

American Literature

This year, we will be exploring the canon of American Literature. To prepare for this course, students should read *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne and *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury. Honors students should also read a modern American classic, which they should choose from the provided list of options below. Students should complete the following assignments to go along with their reading. In this process, there is to be NO collaboration with other students. Any assistance from the internet, movies, or secondary sources such as Sparknotes, Cliff Notes, or Wikipedia will be viewed as cheating. If you have questions about format, email your American Lit. teacher (mdouglas@pcagreenwood.org). All assignments are due at the end of the first full week of school, Friday, August 24, 2018.

Part 1: *The Scarlet Letter* → Essay #1

Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* was written long after the end of the Puritanical Massachusetts Bay Colony. Research what life in the actual colony was like and write an MLA-style essay that compares the setting of *The Scarlet Letter* with the historical Salem. This essay should be at least 3 pages in length and include at least 2 sources other than the novel. A good essay will do more than just explain the differences between history and fiction. It will explore why Hawthorne chose the setting he did and how the setting affects the characters and events in the novel.

Part 2: *Fahrenheit 451* → Essay #2

Where *The Scarlet Letter* is set in the past of America, *Fahrenheit 451* by Bradbury is set in the future of America. In this future, censorship is central to America's way of life. In an essay, discuss the complexities of Bradbury's message. Is he against all forms of censorship? Do you think a society such as this could ever truly exist? What aspects of this society does Bradbury appear to detest the most? Make sure to cite specific information from the text to back your claim.

Honors: A Modern American Novel or Drama → Project

Honors students should choose one of the following novels to read on top of the other two novels. Students then will complete a project of their choice on said novel/play. Please note, these are more complex and more adult texts than the other texts on this list. However, the students who are in the Honors version of this class should be mature enough to handle this.

Possible Novels or Plays:

<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> by John Steinbeck	<i>The Old Man and the Sea</i> by Ernest Hemingway	<i>The Glass Menagerie</i> by Tennessee Williams	<i>The Death of a Salesman</i> by Arthur Miller
<i>Of Mice and Men</i> by John Steinbeck	<i>The Sun Also Rises</i> by Ernest Hemingway	<i>Our Town</i> by Thornton Wilder	<i>In Cold Blood</i> by Truman Capote

Project Options:

Choose one of the following:

- **Poetry Anthology** → Write at least 5 original poems and include at least 3 found poems that relate to the book's contents. Bind it like a book (with a cover and table of contents.) Also, write a forward that identifies the theme of the book.
- **Prezi** → Build an interactive presentation that leads the audience through a story summary (that does not give away the ending!!). It should include images, text, and embedded video. Your goal is to invite the audience to also read the book. You must include an introduction of your characters, an overview of plot, and a thematic concept as well as a thematic statement.
- **Character Party** → Plan a theme party for the characters from the story. Create an event planning folder that includes visuals and descriptions of each element and why you chose it. Your folder should include an invitation, a menu, and a seating chart as well as a plan for entertainment and decoration.
- **Setting Diorama** → Create a high quality shoebox diorama of a scene from the book you read. Write a detailed explanation of the scene and attach it to the diorama.
- **Theme CD** → Compile a selection of 5-8 thematically related songs that represent the book. Though you may make this a digital playlist, you must include a physical CD insert that include that includes a page for each song and a detailed explanation for how the lyrics relate to the novel
- **Book Budget** → Based upon the activities and interests of the main characters, make a list of the supplies and services that were utilized in the story. Research and estimate the costs associated with the items and calculate the characters' total expenses. Create a spreadsheet (Google Sheets or Excel) for the data.
- **Board Game** → Based on the theme of the story, create a game that includes at least 10-12 trivia cards related to the plot, playing pieces that represent the characters, a method of movement and hazards related to the conflict(s) in the novel, and a detailed rule book.
- **Reading Reflections** → Choose and retell 2 main events from the book. For both events, explain your personal connections and support those connections with a personal story. All of your ideas must be thoroughly thought through and you must present them in the form of a scrapbook or a poster.
- **Original Song & Music Video** → Compose and record an original song (based on the plot & theme). You may use garageband or real instruments for this. Create an accompanying music

video that pairs visuals with the music and lyrics. Upload the video to youtube (does not have to be a public video) and send Ms. Douglas the link.

- **Children's Pop-up Book** → Create a pop-up book that contains a minimum of 6 pop-up elements based on the book's content. The pictures and pop-ups must be paired with text.