

## BRITISH LITERATURE 2022-2023 SYLLABUS

### ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

**9th-12th grade students** with the ability to read critically, express thoughts through typewritten academic essays, engage in discussion pertaining to the literature, and synthesize ideas discussed in class.

**\*\*\* Please note:** Students who complete this course will earn 1 high school credit by reading 12 major European works and writing corresponding papers for each.

**Class Dates:** Tuesday, September 6, 2022, through Thursday, May 25, 2023

**Class Times:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00 - 3:15 PM (EST)

**Office Hours:** By request

**Instructor:** Dr. Christine Seaward

**E-mail:** cseaward.scholeacademy@gmail.com

**\*\*\* Please note:** Although this syllabus presents the plan for the course, I reserve the right to change course materials and/or the course schedule in order to best meet the needs of the students.

### BRITISH LITERATURE COURSE MAP QUARTER 1

1. *The Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan (1678)
2. "A Modest Proposal," Jonathan Swift (1729)
3. *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley (1823)
4. Selections from *Book of Nonsense*, Edward Lear (1846) \*

Assignments may include: dialectical journal, response questions, study on satire, persuasive essay, literary devices, contemplation exercises

### QUARTER 2

1. *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen (1813)
2. *On Liberty*, John Mill (1859)
3. *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens (1859)
4. Select poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley\*

Assignments may include: dialectical journal, response questions, dialectical notes, persuasive essay

### QUARTER 3

1. *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë (1847)
2. *Silas Marner*, George Eliot (1861)

3. “The Necklace,” Guy de Maupassant (1884) and other short stories
4. *Old Possum’s Book of Practical Cats*, T.S. Eliot (1924) \*

Assignments may include: thematic essays, dialectical notes, contemplation exercises, response questions, thematic essay, character analysis essay

#### QUARTER 4

1. *Animal Farm*, George Orwell (1945)
2. *The Screwtape Letters*, C.S. Lewis (1942)
3. *The Fellowship of the Ring*, J.R.R. Tolkien (1954)
4. Select stories from *Sherlock Holmes*, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (c. 1900)
5. Select 20th-century poetry \*

Assignments may include: historical presentation, character chart and analysis, responsive essay, literature portfolio

\* as time allows

#### REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS

[\*The Pilgrim’s Progress\*](#), Bunyan (1678)

“[A Modest Proposal](#)”, Swift (1729)

[\*Frankenstein\*](#), Shelley (1823)

[\*Pride and Prejudice\*](#), Austen (1813)

[\*On Liberty\*](#), Mill (1859)

[\*A Tale of Two Cities\*](#), Dickens (1859)

[\*Jane Eyre\*](#), Brontë (1847)

[\*Silas Marner\*](#), Eliot (1861)

[\*Father Brown\*](#) (selected stories), Chesterton

[\*Old Possum’s Book of Practical Cats\*](#) (poetry), Eliot

[\*Animal Farm\*](#), Orwell (1945)

[\*The Fellowship of the Ring\*](#), Tolkien (1954)

[\*The Screwtape Letters\*](#), Lewis (1942)

**\*\*\* Please note:** although purchasing hard copies is encouraged, most of the texts are in the public domain and are readily available in public libraries and online. I will provide links for texts online.

#### OPTIONAL COURSE TEXTS

*The Elements of Style*, Strunk and White

*On Writing Well*, Zinsser

MLA Handbook, 8th edition

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on British Literature written from 1678 to 1970 and will provide a broad sweep of historical perspectives through fiction and nonfiction readings. The books selected for the course will be studied in depth for their tremendous contribution to the literary world and the shaping of society. During this time frame, and particularly in the 19th century, British writing was prolific and greatly influential. This course will provide solid scaffolding for the further enjoyment and study of renowned British literature.

The goals of this course are:

1. to explore the timeline of British authors and recognize influential political, philosophical, social, and religious factors on the authors;
2. to analyze writings according to their structure, form and purpose, and practice synthesizing ideas in the written word through a variety of writing projects;
3. to develop comparative, analytical/critical, and responsive thinking, writing, and questioning skills that bolster communication with others and to practice using said skills in various settings.

Of equal importance is the underlying current of the course, which is to nurture a spirit of searching and restful contemplation through the reading of powerful stories, essays, and poetry. By examining authors, characters, conflict, and themes, students will make connections to themselves and their world while simultaneously recognizing the unchanging state of human nature.

The readings begin with John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and progress through the Enlightenment Era, the Romantic Period and the Victorian Age to Realism and Existentialism. As students investigate the historical impact of political, philosophical, social, and religious perspectives, they will come to recognize the effects on the writers of the time. They will develop the craft of asking questions following the form of Aristotle's Five Common Topics of Invention; in so doing, they will engage with the text and their peers on a contemplative level. Students will be required to read all assigned texts (**approximately 1 hour of reading per day**) and to engage in weekly writing. Additionally, students shall expect to maintain a dialectic notebook (to be explained in class), periodically submit short (1-page) response papers, and complete a portfolio. Participation in Socratic dialogue is imperative as it serves to promote vigorous contemplation and reflection.

