* Course Title: English 4: Theory and Practice of Poetry & Fiction

* Brief Course Description
The Theory and Practice of Poetry and Fiction Course is designed to cultivate in students an aesthetic appreciation for the beauty of language. Students will examine various poetic techniques and poetic forms while learning to read poetry with a critical eye. The course will also offer students a guided tour through several works of fiction, whereby students will learn to identify elements of fiction within works studied and later to use these elements in stories of their own creation. Students MUST be willing to share the pieces they write and must be open to constructive criticism.

Pre-Requisites
English 3 or English 3 Honors - required

Co-Requisites
English 4: Senior Seminar - Recommended

Supplemental Instructional Materials:
Course Purpose

Course Goals and/or Major Student Outcomes.

- Demonstrate an aesthetic appreciation for the art of language through exposure to several different forms and genres of creative writing
- Exhibit speaking, listening, writing and critical thinking skills by working both collaboratively and independently on assignments that challenge them to analyze and interpret works studied
- Improve public speaking skills through participation in poetry recitation exercises
- Learn the importance of and gain practice in the process of writing for both expository and creative writing assignments

Course Objectives:

- Students will write expository essays that demonstrate their comprehension of both literal and interpretive elements of chosen poems and/or short works of fiction.
- Students will memorize and perform three poems as part of a poetry recitation assignment that is designed to help students connect to, comprehend, and learn to appreciate the poems studied by requiring them to communicate the poems using voice articulation and dramatic interpretation.
- Students will learn to derive their own interpretations of short stories and poems studied, using textual evidence to support these interpretations.
- Students will learn to recognize elements such as point of view, character, setting, tone and style, theme, and symbolism when reading works of fiction. They will apply their understanding of these elements in their analyses of works studied.
- Students will engage in imitation and parody exercises that will enrich their
understanding of and appreciation for narrative voice and style in literature and poetry

*Course Outline*

The Theory and Practice of Poetry and fiction is a course that essentially aims to inculcate in students an appreciation for the art of creative writing by first examining the underlying science of the writing process. The course will unfold in two distinct phases. During phase one of the course (approximately 9 weeks) students will study poems and short works of fiction, learning to identify and recognize important literary elements in these works. For example, in examining the importance of setting, students will travel the Northwestern Yukon Territory of Jack London's "To Build a Fire," as well as the Shenzhen Province of modern China in Amy Tan's "A Pair of Tickets." In looking at poetic forms, students will explore the famous odes of John Keats and sonnets of William Shakespeare. During phase two of the course, students will begin to employ their understanding of the literary elements studied during phase one by composing poems and stories of their own creation. Phase two will begin with assignments that ask students to mimic the styles, voices, and sometimes even the forms of some of the masters. By the end of the course, students will hopefully have found a creative voice of their own and in the process will have gained an appreciation for the art of creative writing.

Unit 1: The Elements of Fiction

A. Exploring Plot

1. **Essential questions:** What is the story's central conflict? Who is the protagonist? What does he or she want? What are the main events that take place in the story? How does each event relate to the protagonist's struggle? Where do you find the story's climax or crisis? How is the conflict resolved? What is the impact of the story's outcome on the protagonist?

2. **Literary terms studied:** (types of short fiction) fable, parable, tale, tall tale, fairytale, folktale, short story, initiation story; (elements of plot) protagonist, antagonist, exposition, conflict, complication, crisis, climax, denouement, conclusion; (narrative techniques) foreshadowing, flashback, epiphany

B. Exploring Point of View

1. **Essential questions:** How is the story narrated? Is it told in the first person or third person? If told in the third person, is it told from the limited or omniscient perspective? If told from the first person perspective, what is the narrator's purpose in telling the story? Is there anything peculiar about the first-person narrator? Does this peculiarity create any suspicions about the narrator's accuracy or reliability? What does the narrator's perspective add? Would the story seem as memorable if related from another narrative angle?

