJECTS**

Possible sensitive topics contained in *The Tempest*: mild sexual references, drunkenness, and violence.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the play. For example, the drunkenness occurs only in scenes with the jester and butler, foolish characters the audience was supposed to laugh at and mock; the mild sexual references occur in a speech Prospero makes to his daughter and her new fiance, warning them not to sleep together before they are officially married.

The English Department feels that the literary merit of the play more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. Students are encouraged to feel comfortable in expressing their beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If a student is uncomfortable at any time, they should meet with the teacher to discuss their concerns.