

Creative Writing Curriculum Guide

- 1. Course Name: Creative Writing**
- 2. Course Number: 144**
- 3. Date Written or Revised: August 2008**
- 4. Prerequisites: N/A**
- 5. Level and Number of Credits: CPA Level, 5 Credits**
- 6. Grade Levels Offered To: Open to all students**

7. Course Description: Students will read and interpret a variety of poems and short fictional works by a variety of authors (classic to contemporary). Through reading and writing activities, students will gain a sound understanding of the elements of a poem, poetic techniques, and the various forms that a poem can take. Students will also master an understanding of the elements of fiction and apply this understanding to their own written creations. Students will be encouraged to submit at least two “perfected” pieces to *Calliope*, High Point’s Literary and Arts Magazine. Student projects will also include, but not be limited to, short dramas and children’s and young adult pieces. Aside from broadening students’ literary scope, helping them read with a critical eye, and exposing them to constructive criticism, this class will perhaps most importantly cultivate within them an aesthetic appreciation for the beauty of language. Students will participate in “rough draft workshops,” during which their writings will be read, discussed, proofread, and critiqued by fellow classmates and the teacher. In place of a traditional exam, students will be required to create and present a multi-faceted portfolio.

High Point Regional High School’s curriculum and instruction are aligned to the State’s Core Curriculum Content Standards and address the elimination of discrimination by narrowing the achievement gap, by providing equity in educational programs and by providing opportunities for students to interact positively with others regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender, religion, disability or socioeconomical status.

8. Course Goals and Objectives: The student will...

- recognize that reading has many purposes and demonstrate an ability to choose an appropriate approach to fit text and purpose;
- read and interpret a broad range of poetry and short fiction;
- gain a sound understanding of the elements of poetry and prose;
- compose a variety of written responses for different purposes and audiences;
- use a constructive approach to critique his/her own work, as well as work by his/her peers;

- organize, prepare, and present spoken presentations clearly and expressively;
- collaborate by sharing ideas, examples and insights, productively and respectfully in informal conversations/discussions;
- cultivate an appreciation for the aesthetic nuances of language in all its forms;
- connect writings to significant personal, social, and cultural contexts;
- use a variety of analytical operations in the listening process;
- work within the classroom guidelines, policies and procedures set forth by the instructor; and
- take an active role in the classroom in ways that make a positive contribution to the activities and atmosphere of the class.

9. Core Curriculum Content Standards addressed: 3.1 (Reading); 3.2 (Writing); 3.3 (Speaking); 3.4 (Listening); 3.5 (Viewing/Media Literacy)

10. Unit Title: *Poetry and Prose* – 180 days

a. Unit Goal(s):

- To expose students to relevant topics such as structure, punctuation, how to read a poem, how to conduct an effective peer editing workshop, how to conduct an effective poetry reading/critique session, etc.
- To expose students to a variety of authors, genres, and styles
- To reduce students' anxiety about and self-censorship of their writing
- To cultivate sensitivity toward the reality of a diverse classroom setting
- To connect to a wider writing community through the use of technology
- To create a variety of drafts to add to students' personal portfolios
- To deepen students' awareness of/appreciation for classic and contemporary writing
- To provide students an opportunity to recognize, practice, and master relevant topics and techniques, such as voice, accuracy, plot, setting, character, theme, point of view, dialogue, tone, mood, narration, etc.
- To cultivate a deep appreciation for language

b. Unit Objectives: The Student will...

- Read, discuss, analyze, and create a variety of poetry and prose pieces;
- Participate in a wide variety of (independent and cooperative/long and short-term) classroom activities that involve reading, writing, oral, audio-visual, artistic, and reflective experiences;
- Develop confidence in her/his work by participating in and facilitating revision workshops, cooperative learning experiences, oral presentations, and small/large group readings;
- Increase her/his sensitivity toward language, others' writing, and her/his own personal growth: as a writer, a listener, a critic, a speaker, and a contributing thinker.

c. Integration of Technology: PowerPoint presentations, usage of ELMO, teacher-created blog page, student-created blog pages, word processing, multi-media-

based student-generated projects

11. Sample Assignments:

Writer's Notebook: Notebooks will be checked every two weeks (**every other TUESDAY**).

You will need to complete a total of **SIX** entries in each two-week period. *You may do more than six if you wish.*

Please date each section of entries and number each entry within each section.