2. **Literary terms studied:** (points of view) total omniscience, limited omniscience, editorial omniscience, objective point of view; (types of narrators) omniscient, participant or first person, observer, non-participant or third-person, innocent or naive narrator, unreliable narrator; (narrative techniques) interior monologue, stream of consciousness


C. Exploring Character

1. **Essential Questions:** Who is the main character or protagonist of the story? How do personality traits of the main character impinge upon the action of the story? Does the way the protagonist speaks reveal anything about his or her personality? If the story is narrated in the first person, what is revealed about how the protagonist views his/her surroundings? What is the protagonist's main motivation? Is the protagonist changed or tested in any way by the events in the story?

2. **Literary terms studied:** characterization, character description, character development, character motivation, flat character, round character, stock character

3. **Readings:** "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall"- Katherine Anne Porter, "Miss Brill"- Katherine Mansfield, "Everyday Use"- Alice Walker, "Cathedral"- Raymond Carver

D. Exploring Setting

1. **Essential Questions:** Where does the story take place? What does the setting suggest about the characters' lives? When does the story take place? Is the time of year or time of day important? Does the weather play a meaningful role in the story's action? Does the story's time or place suggest something about the character of the protagonist? Does a change in setting
within the story do anything to effect the main character or other characters within the story?

2. **Literary terms studied:** setting, locale, atmosphere, regionalism, local color


E. Exploring Tone and Style

1. **Essential Questions:** Does the writer use word choice in a distinctive way? Is the diction unusual in any way? Does the author tend toward long, short, or even fragmented sentences? How would you characterize the author's voice? Is it formal or casual? Distant or intimate? Impassioned or restrained? Is there anything ironic about the author's voice? How did the writer arrange the material? Is information delivered chronologically, or is organization more complex?

2. **Literary terms studied:** tone, style, diction, irony, dramatic irony, cosmic irony or irony of fate, verbal irony, sarcasm


F. Exploring Theme

1. **Essential Questions:** What are some of the possible themes in the story? How do plot elements, dialogue, point-of-view, and setting relate to any themes you can identify? Is the title significant with respect to the theme? Are there elements in the story that contradict the theme/themes you have identified? Is there reason to believe that the author deliberately intended to communicate this theme?

2. **Literary terms studied:** summary, theme, author's message


G. Exploring Symbol

1. **Essential Questions:** Which objects, actions, or places seem unusually significant? Are there recurrent references within the text that might
suggest a deeper importance? Can one symbol within the text offer more than one symbolic interpretation? Can you locate the specific moment in the text where symbolism becomes apparent? What is the literal purpose of the symbol?

2. **Literary terms studied:** symbol, conventional symbol, symbolic act, allegory


**H. Exploring Poetry**

1. **Words and their meanings:** These series of lessons will look specifically at word choice and diction in poetry. We will examine how and author's choice of words, especially in poetry, can enhance other elements of a poem, such as: sound quality, meter, imagery, symbolism and aesthetic appeal.

   **Readings:** "This is Just to Say"- William Carlos Williams, "Jabberwocky"- Lewis Carrol, "Ars Poetica"- Archibald Macleish, "Grass"- Carl Sandberg, "anyone lived in a pretty how town?"- E.E. Cummings

2. **Imagery and Haiku:** These lessons will emphasize the importance of economy and precision when offering a poetic image. The lessons will stress the paramount importance of literal meanings in poetry, before students move on to explore poems that deal with metaphoric or interpretive content.


3. **Figurative Speech and Metaphor:** These lessons will help students understand the connection between literal ideas with interpretive thought. By examining how figurative speech and metaphor works in poetry, students will learn to explore multiple meanings in the poems they study. They will learn to value the importance of reading a poem many times to appreciate the sophistication and complexity that the poems have to offer.

   **Readings:** "O Captain! My Captain!"- Walt Whitman, "Sonnet 18: Shall I
compare thee to a summer's day?" - William Shakespeare, "Metaphors" - Sylvia Plath, "Simile" - N. Scott Momaday, "You fit into me" - Margaret Atwood, "Fog" - Carl Sandberg, "To see a world in a grain of sand" - William Blake, "My Life had stood-a Loaded Gun" - Emily Dickinson, "Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day" - Howard Moss

4. Sounds in Poetry - Alliteration, Assonance and Rhyme: These lessons will encourage students to appreciate the art of word choice as it helps to enhance the sound quality in a poem.


