

Syllabus

Transcendentalism
Twelfth Grade Humanities: English (American Literature)
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Course Description:

This English Main Lesson block will be both a literature and philosophy class that explores and evaluates the epistemologies and moral imperatives of key Transcendentalist writers, as well as, provides an opportunity for students to explore their own modes of knowing the world. The class will consist of daily discussions, reading and writing activities, and culminate in each student writing their own moral imperative essay and an oral exam.

Required Texts:

This class will be a survey of Transcendentalist writers including: Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Frederick Douglass, Margaret Fuller, Louisa May Alcott, Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson. All readings will be provided by the teacher. Students are responsible for keeping any texts and bringing them to class each day in an organized folder or binder.

Materials:

All students are required to bring paper to class each day for the keeping of notes, writings, and a folder or binder for handouts, along with a pencil, or blue or black pen. Please make use of a day-planner of your choice. Practice good study hygiene now, and it will serve you for the rest of your life. Laptops and tablets may only be used with prior approval.

Learning Goals:

- 1.) Hone critical reading, and analytical and academic writing skills through the exploration of Transcendentalist writers
- 2.) Identify and evaluate the key ideas of Transcendentalism and American Individualism
- 3.) Identify and evaluate various epistemologies while developing a growing understanding of your own way of knowing the world
- 4.) Identify, analyze and compare various authors' moral imperatives
- 5.) Analyze and compare the style and writing devices of various Transcendentalist writers
- 6.) Reflect and evaluate your own sense of identity, ethics, and role as an individual in the world through dialectic and in-class writing
- 7.) Develop your own moral imperative to be written in your final Transcendentalist essay that expresses the moral and ethical challenges facing individuals in our current society

Key Assignments and Grading:

- 1.) Daily, active participation in all class activities, and meaningful contributions to class discussions: 25% of your grade
- 2.) Dialectic writings and class notes in a dedicated folder or notebook: 25% of your grade
- 3.) Oral exam: 25% of your grade
- 4.) Final essay of your own moral imperative tackling the issues of morality and ethics in the context of the challenges facing our modern world: 25% of your grade
- 5.) Honors Options: *Siddhartha*, by Herman Hesse; *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, by Robert M. Pirsig; *Walden*, by Henry David Thoreau; *Illusions: Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah*, by Richard Bach; *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, by Margaret Fuller (see handout for details)

Student Requirements:

Attendance

Students will be required to attend all classes on-time and adhere to all school absent/tardy policies. Absences will only be excused if pre-arranged or the school has been notified of illness or emergency by the student's parent or guardian. ***Students are responsible for obtaining any missed work or assignments.***

Participation

As this course is one of literature and philosophy, keeping up on reading requirements and nightly dialectic writings will be critical not only to the students' grades, but to the quality of their class participation and to the richness of their experience. Students will be required to keep one spiral notebook for taking in-class notes and keeping neat record of their nightly dialectic writings. This notebook will be turned in periodically in order to assess student progress and will contribute to students' overall participation grade. All readings will be provided by the teacher. Students are expected to bring ***all previous and current readings*** with them to class each day along with their spiral notebooks and proper writing utensils (pencil or blue or black pen).

Student Behavioral Expectations

In addition to being punctual, I expect you to be considerate and respectful of all members in this class. This is a discussion-heavy course, and as such, I ask that all students listen as actively as they speak. If you tackle this material, and the ideas therein with will and honesty, you will have things to say; you will also have things to discover both from the texts and one another.

Academic Policies:

Deadlines

All work is due on the assigned day. In the case of absence, minor assignments may be handed in the following class day ***if*** the absence is an ***excused*** absence. Major assignments due on the last day of a course are ***not accepted late***. It is the student's responsibility to arrange to get work, such as a Main Lesson Book or final paper, turned in on time even if they are ill.

Late Assignments (UPDATED)

Late assignments that are not pre-arranged or from an excused absence are receive an automatic 50% reduction in total credit. This will scale from year to year: 75% reduction in tenth grade and 100% reduction for eleventh and twelfth grades. (In other words, 50% possible credit in ninth, 25% possible credit in tenth, and zero % possible credit in eleventh and twelfth grades without proper extensions or excused absence.)