Entries are **YOUR CHOICE** and may take any of the following forms (and then some): rough drafts of poems, story beginnings, song lyrics, bits of dialogue, a list of topics that you'd like to write about, descriptive observations, overheard snippets of conversations that you'd like to integrate into a song, poem, or story, etc.

Please do not wait until the night before your notebooks are due to complete them. The purpose is for you to be writing on a regular basis, not cramming it all in at the last minute.

Magnetic Poetry Tournament of Champions: Individually, in pairs, or using some combination thereof, please complete the following magnetic poetry challenges:

COMPOSE A 4-6 LINE POEM ABOUT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

MOTHERHOOD, A VISIT TO THE HOSPITAL, PEACE, HISTORY.

COMPOSE A 5-10 LINE POEM ABOUT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

HIGH SCHOOL, PHILOSOPHY, A REGRET, THE COLOR GREEN.

COMPOSE A 4-6 LINE POEM ABOUT POETRY ITSELF.

CREATE TWO METAPHORS FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING ABSTRACT CONCEPTS: LOVE, HOPE, CHAOS, BEAUTY.

COMPOSE AN ODE TO AN EVERYDAY OBJECT OR PHENOMENON.

WRITE ABOUT SOMETHING GOING ON IN THE CLASSROOM RIGHT NOW.

FREE CHOICE POEM (AT LEAST SIX LINES)

FREE CHOICE POEM (AT LEAST TEN LINES)

Midterm Portfolio Project, created based on the following criteria:

A "Table of Contents" page including page numbers, titles, etc.

A collection of poems (**at least SIX**) by other authors that you particularly enjoy.

At least **two** must include written responses for your preferences. Pick out favorite lines, interpret the language, share your insights, etc.

A collection of original poems (**at least EIGHT, written both in and out of class**).

Make sure that these poems are final-FINAL draft quality. Re-edit for spelling, word choice, punctuation, structure, etc. Pick out your **three** strongest pieces and include written responses for your choices (see above).

A collection of Internet sites and books that you have found useful (and/or interesting) in your study of poetry; again, include reasons/specific information.

Drawings, collages, paintings, photographs, etc. (sculpture? You-name-it: some type of **visual representation**) to accompany at least two of the poems in your portfolio. **Please do not merely download images from the Internet or paste in clip art.**

Extras: quotes, poetic song lyrics, thoughts that wish to be placed in the corner of a page, favorite lines from a friend's poem, your favorite grammar school poem, a Cubist drawing of your favorite poet, a cherished piece from last year's issue of *Calliope*, etc. A lot of freedom here!

Option A: poet information page

Option B: the "performance" of a poem

(Ms. Strout will provide further details -- stay tuned. You may choose **EITHER** "A" or "B.")

A self-assessment of your midterm project and your performance in Creative Writing up to this point. Please include the following items in your assessment: 1) a letter grade for your midterm project and an explanation of the grade, 2) your perceived strengths as a writer, 3) your perceived weaknesses, 4) the most significant piece of information you have learned about yourself as a result of this class or as a result of writing in general.

Presentation: Each student will be presenting his/her finished product during the two-hour exam period. (Yes, this is a requirement and will count for a portion of your final grade.)

Self-assessments, using the following criteria:

Completion of in-class work

Completion of homework (journals, rough drafts, add'l assignments)

Final drafts handed in (on time) /quality of final drafts (typed, neatly organized)

On-task/appropriate classroom behavior

Respectful attitude to peers and teacher

Productivity in a pair/group

Overall participation (reading, discussion, peer review, etc.)

Effort and accountability

Overall quality of classroom performance

Willingness to grow

Additional comments/input

Setting activities: Part I: In-Class Writing Warm-Up: Close your eyes and visualize a place that has made a lasting impression on you in some way. It could be the kitchen in the house where you spent your childhood, your grandfather's basement, your favorite Cape Cod seashore, your third grade classroom, etc. Spend some time remembering details: what do you see when you look around? What smells are familiar? You reach out and touch the _____; it feels _____. What do you hear when you listen carefully? Begin by making a quick list of images and associations, highlights, images that define this space. Now, using careful diction, paint a portrait of this place so vividly that you will bring us there, too.

