

# Kolbe Academy Home School

## GRADE TWELVE MODERN ERA LITERATURE

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**COURSE TITLE:** Modern Era Literature

**COURSE TEXTS:**

- TWAIN** ❖ Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Penguin Books: New York, 1985. (T3881)
- DICKENS** ❖ Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*. Signet Classics: New York, 1997. (T3943)
- DOSTOYEVSKY** ❖ Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Crime and Punishment*. Signet Classics: New York, 1968. (T3871)
- WAUGH** ❖ Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited*. Little Brown and co: New York, 1973. (T3889)
- CHESTERTON** ❖ G. K. Chesterton, *The Man Who was Thursday*. Penguin Books: New York, 1986. (T3891)
- STEVENSON** ❖ Robert Louis Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Bantam Classics: New York, 1981. (T3888)
- SOLZHENITSYN** ❖ Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. Signet Classics: New York, 1998. (T3873)
- ORWELL** ❖ George Orwell, *1984*. Signet Classics: New York, 1977. (T3884)
- ELIOT** ❖ New York, *The Waste Land, Prufrock and other Poems*. Dover Publications: New York, 1998. (T1444)
- Twain* ❖ *Kolbe Academy Study Guide to The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Kolbe Academy Press: Napa, 2008. (T3881A)
- Dickens* ❖ *Kolbe Academy Study Guide to The Tale of Two Cities*. Kolbe Academy Press: Napa, 2008. (T3943A)
- Dostoyevsky* ❖ *Kolbe Academy Study Guide to Crime and Punishment*. Kolbe Academy Press: Napa, 2008. (T3871A)
- Waugh* ❖ *Kolbe Academy Study Guide to Brideshead Revisited*. Kolbe Academy Press: Napa, 2008. (T3889A)
- Chesterton* ❖ *Kolbe Academy Study Guide to The Man Who Was Thursday*. Kolbe Academy Press: Napa, 2008. (T3891A)
- Stevenson* ❖ *Kolbe Academy Study Guide to Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Kolbe Academy Press: Napa, 2008. (T3888A)
- Solzhenitsyn* ❖ *Kolbe Academy Study Guide to One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. Kolbe Academy Press: Napa, 2008. (T3873A)
- Orwell* ❖ *Kolbe Academy Study Guide to 1984*. Kolbe Academy Press: Napa, 2008. (T3884A)
- Eliot* ❖ *Kolbe Academy Study Guide to "The Waste Land."* Kolbe Academy Press: Napa, 2008. (T1444A)
- CD** ❖ *Kolbe Academy 12<sup>th</sup> grade Literature presents Lectures on Dostoyevsky by Dr. White from Keep the Faith*. Kolbe Academy Press: Napa, 2008. (K2671)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This is a challenging course intended to be taken in conjunction with the 12<sup>th</sup> grade Modern and US History course. The course is largely based on reflective reading and writing essays based on text analysis. The novels have been chosen for their timelessness and their accurate, stunning portrayal of important historical events and the ideas that have helped shape the Modern world.

This course in Modern Literature will show how modern times have reaffirmed man's capacity for terror. Dickens presents "Madame Guillotine" as the patroness of a new nation. In Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov, a brilliant young man, caters to a philosophy that is utterly evil and self-destructive. Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* chronicles the struggle of the individual seeking goodness and truth in a world that is increasingly indifferent to man's spiritual needs. Robert Louis Stevenson shows how the degenerative possibilities of scientific discoveries can affect the nature of man and subconsciously devolve him into a Mr. Hyde. In *1984*, the path of atheistic politics strikes the beauty and integrity of man and dwarf him from a creature made to love and serve God to a cog in the machine of a finite and pathetic state deity. Although modernity, in the words of T.S. Eliot, is a Waste Land "where the sun beats and the dead tree gives no shelter," the Church is the refuge for Heaven-directed pilgrims, and it is a large rock in the desert inviting all to "come under the shadow of this red rock."

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- ❖ Become familiar with some of the major authors and most influential novels from the Modern Era.
- ❖ Identify the historical events that took place during the life of the Modern writers and how these events have impacted their writing.
- ❖ Have a greater understanding of the evolution of literary style and technique in the Modern Era.
- ❖ Learn to interpret and analyze an author's means of conveying ideas.
- ❖ Appreciate the impact of philosophy upon literature, and the subsequent impact of literature upon culture.

