

Course Objectives/Course Outline
Spokane Community College

Course Title: Introduction to Fiction

Prefix and Course Number: ENGL& 112

Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, a student should be able to:

- Identify and correctly use the terminology of literary analysis, such as plot, setting, character, theme, point of view, and style
- Identify significant traits of subgenres (short story, novel, novella, vignette) and literary movements (Romanticism, Realism, Modernism, Postmodernism) relevant to the study of fiction
- Identify main premises of various schools of literary theory, such as psychological, new historicist, and feminist approaches, and articulate ways in which these theoretical lenses shape one's understanding of a work's meaning
- Articulate valid points of comparison between works from different eras or genres
- Use textual evidence to support original and valid interpretations of literary works

Course Outline:

(Note: Authors and titles are meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive.)

I. Overview

- A. Elements of fiction such as exposition and setting, plot, character and conflict, point of view, theme, style, language
- B. The subgenres of fiction: short story, vignette, novella, novel
- C. The limits of study: the course treats primarily 19th_21st century works rather than earlier forms of fiction such as fable, allegory, fabliau, and tale
- D. Can literary study be objective? Literary criticism and the value of disagreement
- E. Four important periods in literary fiction with differing stylistic effect, noting that authors' sensibilities do not fit neatly into the historical categories.

II. Romanticism - Representative Works

- A. Romance as Social Commentary
 - 1. Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (excerpt)
 - 2. Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Birth-mark"
- B. Dark Romanticism
 - 1. Edgar Allen Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher"
 - 2. Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener"

III. Realism - Representative Works

- A. Early Realism
 - 1. Mark Twain, "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg"
 - 2. Guy de Maupassant, "The Necklace"
 - 3. Anton Chekhov, "The Lady with the Pet Dog"
 - 4. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wall-paper"
- B. Naturalism

1. Stephen Crane, "The Open Boat"
 2. Jack London, "To Build a Fire"
 - C. Contemporary Realism and "Dirty Realism"
 1. James Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues"
 2. Raymond Carver, "Cathedral"
 3. Amy Hempel, "In the Cemetery Where Al Jolson Is Buried"
- III. Modernism - Representative Works
- A. Psychological Depth
 1. D. H. Lawrence, "Odour of Chrysanthemums"
 2. Franz Kafka, "The Metamorphosis"
 - B. Linguistic Innovation
 1. Virginia Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway
 2. James Joyce, "The Dead"
- IV. Post-modernism/Experimental Fiction
- A. Post-modernism: Continuity or Radical Departure?
 1. Jorge Luis Borges, "Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote"
 2. John Barth, "Lost in the Funhouse"
 - B. Innovations in Genre Fiction
 1. Science Fiction/Fantasy
 - a. Ursula Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Ornelas"
 - b. Ray Bradbury, Fahrenheit 451
 2. Mystery/Detective Fiction
 - a. Umberto Eco, The Name of the Rose
 - b. Walter Mosley, Devil in a Blue Dress
 - C. Emerging Issues, Voices, and Techniques
 1. Tim O'Brien, "The Things They Carried"
 2. Jamaica Kincaid, "Girl"
 3. Junot Diaz, Drown
- V. Schools of Literary Theory
- A. Formalist approaches
 1. New Criticism
 2. Reader Response
 3. Deconstruction
 - B. Structuralist and historicist approaches
 1. Marxist
 2. Psychological
 3. New Historicist
 4. Feminist/Gender Studies

