

Syllabus

English 8A

Course Overview

English is the study of the creation and analysis of literature written in the English language. In English 8A, you will explore the features of different forms of literary writing such as diaries, memoirs, informative essays, and fictional narratives. You will also improve your writing by learning about persuasive writing techniques. You will compare and contrast a literary piece across different mediums, including drama. You will engage in a dramatic reading of poetry and learn how to give multimedia presentations. In the latter part of the course, you will analyze informational texts to understand the history of the Civil War. You will also analyze various types of literary works to better understand literary elements such as point of view, conflict, theme, structure, and setting.

Course Goals

This course will help you meet these goals:

- Investigate the features of written forms of literature such as diaries, memoirs, informative essays, and fictional narratives.
- Analyze stage directions and dialogue in a drama.
- Engage in character study.
- Learn about the elements of multimedia presentations.
- Compare and contrast a literary piece with its film adaptation/live performance.
- Participate in a dramatic reading of poetry.
- Investigate the origins, causes, and effects of the Civil War.
- Explain the function, features, and persuasive techniques used in informational texts.
- Examine the process of debating and participate in a debate.
- Evaluate elements of fiction such as theme, point of view, conflict, word choice, structure, and setting in short stories.

General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Complete basic operations with word processing software, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs.
- Complete basic operations with presentation software, such as Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Docs Presentation.
- Perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Communicate through email and participate in discussion boards.

For a complete list of general skills that are required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Plato Student Orientation document, found at the beginning of this course.

Credit Value

English 8A is a 0.5-credit course.

Course Materials

- notebook
- pencil or pen
- computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft PowerPoint or equivalent

Some course readings may require a visit to your school library or public library.

Course Pacing Guide

The following course description and pacing guide is intended to help you stay on schedule with your work. Note that your course instructor may modify the schedule to meet the specific needs of your class.

Unit 1: How Can You Benefit from Written Communication?

Summary

This unit focuses on the different forms of literary writing, beginning with a lesson on diaries. In the next lesson, you will explore point of view and theme in Frederick Douglass’s memoir titled *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. You will then examine the features of informative essays. You will also investigate purpose in the informative essay “Business and Ethics” by Redfield Ingalls and the short story “Bernice Bobs Her Hair” by F. Scott Fitzgerald. In the final lesson in this unit, you will explore the process of writing fictional narratives.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
1 day: 1	Syllabus and Plato Student Orientation <i>Review the Course Syllabus and Plato Student Orientation at the beginning of this course.</i>	Course Orientation
4 days: 2–5	Dear Diary: Writing for Yourself <i>Explore examples of famous diaries and practice keeping your own diary.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 6–9	Memoirs <i>Explore point of view and theme in a Frederick Douglass’s Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 10–13	Writing Informative Essays <i>Examine the characteristics of informative essays.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 14–16	Reading Fictional Narratives <i>Investigate purpose in fictional narratives and study techniques for reading them.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 17–19	Writing Narratives <i>Explore the process of creating a narrative.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 20–22	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 1	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 23	Posttest—Unit 1	Assessment

Unit 2: How Does Communication Style Affect Your Understanding?

Summary

This unit focuses on analysis of literary works, beginning with a lesson in which you will explore the elements of drama in Susan Glaspell’s *Trifles*. Later, you will evaluate the literary element of character in Glaspell’s short story, “A Jury of Her Peers,” an adaptation of *Trifles*. In this unit’s third lesson, you will examine the main features of multimedia presentations. Then, you will investigate and interpret a film adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s “The Adventure of the Speckled Band.” In the last lesson, you will examine techniques for delivering dramatic readings of poems such as Lewis Carroll’s “Jabberwocky,” Robert Frost’s “Design,” and William Blake’s “The Chimney Sweeper.”

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 24–26	Elements of Drama: <i>Trifles</i> <i>Determine the relationship between stage directions and dialogue in Susan Glaspell’s play Trifles.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 27–29	Character Study: “A Jury of Her Peers” <i>Evaluate the main characters in Susan Glaspell’s short story “A Jury of Her Peers,” an adaptation of her play Trifles.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 30–33	Giving Multimedia Presentations <i>Examine key elements of creating and delivering successful multimedia presentations.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 34–37	Film Adaptations <i>Investigate and interpret a film adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s “The Adventure of the Speckled Band.”</i>	Lesson
3 days 38–40	Performing Poetry: Dramatic Readings <i>Examine techniques for delivering a dramatic reading of a poem.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 41–43	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 2	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 44	Posttest—Unit 2	Assessment

Unit 3: How Can You Make Peace with Conflict?

Summary

This unit focuses on informational texts related to the Civil War. First, you will explore the main idea and point of view in Abraham Lincoln’s two inaugural speeches, as well as Jefferson Davis’s First Inaugural Speech. Next, you will analyze the Dred Scott Decision, James Henry Hammond’s speech, and William Lloyd Garrison’s speech and their arguments for and against slavery. In the third lesson of this unit, you will investigate the connections and distinctions between important Civil War events. Then you will explore the main features of persuasive essays. In the last lesson, you will examine the process of preparing for and participating in a debate.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
4 days: 45–48	The Civil War: Understanding the Conflict <i>Determine the main idea and point of view in Civil War texts.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 49–52	Arguments about Slavery <i>Analyze Civil War documents that contain arguments for and against slavery.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 53–56	The Civil War: Connecting Major Events <i>Investigate connections and distinctions between important Civil War events.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 57–60	Writing a Persuasive Argument <i>Explore the characteristics of persuasive essays.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 61–64	Debating an Argument <i>Examine the process of preparing for and participating in a debate.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 65–67	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 3	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 68	Posttest—Unit 3	Assessment

Unit 4: How Do You Analyze Internal and External Struggles?

Summary

This unit focuses on internal and external struggles. It starts with a lesson in which you will evaluate point of view and structure in Amy Tan’s “Rules of the Games” and Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart.” In the next lesson, you will investigate the impact of word choice and structure in O’ Henry’s “The Gift of the Magi” and Giovanni Boccaccio’s “Federigo’s Falcon,” both of which are short stories with surprise endings. In the third lesson of this unit, you will examine theme and setting in Stephen Crane’s “An Episode of War.” Finally, you will investigate approaches for writing argumentative essays about works of fiction.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
5 days: 69–73	Point of View and Conflict with the Self in Short Stories <i>Evaluate point of view and structure in Amy Tan’s “Rules of the Game” and Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart.”</i>	Lesson
4 days: 74–77	Word Choice and Stories with Plot Twists <i>Investigate the impact of word choice and structure in two stories with plot twists, O. Henry’s “The Gift of the Magi” and Giovanni Boccaccio’s “Federigo’s Falcon.”</i>	Lesson
4 days: 78–81	Theme, Setting, and Cultural Conflict in Short Stories <i>Examine theme and setting in Stephen Crane’s “An Episode of War.”</i>	Lesson
4 days: 82–85	Writing about Short Fiction <i>Investigate approaches for writing argumentative essays about works of fiction.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 86–88	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 4	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 89	Posttest—Unit 4	Assessment
1 day 90	End-of-Semester Test	Assessment