

## Syllabus

**Contact:** bennetta@wellesleys.org

**Office Hours (306):** Block D Day 5, and by appointment

**Writing Lab (237):** Block A Days 1 and 3, Block D Days 4 and 6  
(see WL schedule for complete staffing)

### What will I do in this class? What is it about?

You will engage in two modes of reading and writing throughout the year, *Reading as Writers* and *Writing as Readers*.

Mode	Reading as Writers	Writing as Readers
Essential Question	What can we learn from good storytellers about how to tell our own stories?	What can the study of good stories tell us about ourselves as human beings?
Style of Pursuit	Artistic	Scholarly
Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●accessing <b>memory and imagination</b> as resources</li> <li>●using language that is <b>concrete and specific</b>, not abstract and general</li> <li>●writing <b>scenes</b> instead of summary</li> <li>●centering on <b>conflict</b></li> <li>●making the familiar feel <b>surprising</b></li> </ul>	evaluating all aspects of an author's craft (i.e. <i>how</i> the author writes)... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●<b>point-of-view</b></li> <li>●<b>conflict</b></li> <li>●<b>structure</b></li> <li>●<b>events</b></li> <li>●<b>place</b></li> <li>●<b>language</b></li> <li>●<b>characterization</b></li> <li>●<b>length</b></li> <li>●<b>time-span</b></li> <li>●<b>tone</b></li> <li>●<b>details</b></li> <li>●<b>spacing</b></li> </ul> ...to understand <b>theme</b> (i.e. "what the author is saying")
Product	Creative Writing (fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction)	Analytical Essay

This is also an *American Literature* course, so all authors studied will be American. These will include Steinbeck, Salinger, Fitzgerald, Williams, Twain, Morrison, and others.

### The Fine Print—procedures and policies

#### Attendance

- Because class participation is measured in both quality and quantity, when you are *absent*, you must ask the instructor how to make up the hour of *participation* you missed, and complete this make-up work in addition to any graded assignments due that day. The same applies to partial absences (tardies, early dismissals, bathroom breaks: any time you are not physically in the classroom during class).

- Keep to a minimum the number of times you leave the room during class. It causes distraction and precludes your ability to participate.

### **Academic Integrity**

- Consultation of any sources outside the primary text we are studying is rarely required. Any outside sources used in writing must be cited in MLA format. Any such sources used in class discussion must be verbally attributed.
- The use of Sparknotes or similar references is not permitted for any assignment.
- See the Student Handbook for more information on plagiarism.

### **Organization**

- It is an essential scholarly habit to take good notes in class, and save them along with handouts and assignments you've completed.
- No specific method of organization is mandated, but you are expected to have a method that works for you. In addition to notetaking space, you'll need a place for in-class and take-home writing exercises, and a place to keep handouts.

### **Cell Phones and Laptops**

- Cell Phones are not permitted in class. If you carry a phone with you in school, park it in the cell phone parking lot by the door.
- You may use a laptop for writing exercises or other guided activities, but otherwise keep it closed or away. Take class notes on paper.
- If your device causes distraction to you, your classmates or the instructor, your participation grade will be lowered.

### **Deadlines**

- Assigned work is due at the beginning of class; after that it's late.
- The instructor may grant an extension on a writing assignment if you speak with him in person a day (at least) before the deadline. No extensions are granted on the day the work is due, or by email at any time.
- Late work will otherwise be accepted for half credit.

### **Quarterly Grades**

- The *Writing Portfolio* is a quarter-long—and ultimately year-long—project that doesn't get graded until the end of each quarter. Writing assignments submitted to the instructor during the quarter will earn *completion* credit and *editorial* feedback, but will not receive a number or letter grade. This portfolio—which compiles these assignments along with revision and reflection—will count as the majority of each quarter's grade.
- Participation, quizzes, first-submitted drafts and other assignments count too, but much less than the portfolio.
- Your *participation* grade will be assessed at the end of each quarter as follows:

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| A: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attendance is excellent (no more than a few full or partial absences, and all make-up work completed)</li> <li>2. Preparation is excellent (consistently has all materials, consistently evidences thoughtful completion of non-graded homework)</li> <li>3. Citizenship is extraordinary (goes out of way to keep the room neat, or to make others feel comfortable and welcome; electronic devices are never a distraction)</li> <li>4. Contributions are extraordinary (frequently offers thoughtful comments and questions that <i>stimulate</i> discussion; shows leadership in this regard)</li> </ol> |
| B: | Meets all criteria for "A" but is inconsistent in one area   |
| C: | Meets three out of the four criteria for "A" but is significantly weak in one area; or, meets all criteria for "A" but is inconsistent in two areas  |
| D: | Meets two out of the four criteria for "A" but is significantly weak two areas; or, meets all criteria for "A" but is inconsistent in three areas  |
| F: | Meets one of the four criteria for "A" but is significantly weak in three areas; or, is inconsistent with all four criteria for "A"  |