5. Rhythm and Meter: Continuing in the vein of sound quality, students will learn from this series of lessons the importance of hearing the rhythm of the language while reading a poem. The students will learn to count meter and to consider how the author's choice of meter sometimes reflects the verbal content of the poem.


6. The Sonnet: Having learned to recognize meter in poetry, the students will now study one of the most popular forms of poetry involving meter: the sonnet. Students will learn the basic elements of the Shakespearean and the Italian sonnet.


7. Symbols, Personification, and Apostrophe: These lessons will once again encourage students to look beyond the literal in order to explore alternative meanings in the poems they read. By this stage in their studies, students should be able to recognize on their own the features of a poem that help to qualify it as art.

* Key Assignments

1. **Analysis of Literature**- Students will write a five paragraph thesis paper that examines the literary elements (discussed in class) of a chosen short piece of fiction. The assignment will be assessed based on its language, content, mechanics, and presentation using the standard PGHS writing standards rubric.

2. **Comparison and Contrast Essay**- Students will write a multiple paragraph expository essay that compares and contrasts two poems studied in class. In their essays, students will examine how two poets can address similar topics and themes while approaching them from completely different poetic styles. The assignment will be assessed based on its language, content, mechanics, and presentation using the standard PGHS writing standards rubric.

3. **Poetry and Creative Writing Portfolio**- At the end of the course, students will submit a portfolio of their work. The portfolio will include poems written as exercises that help them to apply lessons about poetic elements learned in class. For example, the portfolio will contain a haiku, a sonnet, an apostrophe poem, and extended metaphor poem and many more examples of creative writing.

4. **Mimicry of Style**- Students will write at least one self-composed short story that mimics the style of an author studied in class. The story must be a minimum of 700 words in length. Word choice, diction, tone, characterization, and basic conventions will be the primary considerations for assessment on this assignment.

5. **Poetry Recitation**- Students will be required to memorize at least three poems from the Poetry Out Loud Anthology. They will recite one of these poems in class. Their recitation will be assessed based on the following criteria: physical presence, voice and articulation, dramatic appropriateness, level of difficulty, evidence of understanding, and overall performance.

* Instructional Methods and/or Strategies

While this course does, at times, utilize traditional lecture based instructional strategies, the primary instructional emphasis will be based on "constructivist" models of teaching. Many of the methodologies employed will address all four domains (reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language) of the Common Core Standards within one instructional model. For instance, the Socratic Seminar, while largely a discussion based format...
that one might presume addresses only the domain of speaking and listening, may (if utilized effectively) address reading, writing, and language domains as well. Of course, the instructor would need to add reading, writing, and inquiry strategies to the basic Socratic Dialogue format to achieve this ends. The following constructivist strategies will be used regularly throughout the duration of this course:

1. **SQ3R** - The acronym stands for *Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review*. Primarily a reading strategy, this instructional method helps to enable comprehension (one of the essential features of the 11th and 12th grade Common Core) by offering students tools for evaluating and meaningfully reflecting upon assigned grade level texts.

2. **WICR** - This acronym that stands for *writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading* defines a "constructivist" teaching model that addresses all four domains of the English Language Arts Common Core Standards. Through the WICR process, students learn to become self-guided learners that build their own understanding from authentic self-generated questions they have about assigned reading and issues that come up in class discussions. The process demands that students learn to take Cornelian Notes while they read. These notes challenge students to conceptually organize and inquire about the works they have been assigned to read. Using these notes, students will engage in guided "tutorial" sessions with their peers that will offer more practice with speaking and listening.