Part II - Thoughts: You are what you buy, own, eat, wear, collect, read, and create. You are what you do for a living and how you live. If somebody broke into your home or apartment while you were away, chances are he/she could construct a good profile of who you are just by observing your "setting." You should be able to do just that for your characters even when they are "offstage."

The assignments listed are representative of the types of assignments student will complete throughout the unit. Additional readings and writings, class activities and projects will also be completed.

12. Additional Materials:

Teacher-generated handouts

Art supplies

Teacher and student blog pages

13. Evaluation Tools:

- c. Measures of student progress: completion of homework/rough drafts/journals/final drafts/projects; participation in class discussion/editing/critiques/readings; development of personal style; evidence of growth from September-June; student self-assessments completed each marking period
- d. Measurement of effectiveness of this course: teacher reflection, student success/growth recognized in writing, critical reading, participation, development of personal style
- e. CW midterm – Portfolio Project
- f. CW final exam – Class-wide Anthology

14. Course Policies: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Pupils are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. This means that they will not engage in any of the following acts:

- Cheating on examinations or other school assignments, including but not limited to, the non-authorized use of books or notes, the use of crib sheets, copying from other students' papers, exchanging information with other students orally, in writing, or by signals, obtaining copies of the examination illegally and other similar activities. Cheating through the use of technology to exchange information on any school assignment, examination, etc. is prohibited. Technology is defined as, but not limited to, computers, telephones, text messaging, palm pilots, calculators, cameras or any other hand held device.
- Plagiarism is not permitted in term papers, themes, essays, reports, images, take-home examinations, and other academic work. Plagiarism is defined as stealing or use without acknowledgment of the ideas, words, formulas, textual materials, on-line services, computer programs, etc. of another person, or in any way presenting the work of another person as one's own.
- Falsifications, including forging signatures, altering answers after they have been graded, inserting answers after the fact, erasing of grader's markings, and other acts that allow for falsely taking credit.

A pupil found guilty of academic dishonesty may be subjected to a full range of penalties including, but not limited to reprimand and loss of credit for all of the work that is

plagiarized. Disciplinary action may also be a consequence of such behavior. Additional consequences may apply as defined in specific department policies and guidelines.

A teacher who believes that a pupil has been academically dishonest in his/her class should resolve the matter in the following manner:

- Reprimand the student orally and/or in writing. The teacher is also authorized to withhold credit in the work due to academic dishonesty.
- If warranted, the teacher shall file a written complaint against the student with the Administration, requesting a more stringent form of discipline. The complaint must describe in detail the academic dishonesty that is alleged to have taken place, and must request that the matter be reviewed by the Administration.
- The Administration will determine if further discipline of the pupil is appropriate, and will determine the nature of the discipline on a case-by-case basis.
- If the pupil is not in agreement with the disciplinary action of the Administration, he/she may appeal the action first to the Principal and secondly to the Superintendent. If the pupil is dissatisfied with the Superintendent's disposition of the case, he/she may grieve the action in accordance with Policy No. 5710, Pupil Grievance.

15. References:

Classroom library containing a variety of poetry and prose pieces (excerpts, novels, anthologies, collections, etc.) from contemporary and classic authors

Risking Intensity

Voice Lessons

The English Teacher's Companion

The Poet's Pen

Writer's Block

Metro: Journeys in Writing Creatively

The Creative Writing Guide

Poems by Adolescents and Adults: A Thematic Collection for Middle School and High School

Steering the Craft

Three Genres

Writing Poetry with High School Students

(and other relevant texts)

Teacher website:

http://www.hpregonal.org/departments/english/hstrout/Creative_Writing_Page.html

Teacher blog: <http://www.msstroutscw.blogspot.com>

Optional Elements

1. Possible field trips or other educationally appropriate activities:

Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival (even years)

Warren County Poetry Festival (odd years)

Sussex County Teen Arts Festival
NJ State Teen Arts Festival (when applicable)
Guest speakers (when applicable)
Workshops/Readings at Wantage Library

2. Community Involvement:

Opportunities for collaboration with the Wantage Library
Pen-pal sharing with Lynn Panico's fourth grade class at the Wantage School
Celebration of National Poetry Month (April)

3. Other resources, supplemental readings, provisions for different styles of learning, provisions for differentiated instruction: mentioned throughout guide

4. Opportunities for Exceptional Learner: mentioned throughout guide