The writing portion of this course will focus on various types of academic essays including compare and contrast, critical analysis, expository and persuasive. Students will follow a rubric for each piece of writing in order to develop strong mental templates for presenting thoughts in differing forms. As the communication of ideas is paramount in literature, selecting the most appropriate structure to convey such ideas is a valuable skill. Experimenting with wordplay will

enrich our study of British literature and lead students toward growth in eloquence. Students will be expected to employ proper grammar and mechanics of writing (including spelling, grammar, and structure) as they endeavor to stretch their writing abilities.

### **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS: THE *IMAGO DEI***

Students have the privilege of reflecting the image of God in this class in the following ways:

#### **1. Students will be active and purposeful**

Students reflect the active and purposeful nature of God when making a commitment to engage. Students should be willing to participate in class discussions through active listening, asking and answering questions, and building the conversation with informed contributions. Students will demonstrate initiative in the active reading process by maintaining a dialectic notebook. They will ruminate on themes and generate questions throughout their reading processes; they will weigh comments adequately and be comfortable making annotations and responding to class questions and conversations. All students are expected to be prepared with readings and assignments completed, and students should expect to engage with others during class time.

#### **2. Students will be rational**

Students will reflect the rational nature of God by employing reason, thinking logically, and seeking order out of chaos. Students should implement critical questioning as demonstrated in class by the teacher. Students will exhibit aptitude in the grammar and mechanics of writing and display a suitable eagerness for advancing their skills. As students study writing devices and techniques, they will aim to weave them into their own writing and actively search for examples in classic and modern texts. Students will make connections between readings, authors, and historical context to add layers to their understanding. Students will be receptive to peer and teacher critiques that aim to illuminate errors or graciously provide feedback. They are willing to scrutinize their own work and revise their final papers. Students employ organizational techniques that increase success: notes are taken during class, annotations marked while reading, and writing practices and activities are maintained and consolidated.

#### **3. Students will be creative**

Students will reflect the creative nature of God by completing various assignments: presentations, a portfolio, and written assignments. Students will have opportunities to take delight in what they are learning, and they are encouraged to express themselves creatively within the guidelines of the assignment.

#### **4. Students will be moral**

Students will reflect the moral nature of God by exhibiting their moral nature in class. This means that students will follow several principles for discussion in the virtual classroom. Students will be mindful of their peers during dialectic periods and strive to maintain a balance between pensive listening and thoughtful responding. Compassion is evidenced through gracious

conversation even as disagreements occur. Honoring others in a Socratic setting allows the guests (students) to restfully seek understanding in the realm of truth. Learning more about a subject and building a scholarly community are the goals of classroom discussions.

### **5. Students will be both free and responsible**

Students will reflect the free and responsible nature of God. Students are responsible for attending and participating in all class sessions. Students are expected to complete readings, watch or attend lectures, and complete assignments on time, requesting help from the teacher as needed. It is the student's responsibility to obtain any missed work. Students shall be adept at using a keyboard and submitting assignments; they should be familiar with the required technology and take ownership in their academic pursuits. Students will properly cite sources in the correct MLA format as found in their printed edition or online resource. All assignments will be due in the appropriate Schoology Assignment folder prior to the start of class each day. Late assignments will not receive full credit. Students will submit their work by scanning their homework pages and uploading it into the Schoology assignment window. Photographs of completed assignments will not be accepted as they are difficult to read.

Students who have not submitted their homework to the appropriate Schoology assignment folder prior to the start of class may not be permitted to join the live class session. Those students will be invited into a separate Zoom breakout room to work privately until they have completed the day's assignment. After they have completed their homework submission, they will be permitted to rejoin the class in session. A day spent in a breakout room will constitute an absence from class.

### **6. Students will be faithful**

Students will reflect the faithful nature of God by being faithful to manage their time and faithful to pursue the Good, True, and Beautiful. Students will determine appropriate pacing measures in order to thoroughly complete all readings. They are managers of their time, seeking quiet, unpressured opportunities to delight in the text. They will allow themselves to consider the many dimensions of a literary work without simply rushing through the reading. They will pursue knowledge by conducting research if necessary, looking up new vocabulary, and asking questions. Students will be faithful to actively take notes and discern the concepts most important to the goal of the discussion and assignment. Students will provide adequate time to write, study, and polish assignments. Students will be faithful to seek the Good, True, and Beautiful in all assignments.

## **STUDENT EVALUATION (GRADING)**

Scholé classes strive to be restful, but we also recognize the need to provide grades for students who will be using this course as part of their prepared college transcript. It's a delicate balance to achieve both restful learning and excellent academic performance. Earning a specific grade

should not overshadow achievement goals for mastery of this discipline, and students should strive to appreciate constructive feedback and authentic learning.