### **WEEKLY COURSE WORK:**

1. Readings: approximately 80 pages per week (Weeks 5 through 7 of Quarter 1 is nearer 120, and the Review Week may be used for catch-up reading)
2. The student will have Study Guide questions every week. It is advised that the student take notes while they read the text. Then, they should answer the study guide questions without referring to the text. Next, the teacher should tell the student which answers are incorrect. Then the student should use the text to answer any question which they had incorrect.
3. Weekly papers; topics are listed in the Course Plan. These papers should be 1- 2 pages type-written, size 12 point font, double-spaced or neatly handwritten in cursive. Each paper should be comprised of a strong introduction, body, and conclusion. See the *Weekly Paper Topics Answer Guide* for grading guidelines.
4. Key Points sections highlight the most important concepts that the student should know and consider.
5. Three-Part Quarterly Exams: given at the end of each quarter in order to assess the student's understanding and retention of material and concepts. These tests along with the test answer keys are provided in the Course Plan packet.

**DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS:**

**Summa Cum Laude** students must complete the entire Kolbe Academy proposed curriculum as written. Summa students must fulfill the requirements for the Kolbe Core (K) or Kolbe Honors (H) course as outlined in this Literature course plan. In 9<sup>th</sup> grade, **Summa** students must pursue the (H) designation in at least one of the following courses: Theology, Literature, or History. In 10<sup>th</sup> grade, **Summa** students must pursue the (H) designation in at least two of the following courses: Theology, English, Literature, or History. In 11<sup>th</sup> grade, **Summa** students must pursue the (H) designation in at least three of the following courses: Theology, English, Literature, or History. In 12<sup>th</sup> grade, **Summa** students must pursue the (H) designation in all of the following courses: Theology, English, Literature, and History. **Magna Cum Laude** and **Standard** diploma candidates may choose to pursue the (H) or (K) designation, but are not required to do so. If not pursuing either of those designations the parent has the option of altering the course plan as desired. **Magna Cum Laude** students must include a combination of 5 years of English and Literature courses in high school, two of which must be Literature. **Standard** diploma students must include a combination of 3 years of English and Literature in high school.

**KOLBE CORE (K) AND HONORS (H) COURSES:**

- ❖ Students pursuing the **Kolbe Core (K)** designation should do the readings. **Kolbe Core students need to complete at least 1 or 2 of the 7 weekly papers each quarter;** they should have discussions or write informal essays in response to the rest of the weekly paper topics as these are major themes and will appear in some way on the final exam.
- ❖ Students pursuing the **Kolbe Honors (H)** designations must do all of the readings. **Honors students need to complete 5 of the 7 weekly papers each quarter;** they should have discussions or write informal essays in response to the rest of the weekly paper topics as these are major themes and will appear in some way on the final exam.
- ❖ For students who are not seeking the Kolbe Core (K) or Honors (H) designation for this course, parents may alter the course as they so desire.

**REQUIRED SAMPLE WORK:**

Designation*		K	H
Course Title	Modern Era Literature	Modern Era Literature	Modern Era Literature
Quarter 1	1. Any written sample work	1. <i>Complete</i> Quarter 1 Exam	1. <i>Complete</i> Quarter 1 Exam 2. One Paper Topic Essay
Quarter 2	1. Any written sample work	1. <i>Complete</i> Quarter 2 Exam	1. <i>Complete</i> Quarter 2 Exam 2. One Paper Topic Essay
Quarter 3	1. Any written sample work	1. <i>Complete</i> Quarter 3 Exam	1. <i>Complete</i> Quarter 3 Exam 2. One Paper Topic Essay
Quarter 4	1. Any written sample work	1. <i>Complete</i> Quarter 4 Exam	1. <i>Complete</i> Quarter 4 Exam 2. One Paper Topic Essay

\*Designation refers to designation type on transcript. K designates a Kolbe Academy Core course. H designates a Kolbe Academy Honors course.

The Kolbe academic advisor will verify that the required work was completed successfully and award the Kolbe Core (K) or Honors (H) designation. The Kolbe academic advisor has the final decision in awarding the designation for the course. **If no designation on the transcript is desired, parents may alter the lesson plan in**

any way they choose and any written sample work is acceptable to receive credit for the course each quarter. If you have any questions regarding what is required for the (K) or (H) designations or diploma type status, please contact the academic advisory department at 707-255-6499 ext. 5 or by email at [advisors@kolbe.org](mailto:advisors@kolbe.org).

## SCOPE AND SEQUENCE:

### FIRST QUARTER

#### I. Mark Twain and Charles Dickens

One theme shared in both *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *A Tale of Two Cities* is the idea of freedom. Around the beginning of the Modern Era (approximately the 17<sup>th</sup> century) many thinkers, writers and philosophers were concerned with political science. The philosophical scope had been shifted, and the academic world was becoming less concerned with God and more concerned with man. The deistic idea that man has been left on earth to do his best, and achieve a certain possible magnitude, was popularly indulged in and upheld by many of America's founding fathers. Thus political scientists and philosophers continually strove to map out the means to a utopian society. In *Huck Finn*, Twain presents a pre-Civil war America, where there is freedom for some but not for all. Twain shows through the eyes of a young boy the blinding and inhibiting effects of social convention, even among those most considered "enlightened." Similarly, in *A Tale*, Dickens shows how mob mentality can lead groups of people to commit the grossest atrocities without a shred of guilt or doubt of purpose. In this story, revolution occurs for the same reasons as it does in America. In France, however, it ends up yielding terror and chaos, a far cry from the "liberty and fraternity" of the cause.