Extensions

I ***love*** granting extensions as it shows proactive responsibility for one's academic progress, but a student ***must*** contact me ***before*** the due date in order to make the proper arrangements. For minor assignments, this is at least one class day before the deadline. For ***major assignments***, students must request extensions in writing by using the ***Request for Extension Form***, which

is available in the High School Office or on the website:

<https://portlandwaldorfhs.wordpress.com/forms> This form must be signed by the teacher, the advisor, and the Student Assistant Coordinator prior to submission. Completed forms must be submitted to the high school office no later than **48 hours in advance of the deadline**. (Please see your Student handbook for a thorough explanation of the school absence, late work, and extension policies).

Planned absences must be arranged through the High School Office, and the student is responsible for obtaining a Planned Absence Form, getting it signed by all teachers, advisor and parent/guardian. ***This must be turned in prior to absence. The student is responsible for turning in any missed work ON TIME.***

As your teacher, I want you to succeed! If you have questions or concerns, ask early and ask often; help is always available.

Plagiarizing and Cheating

Do not plagiarize. Plagiarizing is a form of academic dishonesty wherein you try pass someone else's ideas as your own. This can happen when writing without the use of proper citations. To avoid this, quote your sources accurately, and cite them properly and often. When in doubt--give credit where credit is due!

Please do not cheat. Cheating is when your work is not your own; whether that is copying homework or during an exam, it is taking someone else's work. This is also a form of academic dishonesty and does not show me the caliber of your work and striving.

Plagiarizing and cheating are serious offenses and will be treated as such according to official school policy and may result in loss of credit and failure of this course. Further, they damage your integrity, my trust, and cheat you out of a chance to earn the fruits of your own work. (Please see the Student Handbook for a full explanation of PWS's Academic Honesty policy).

PWHS HOMEWORK FORMAT POLICY

- Homework that does not meet the formatting expectations listed below will be returned with no grade and counted as late.
 - All homework should be in blue or black pen, or typed as is appropriate
 - Pages with fringes (from spiral notebooks) are not acceptable.
 - Homework or drawings written or drawn in pencil is not acceptable unless otherwise noted by the teacher.
- Materials required in every class:
 - Black or blue pen; pencil; eraser; lined 3 hole paper; notebook or binder w/dividers for each class; colored pencils.
 - Students are expected to bring their day planner (provided by the school for ninth graders) to every class, every day, and to keep it up-to-date with all assignments. There will be pop planner checks.

WRITING STYLE SHEET

Formal essays should be written on white paper in blue or black ink or typed. If typed, the font should be a classic, (no comic sans or papyrus), no smaller than 10 point, and no larger than 12 point font, including the title. Main lesson books may be typed, or should be written in blue or black ink, unless otherwise specified by the teacher.

ROUGH DRAFTS: Double-Spaced, or lines skipped when handwritten.

FINAL DRAFTS: 1.5 spaced, or lines skipped when handwritten.

Margins should be one inch on all four sides.

Every page should have page numbers, whether in the top right hand corner or along the bottom.

First page:

- Place your name on the first line at the left of the page.
- Place the course name on the second line at the left of the page.
- Place the date on the third line at the left of the page.
- Center the title, underlined or bold, on the fourth line.
- Your essay must have a title and it should NOT be the same as the title of a book.
- DO NOT skip a line. At the end of a line, hit ENTER once and then TAB to indent the first word of the first paragraph. (See example below/next page.)

First Name Last Name

Name of Class (eg Transcendentalism)

Month/Day/Year

Title May be BOLD or UNDERLINED

Please indent paragraphs by using the TAB key. All assignments, whether typed on the computer or hand-written, must conform to this format of indentation. Spelling and grammar both count on the final draft, and errors will result in a deduction of the grade. NO ASSIGNMENTS MAY BE TURNED IN ELECTRONICALLY. All assignments must be turned in as hardcopies. At the end of a paragraph do not leave a blank line, just press ENTER...

Last Name 2

Once, and then TAB, so that the first word of the second paragraph is indented just like this. Yes, you will be held accountable for this. Papers turned in that are not in the proper format will be handed back and given 24 hours to correct--the FIRST TIME. Thereafter, any paper not in the proper format will either be handed back for no credit, or see a reduction in grade at the teacher's discretion.

For example, turning in something in pencil on a ragged piece of paper for a second time might earn a zero, while reversing the order of name/class/date in the upper left-hand

corner might receive a deduction.