

**American Literature**  
Fall 2018 Syllabus

**Texts:**

*Adventures in American Literature* (AAL, textbook provided)  
*The Scarlet Letter*, by Nathaniel Hawthorn (any unabridged edition)  
*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, by Mark Twain

**Assignment Prior to First Co-op on August 31**

1. Read the summary of “The Custom House” which is the introduction to *The Scarlet Letter*. Use this link. <http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/scarlet/section1/>

2. Read chapters 1-4 of *The Scarlet Letter*.

3. Fill in Study Guide for chapters 1-4.

Be aware of this resource which gives the original text on the left left-hand page, and an easy-to-understand translation on the right.

<http://www.sparknotes.com/nofear/lit/the-scarlet-letter/>

4. Read the introductory material about the following men in *AAL*:

William Bradford (pp. 7-8), William Byrd (p. 13), Edward Taylor (p. 19),

Jonathan Edwards (pp. 24-25), Patrick Henry (p. 50), and Thomas Paine (p. 54).

In complete sentences, list three major facts about each one. Turn this assignment in at the first class.

**August 31: Overview and Introduction to American Literature**

What makes a piece of writing “American” Literature?

Review of Puritan and Cavalier writers.

**Assignment (due September 7)**

1. Read chapters 5-8 in *The Scarlet Letter*. Continue to fill in Study Guide.

2. Read pages 8-11, 14-18, 22-23, 26-29, 51-53, and 55-57 in *AAL*.

Know who wrote which work and the general content of each piece. There will be a quiz.

**September 7: The Beginnings of the American Tradition**

Quiz on reading assignments.

Discuss Edward Taylor and Jonathan Edwards.

**Assignment (due September 21)**

1. Read chapters 9-15 in *The Scarlet Letter*. Continue filling in Study Guide.

2. Read introductory material on Washington Irving (pp. 99-100) and “The Devil and Tom Walker” (pp. 100-108). Be prepared to discuss his worldview and use of humor in class.

**September 21: Early Men of Letters**

Discuss Washington Irving and William Cullen Bryant.

Read examples of 19<sup>th</sup> century American poetry.

**Assignment (due October 5)**

1. Read chapters 16-20 in *The Scarlet Letter*. Continue filling in Study Guide.
  2. Read introduction to Poe (pp. 117-118) and “The Fall of the House of Usher” (pp. 127-138).
  3. Do “For Composition” #1 on page 140 of *AAL*. Be sure to follow the directions carefully.
- We will do the paper exchange at our next class.

**October 5: Early Men of Letters Part 2**

Discuss Edgar Allen Poe, “The Raven”, and “The Fall of the House of Usher”.  
Exchange paragraphs group activity.

**Assignment (due October 12)**

1. Read chapters 21-24 in *The Scarlet Letter*.
2. Finish filling in Study Guide and answer “Final Thought” question.

**October 12: Nathaniel Hawthorne and *Scarlet Letter* Discussion****Assignment (due October 19)**

1. Study for *The Scarlet Letter* test using your Study Guide and class notes.  
The test will contain matching, true/false, multiple choice and one lengthy essay question.  
You will have the class period to take the test. Be sure to bring notebook paper and a writing utensil.
2. Turn in Study Guide for grading.

**October 19: *The Scarlet Letter* Exam****Assignment (due November 2)**

1. Read the introductory material about the following men in *AAL*:  
Ralph Waldo Emerson (pp. 165-167), Henry David Thoreau (pp. 183-184),  
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (pp. 205-206), John Greeley Whittier (p. 213),  
and Oliver Wendell Holmes (pp. 221-222).
2. Create an outline with facts about each author. Use [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/media/pdf/20081113013048\\_544.pdf](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/media/pdf/20081113013048_544.pdf) as a guide if you are unsure about how to outline.  
Use the Alphanumeric style.
3. Read pages 282-283 about Emily Dickinson and the 3 poems on page 283. On page 286, answer questions 1 and 3 in the “For Study and Discussion” section. Read the portion about “Simile and Metaphor” and answer questions 2 and 3 in that section. Turn this assignment in at the next class.

**November 2: The Flowering of New England**

Return and review tests.  
New England’s Golden Age

**Assignment (due November 9)**

1. Read chapters 1-3 of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
2. Begin filling in the Study Guide short answer questions.
3. Read background information on Walt Whitman (pp. 310- 312) and stanzas 1-6 of *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed*.

**November 9: Tragedy and Renewal**

The Civil War and Literature of this period  
Walt Whitman's Contribution

**Assignment (due November 16)**

1. Read chapters 4-7 of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
2. Continue filling in the Study Guide short answer questions and work on vocabulary matching.
3. Read handout on Race Matters and Offensive Language. Be ready to discuss in class.

**November 16: Mark Twain and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

Dialogue and discussion about offensive language

**Assignment (due December 3)**

1. Read chapters 8-14 of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
2. Continue filling in the Study Guide short answer questions and work on vocabulary matching.
3. Choose one journal entry question to answer. Write a minimum of one page response to turn in.

**December 3: Elements of Fiction**

Discuss *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*  
Introduction to project for January

**Homework for month of December (Due by December 20)**

1. Finish reading *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
2. Complete Study Guide (All Short Answer questions, vocabulary and 2 additional Journal Entry questions. (These are a minimum of one page answers.)

**TBD:**

**Thursday, December 20 or Friday, December 21**

Study Guide Due

Book Discussion and Wrap Up at my home