### SECOND QUARTER

#### II. Fyodor Dostoyevsky

Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* is a monumental masterpiece and one of the greatest novels of modern times. In the novel, Dostoyevsky firmly grasps the human psyche, the deepest component of man's physical nature. He shows the natural repulsion toward sin and the relationship between faith and sanity. Furthermore, Dostoyevsky shows that even in the face of utter depravity, God always offers redemptive suffering. Dostoyevsky antagonizes the notions of historical necessity (Hegelianism) and shows their impractical and detrimental nature. *Crime and Punishment* is thoroughly Christian, as well as a warning that was unheeded by the enablers of Nazi Germany and Communist Russia, whose errors have reverberated around the world.

### THIRD QUARTER

#### III. Evelyn Waugh & G. K. Chesterton

Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* takes its readers back in time to Post World War One. Waugh's poetic language captures this era through the eyes of two young college students: Charles Ryder, an atheist and an artist, and the other slightly eccentric, but lovable, Catholic aristocrat named Sebastian Flyte. The story spans nearly twenty years, during which time Charles Ryder becomes involved in the Flyte family at the gorgeous Marchmain House, and grasps for the first time the profound influences of Catholicism upon this family as he becomes inextricably involved in their family drama. The story is about reflection and remembering, and it is written for an age which has largely forgotten the value of these human tools.

### FOURTH QUARTER

#### IV. Robert Louis Stevenson, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, George Orwell, T.S. Eliot

If nothing else, Modern times have reaffirmed man's capacity for terror. Dickens presents "Madame Guillotine"

as the patroness of a new nation. In Dostoyevsky's *C&P*, Raskolnikov, a brilliant young man, caters to a philosophy that is utterly evil and self-destructive. Robert Louis Stevenson shows how the degenerative possibilities of scientific discoveries can affect the nature of man and subconsciously devolve him into a Mr. Hyde. In *1984*, the path of atheistic politics strike at the beauty and integrity of man and dwarf him from a creature made to love and serve God to a cog in the machine of a finite and pathetic state deity. Although modernity, in the words of T.S. Eliot, is a Waste Land "where the sun beats and the dead tree gives no shelter," the Church is the refuge for Heaven-directed pilgrims, and Christ is a large rock in the desert inviting all to "come under the shadow of this red rock."

#### **SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS:**

- **Ed. Charles E. Beckwith, *Twentieth Century Interpretations of A Tale of Two Cities*, Prentice-Hall Inc.**
  - Excellent for various interpretations
- **Books on CD/tape.** Many students, especially those new to Kolbe Academy and/or to the novels introduced in the text, may benefit from listening to an audiobook.

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

##### **Spark notes for Crime & Punishment**

##### **Spark notes for 1984**

##### **Spark notes for One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich**

Childs, Donald J., "Stetson in The Waste Land," *Essays in Criticism*, (April 1988)

Parker, Rickard., <http://world.std.com/~raparker/exploring/theWasteLand.html>

**December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008.**

#### **COURSE PLAN METHODOLOGY:**

- Be sure to reference the introductory portions and glossaries of your textbooks. They are full of valuable information and helps for understanding the texts.
- Family discussions on the materials and lessons are highly effective means to foster deeper considerations of the materials. Use the "Discuss" questions from the course plan, the paper topics and study guide questions as a basis to start these discussions at home with your students.
- Reading should be done in accompaniment to note taking.
- Although Week 8 is a "Review Week," it can be used as extra time for students to finish reading, especially for *A Tale of Two Cities* in Quarter 1.
- Forewarn students that the exam questions may be taken either from the books or from information given in the course plans and study guides, and thus prudence demands thorough study of all materials.
- Quizzes may be given using a few study guide questions.