The study of British Literature is a key component of a student's upper school education. It will not only lay a foundation for the lifelong pursuit of seeking but also expand the student's academic scope. Due to the dialectic nature of the course, students will examine their thoughts and synthesize them into reflective presentations and papers. Thus, student assessment will focus on clarity of written expression, depth of thought, and effort.

I will use rubrics to both explain and assess assignments; these should be viewed as helpful aids in determining goals and measuring success. In addition to percentage grades, I will provide assessment marks for your student's level of achievement as follows: magna cum laude (with great praise); cum laude (with praise); satis (sufficient, satisfactory) and non satis (not sufficient).

Ideally, every average student working diligently should do praiseworthy work (cum laude). Those who excel beyond this expectation will be the magna cum laude students. Adequate, but not praiseworthy, work will be designated satis. Non satis means lacking sufficiency or adequacy.

Inasmuch as you might be fully on board with this grading method, in theory, there will undoubtedly be the need to complete a college transcript with either a numeric or traditional letter grade. I will provide traditional percentage grades on the British Literature Schoology page, which you will be able to access throughout the course. Additionally, I will offer transcripts to parents upon completion of the course.

## **MASTERY PORTRAIT**

Students who are prepared to take this class are typically freshmen and sophomores with some background in critical reading. They are beginning to think rhetorically, using comparison skills to weigh objective and subjective ideas. They are developing analytical abilities and examining contradicting philosophies for Truth to the end that they may continue on their journey of contemplative growth. As well, they are practicing the art of conversation and dabbling in debate as they find themselves holding opinions contrary to others.

- At the completion of this course cum laude students will be able to recognize time periods within British literary history, including the factors that influenced thinkers and writers of the day. They will have the ability to discern between various writing genres and deliberate on themes contained therein.
- Additionally, they will have attained skills, especially attentive listening and directed questioning, crucial to engaging others in meaningful dialogue. This promotes the goal of

honoring others throughout the discourse that frequently materializes when individuals study powerful ideas.

- Further, students' appreciation for the English language will grow as they learn and recognize writing techniques utilized throughout classic and modern writing. They will have practiced various types of writing, valuing clarity and truth while endearing their listeners and readers.

## STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Dr. Seaward will communicate with students regularly, giving feedback and using the free online grading system, Schoology. Student's numerical grades will be comprised of:

Essays (20%)

Class Participation (40%)

Assessments: Response questions, contemplation exercises, presentations, dialectic notebook, portfolio (40%)

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students will sometimes take assessments privately at home. They will be on their honor to abide by Scholé Academy's Learning Philosophy which assumes the personal cultivation of Student Virtues described in the Student-Parent Handbook.

Additionally, plagiarism is a serious and punishable offense. Proper citation of all sources is essential to the academic endeavor. A plagiarized assignment will result in a failing grade. Students should consult their chosen style manual (see Student Expectations above) for specific directions on obtaining, quoting, and paraphrasing sources.

## THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

We will be using the free online "virtual classroom" software provided by Zoom, one of the leading companies that provide such software. The virtual classroom will provide students with interactive audio, text chat, and an interactive whiteboard in which texts, diagrams, video, and other media can be displayed and analyzed. We will provide students with a link (via email) that will enable students to join the virtual classroom.

Specific information regarding the technology used by Scholé Academy (including required technology) can be found by visiting the Technology in the Classroom section of the Student Parent Handbook. Students will submit documents by scanning and uploading them to their personal computer, then attaching those files as pdfs to an email. They will submit their work to the British Literature Schoology assignment page (access granted after enrollment is secured).

## THINGS TO REMEMBER WITH ONLINE EDUCATION

Online learning can be enjoyable, but students are encouraged to experience screen-free time! Meeting with a friend face to face, taking walks outside, playing an outdoor game, and watching

neighborhood critters will balance and enhance online education. There are also endless opportunities to be distracted when learning online. Websites are designed to grab people's attention. Giving focused attention is difficult, so in order to be fully present with online learning, turn off distractions, and practice self-control. This will foster the best educational experience possible.

### ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Seaward was born and raised in central California. She received her B.A. in Liberal Arts and earned her elementary teaching credential at California State University, Stanislaus before becoming an Air Force wife in 1992. During the nomadic years of military life, she lived in various places: Oklahoma, Colorado, South Korea, Japan, Hawaii, and Florida. She is blessed to be a wife and mother of two teenage girls. Dr. Seaward has served as the President of the Protestant Women of the Chapel at Hickam AFB, Hawaii. She has also served as a group and administrative leader in Bible Study Fellowship. She completed her M.A. in Humanities from California State University, Dominguez Hills, and her Ph.D. in Humanities with a concentration in Literature from Faulkner University where the *Great Books* program changed the way she viewed education. Dr. Seaward has taught high school English in a traditional Christian school. She also taught a course on Aquinas and Dante and served as the faculty adviser for the student book club at Kepler Education. She is a long-time admirer of C.S. Lewis, and she continues to grow in her appreciation for the *Great Books of the Western World*. She enjoys supporting her daughters, taking long walks with her husband, following sumo wrestling, and the pleasure of reading.