3. **Socratic Seminar** - also known as Socratic Dialogue, this teaching method challenges students to explore important "upper domain" (see Bloom's Taxonomy) questions that arise from assigned readings. While this teaching method lends itself to many different formats, the most commonly used format for the Socratic Dialogue is the large group circle. Students must follow specific dialogue standards when engaging in analytical discussion with their peers.

4. **Philosophical Chairs** - Similar to the Socratic Dialogue, this "constructivist" instructional method challenges students to critically read, discuss, ask questions and write about assigned readings. In small groups, students are given a polemical issue pertinent to an assigned reading. They must throughout the exercise change positions several times, which will require them to think about the chosen topic from multiple perspectives.

5. **Costa's Questions** - Conceptualized by learning expert and professor Dr. Art Costa, this instructional methodology teaches students the importance of self-guided inquiry during the learning process. Students learn to ask questions at multiple levels, and this questions, in turn, help guide their exploratory journey to the upper domains of Bloom's taxonomy. Sometimes a simple knowledge-based question (level 1) opens the door to
comprehending a sentence. At other times, a more philosophical question (level 3) might inspire a novel interpretation of a reading. In any case, Costa's questions will play an essential role in the methodological design of this course.

6. **Cornelian Notes**- Students will be required to take Cornelian Notes constantly throughout the duration of this course. These notes, will require them to organize essential information, ask questions while engaging in the process of note-taking, and reflect upon the information learned. Costa's questions should be utilized when taking these notes. The notes will also be necessary component of the SQ3R process, Socratic Seminar, and Philosophical Chair activities.

**Assessment Methods and/or Tools**

1. All grades are be determined by a point system. Students can earn points in each of the following categories:
   - Major writing assignments (purple handouts)......................40%
   - Unit Exams.................................................................20%
   - Homework and in-class assignments...............................15%
   - Quizzes........................................................................15%
   - Participation and Oral Presentations.........................10%

The final semester grade will calculated from the following three components:

First Quarter Grade 40% of final grade

Second Quarter Grade 40% of final grade

Final Exam 20% of final grade

The following scale will be used to determine the student's grade:

90% + = A  
80-89% = B  
70-79% = C  
60-69% = D  
Less than 60% F

Major writing assignment will be assessed using the following guidelines for writing, which have been adopted for all English courses at Pacific Grove High School.
Pacific Grove High School English Department
Writing Assessment Guidelines

*Each major writing assignment at Pacific Grove High School will receive three scores based on the following assessment areas:*

**Language**

- Provides a variety of sentence types (syntax): simple, complex, and compound-complex sentences
- Uses accurate, precise, and descriptive language (complexity of diction) appropriate to the assignment
- Demonstrates control of verb tense and uses active, sophisticated verbs

**Content**

- Clearly addresses all parts of the writing task in a consistent and clearly articulated manner
- Provides a meaningful thesis statement, which provides direction, focus, and tone for the paper (at the end of the introduction)
- Each body paragraph starts with a topic sentence and includes elaboration, i.e. examples, supporting details, and concrete evidence
- Demonstrates clear awareness of audience
- Conclusion synthesizes ideas and arguments built throughout the paper in a unique and compelling manner; leaves a lasting, vivid impression

**Mechanics**

- Grammar
- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Spelling
- In-text citations

**Reading**

Three texts will be used for this course:

- "Backpack Literature" by X.J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia (primary text, read in full)
- "Poetry Out Loud Anthology" edited by Dan Stone and Stephen
Young
• "The Elements of Style" by William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White

Please see the course outline for a detailed list of the works that we will look closely at in class.

**Writing**

1. **Analysis of Literature**- Students will write a five paragraph thesis paper that examines the literary elements (discussed in class) of a chosen short piece of fiction. The assignment will be assessed based on its language, content, mechanics, and presentation using the standard PGHS writing standards rubric.

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**Listening and Speaking**

The Listening and Speaking components of this class will include:

• Socratic Seminars
• Philosophical Chair Activities
• The Poetry Recitation Assignment
• Group Tutorial

All of the above activities will have specific guidelines that help to define speaking and listening criteria. Students will be assessed using a rubric based on the criteria defined for each activity.