## ◆ ◆ ◆ FIRST QUARTER ◆ ◆ ◆

WEEK 1		
READING	TWAIN	Ch. 1-12 Read Twain's short Biography
<i>Study Guide</i>	<i>Twain</i>	Do Study Guide Questions for Chapters 1-12.
<i>Paper Topic</i>	<i>Examine the contrast between superstition and religious faith in <u>Huck Finn</u>. How does Huck value superstition/faith and who is his authority or role model for each?</i>	
<p>↪ <b>Key Points:</b></p> <p><b>Introduction:</b> Samuel Langhorne Clemens ("Mark Twain" was his <i>nom de plume</i>) lived from 1835-1910. His novel, <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> is a monumental achievement, which Ernest Hemingway considered the origin of all American Literature. Mark Twain crafted the characters from the novel after boyhood acquaintances. Tom Sawyer, especially considering his imaginative propensities, is clearly a reflection of Twain himself. Huck Finn's hometown, St. Petersburg, is modeled after Twain's boyhood town Hannibal, MS.</p> <p><b>Setting:</b> St. Petersburg Missouri and the Mississippi River.</p> <p><b>Motif:</b> Childhood is an important motif in the story. The actions and events are not scrutinized with the acumen of a mature narrator, but with the simple, unbiased observation of a boy.</p> <p><b>Symbols:</b> The first twelve chapters of Huck Finn begin to define the river. It is always Huck's last resort when his circumstances are overbearing and it is a means for freedom for both himself and Jim. However, as the story unfolds there are various indications of another side of the river. It also destroys abodes, drowns people, and lures scavenging "rapscallions."</p> <p><b>Conflict:</b> The story quickly introduces an enduring conflict within Huck. His desire for freedom versus the Widow Douglas and Miss Watson's ceaseless attempts to civilize, and on the other hand Pap's domineering cruelty. As the story progresses, the reader will distinguish the many ways that this desire of Huck parallels Jim's desire for freedom.</p> <p><b>Characters:</b> One of the most fascinating facets of Huck is his willingness to sit down alone and analyze a question. After Miss Watson tells Huck about praying for others he commits himself to serious thought but eventually dismisses prayer as useless.</p> <p><b>Discuss:</b> Consider the advantages of the Lady Douglas and Miss Watson's attempt to civilize Huck. Are they committing the error of "social engineering"? As Huck's guardians are they responsible for fostering in Huck whatever morals they have come to understand as right? Does their strictness obscure the effect of their teaching? How does Huck view Miss Watson as a person? Does he look at her as an authority, or does he simply ignore her? Does Huck see any inconsistencies between what she says and does, and are these inconsistencies justifiable?</p>		

Notes

WEEK 2

<b>READING</b>	TWAIN	Ch. 13-22
<i>Study Guide</i>	<i>Twain</i>	Do Study Guide Questions for Chapters 13-22.
<i>Paper Topic</i>	<i>How does Huck's attitude toward Jim change throughout the story? Does he begin to see Jim as a unique individual endowed with human dignity?</i>	

↔ Key Points

**Motif:** "Is a Frenchman a man?" In Chapter 14 there is little action and plot development. However, Huck and Jim unwittingly discuss a matter profoundly relevant to the entire story. In Huck's attempt to show Jim how different peoples speak different tongues, he points out that cows and cats don't speak English like humans, rather they speak in accord to their nature. However, Jim is quick to point out that unlike cows and cats, Frenchmen are men. Again, this antiracist motif is exposed in chapter 22 when Colonel Sherburne, faced with a lynch mob, denounces the Ku Klux Klan as a bunch of weak inhumane cowards. That all humans are created with equal dignity is written on the heart, a fact repeatedly highlighted in *Huck Finn*.

**Symbols:** In Chapter 18, Huck explicitly states his opinion of life on a raft: "We said there warn't no home like a raft after all. Other places do seem so cramped up and smothery, but a raft don't. You fell mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft."

**Conflict:** Chapters 13-22 present several minor conflicts. Huck and Jim are on the run desperately seeking freedom. One of them is a wanted runaway slave without rights and the other is a relatively helpless young boy. The duo must constantly flee from problems only to be presented with greater problems. Their raft is destroyed by a steamboat and Huck becomes inadvertently involved in a bloody feud between two warring families and must make his way back to the river. Next, two con-artists emerge on the scene and Huck and Jim become subjected to the will of their evil and dangerous designs.

**Characters:** Jim proves to be a better father to Huck than his "pap" could ever be. Jim, the black slave, is Huck's father figure and his guardian by virtue of his love for Huck and his maturity. Jim, although ignorant in many matters, deeply understands that self-sacrifice is an essential part of love and is dedicated to Huck's well being and safety. At the end of the story, this is indicated when Jim saves the life of Tom Sawyer even though it means incarceration and death. Jim personifies the American spirit and the unquenchable desire of all men for freedom.

**Discuss:** Describe the Sunday Church service (Chapter 18) attended by both the Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons. After service the families ironically laud the preacher's sermon on brotherly love. How has years of violent vengeance blinded the families and made the "feud" seem more natural rather than evil? Consider the fact that nobody even knows how the feud began.