

**SHEPAUG VALLEY SCHOOL**  
**Course Expectations Fall 2022**

**Grade 12**  
**Creative Writing**

**Mr. Taylor**

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*“Creativity is intelligence having fun.”*  
*Albert Einstein*

*“A very good book tells me news, tells me things I didn’t know, or didn’t know I knew, yet I recognize them — yes, I see, yes, this is how the world is.”*  
*Ursula Le Guin*

*“You can’t use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have.”*  
*Maya Angelou*

**Overall Course Objective and Description**

In this course, students will explore their interests in writing through creative genres. Students will analyze the factors that have contributed to the creation of their stories and the questions about our humanity that they attempt to answer. Through attempting to answer these questions students explore the unlimited pathways through human existence. This course will most particularly focus on The Shepaug Learner Outcomes of *Engaging in the Creative Process and Defending Conclusions and Judgements*. Throughout the course, students will regularly engage in the creative process. We will devote considerable class time to all facets of the creative process, including: prewriting, free writing, drafting, editing, revising, conferencing, and polishing for a final draft. In our course, students will not only engage in the creative process, but they will do so *with understanding*. To that end, students will also be reading and analyzing examples of creative writing by accomplished literary writers in a variety of genres. Students will perform literary analysis of these texts, focusing in particular on the fundamental elements of fiction (i.e. characterization, scene setting, dialogue, diction, narrative structure). Within the curriculum, students will use a wide range of reading, writing, and creative strategies to develop and refine their ability to compose creative writing pieces.

**Essential Questions**

- What is creativity?
- How have great artists and philosophers defined creativity?
- What are the basic features of a compelling short story or novel?
- How can poetry provide a powerful outlet for creative expression?
- How can we analyze and assess the overall quality of a piece of creative writing?
- What are the stages in the creative writing process?
- How can I develop a personal, individual voice in my own creative writing?

### **Classroom Expectations**

1. **Courtesy, Diligence, and Punctuality** are the rules appropriate for behavior both in and outside the classroom. These rules underscore all policies.
2. **Bring a three-ring binder, course folder, and our reading to class each day.** Use the binder to organize all your notes and hold all returned papers. Use loose-leaf paper.
3. **Keep up with the reading.** While the overall emphasis in our course is on *your* creative writing, we will see that one of the best ways to hone our creative writing skills is to study the work of exemplary writers. Therefore, I expect that you will complete the assigned readings and that you will come to class prepared for quizzes.

### **Shepaug Learner Outcomes**

Everything in this course is rooted in our four Learner Outcomes:

- *Defending Conclusions and Judgements*
- *Engaging in the Creative Process*
- *Solving Problems*
- *Answering a Call to Citizenship*

### **Units of Study**

Unit 1: Creativity Defined (3 weeks)- Students will read multiple authors, artists, and philosophers who have written about the creative process. At the end of the unit, students will provide a report and summary of 2-4 sources where they have found a definition of ‘creativity.’

Unit 2: Creativity and Genre (6 weeks)- Once students have a working foundation of what creativity might be, they will study various literary genres (poetry, drama, short stories, and novella). After looking closely at these genres through a series of samples, students will decide if they want to work in one genre or experience a variety. At the end of the unit, students will turn in a proposal for their creative writing project.

Unit 3: Engaging in the Creative Process (8 weeks)- Students will continue to engage with a variety of literary texts, while also developing their own collection of creative work. Classes will be a mix of reading literary texts (both to deepen student understanding and to provide creative inspiration) and creative writing exercises. By the end of the unit, students will turn in at least one authentic piece of writing (e.g. a book, script, collection of poems, a series of short stories, or a play).

Unit 4: Reflection (2 weeks)- Students will evaluate their writing utilizing the school rubric, ‘Engaging in the Creative Process,’ to assess their own writing. Classmates will provide feedback to help each student reflect upon their work. At the end of the unit, students will write a reflection on their engagement with the creative process.

NOTE: The precise pacing of the course is subject to change depending on student progress, interest, and engagement.

### **Grading Policy**

Your grade will reflect the courtesy, diligence, and punctuality you have shown through our time together. Your grade will also be determined by the quality and thoroughness of your work. Each assignment (formatives, interims, and summatives) will receive a letter grade. **Formatives will comprise 20% of your grade, Interims 40%, and Summatives 40 %.**

### **Late Work Policy (Interim and Summative):**

Students are expected to complete all assigned work so that learning can be properly assessed and teaching can be properly adjusted. There will be a penalty for late work. For the most part, this penalty will be a deduction of half a letter grade, up to five days.

### **Late Homework Policy (Formative):**

Each homework assignment is given a letter grade. Late or incomplete homework will not result in full credit. In some cases, late homework cannot be accepted, for example, if the teacher has reviewed the work and given all answers in class.

### **Readings and Resources**

David Morley, *The Cambridge Introduction to Creative Writing*

Plato: *Ion*

Chung-yuan Chang: *Creativity and Taoism*

William Wordsworth: *Preface To Lyrical Ballads*

T.S. Eliot: "Tradition and the Individual Talent"

J.R.R. Tolkien: "On Fairy-Stories" and "Mythopoeia"

Lev Tolstoy: *The Death of Ivan Illych*

Selected short stories (Hemingway, Christie, Chekhov, Le Guin, Joyce, Baldwin)

Selected poems (Shakespeare, Basho, Frost, Hughes, Williams, Bishop, Yeats, Ammons)

Selected drama (Sophocles, Shakespeare, Beckett)

Non-fiction articles on creative writing

TedTalks and video lectures on creativity

**Academic Commitment:** At the end of each marking period, teachers determine which students have exhibited a strong commitment to their studies. For that marking period, students recognized for their strong commitment, in one or more courses, will receive "Academic Commitment" recognition for each applicable course. Academic Commitment is recorded on the report card and the transcript. Essentially, strong commitment involves:

- Demonstrating purpose
- Setting and pursuing short- and long-term goals

- Demonstrating perseverance
- Producing quality work

**Contact Information:**

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