

Virginia English 8, Semester A

Course Overview

English is the study of the creation and analysis of literature written in the English language. In Virginia English 8, Semester A, you will explore the features of different forms of literary writing such as diaries, memoirs, informative essays, and fictional narratives. You will also improve your writing by learning about persuasive writing techniques. You will compare and contrast a literary piece across different mediums, including drama. You will engage in a dramatic reading of poetry and learn how to give multimedia presentations. In the latter part of the course, you will analyze informational texts to understand the history of the Civil War. You will also analyze various types of literary works to better understand literary elements such as point of view, conflict, theme, structure, and setting.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Investigate the features of written forms of literature such as diaries, memoirs, informative essays, and fictional narratives.
- Analyze stage directions and dialogue in a drama.
- Engage in character study.
- Learn about the elements of multimedia presentations.
- Compare and contrast a literary piece with its film adaptation/live performance.
- Participate in a dramatic reading of poetry.
- Investigate the origins, causes, and effects of the Civil War.
- Explain the function, features, and persuasive techniques used in informational texts.
- Examine the process of debating and participate in a debate.
- Evaluate elements of fiction such as theme, point of view, conflict, word choice, structure, and setting in short stories.

General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Complete basic operations with word processing software, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs.

- Complete basic operations with presentation software, such as Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Docs Presentation.
- Perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Communicate through email and participate in discussion boards.

For a complete list of general skills that are required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Student Orientation, found at the beginning of this course.

Credit Value

Virginia English 8, Semester A is a 0.5-credit course.

Course Materials

- notebook
- pencil or pen
- computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft PowerPoint or equivalent

Some course readings may require a visit to your school library or public library.

Course Pacing Guide

This course description and pacing guide is intended to help you keep on schedule with your work. Note that your course instructor may modify the schedule to meet the specific needs of your class.

Unit 1: How Can You Benefit from Written Communication?

Summary

This unit focuses on the different forms of literary writing, beginning with a lesson on diaries. In the next lesson, you will explore point of view and theme in Frederick Douglass's memoir titled *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. You will then examine the features of informative essays. You will also investigate purpose in the informative essay "Business and Ethics" by Redfield Ingalls and the short story "Bernice Bobs Her Hair" by F. Scott Fitzgerald. In the final lesson in this unit, you will explore the process of writing fictional narratives.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
1 day: 1	Syllabus and Plato Student Orientation <i>Review the Course Syllabus and Plato Student Orientation at the beginning of this course.</i>	Course Orientation
4 days: 2–5	Dear Diary: Writing for Yourself <i>Explore examples of famous diaries and practice keeping your own diary.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 6–9	Memoirs <i>Explore point of view and theme in a Frederick Douglass’s Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 10–13	Writing Informative Essays <i>Examine the characteristics of informative essays.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 14–16	Reading Fictional Narratives <i>Investigate purpose in fictional narratives and study techniques for reading them.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 17–19	Writing Narratives <i>Explore the process of creating a narrative.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 20–22	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 1	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 23	Posttest—Unit 1	Assessment

Unit 2: How Does Communication Style Affect Your Understanding?

Summary

This unit focuses on analysis of literary works, beginning with a lesson in which you will explore the elements of drama in Susan Glaspell’s *Trifles*. Later, you will evaluate the literary element of character in Glaspell’s short story, “A Jury of Her Peers,” an adaptation of *Trifles*. In this unit’s third lesson, you will examine the main features of multimedia presentations. Then, you will investigate and interpret a film adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s “The Adventure of the Speckled Band.” In the last lesson, you will examine techniques for delivering dramatic readings of poems such as Lewis Carroll’s “Jabberwocky,” Robert Frost’s “Design,” and William Blake’s “The Chimney Sweeper.”

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 24–26	Elements of Drama: <i>Trifles</i> <i>Determine the relationship between stage directions and dialogue in Susan Glaspell’s play Trifles.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 27–29	Character Study: “A Jury of Her Peers” <i>Evaluate the main characters in Susan Glaspell’s short story “A Jury of Her Peers,” an adaptation of her play Trifles.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 30–33	Giving Multimedia Presentations <i>Examine key elements of creating and delivering successful multimedia presentations.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 34–37	Film Adaptations <i>Investigate and interpret a film adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s “The Adventure of the Speckled Band.”</i>	Lesson
3 days 38–40	Performing Poetry: Dramatic Readings <i>Examine techniques for delivering a dramatic reading of a poem.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 41–43	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 2	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 44	Posttest—Unit 2	Assessment

Unit 3: How Can You Make Peace with Conflict?

Summary

This unit focuses on informational texts related to the Civil War. First, you will explore the main idea and point of view in Abraham Lincoln’s two inaugural speeches, as well as Jefferson Davis’s First Inaugural Speech. Next, you will analyze the Dred Scott Decision, James Henry Hammond’s speech, and William Lloyd Garrison’s speech and their arguments for and against slavery. In the third lesson of this unit, you will investigate the connections and distinctions between important Civil War events. Then you will explore the main features of persuasive essays. In the last lesson, you will examine the process of preparing for and participating in a debate.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
4 days: 45–48	The Civil War: Understanding the Conflict <i>Determine the main idea and point of view in Civil War texts.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 49–52	Arguments about Slavery <i>Analyze Civil War documents that contain arguments for and against slavery.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 53–56	The Civil War: Connecting Major Events <i>Investigate connections and distinctions between important Civil War events.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 57–60	Writing a Persuasive Argument <i>Explore the characteristics of persuasive essays.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 61–64	Debating an Argument <i>Examine the process of preparing for and participating in a debate.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 65–67	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 3	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 68	Posttest—Unit 3	Assessment

Unit 4: How Do You Analyze Internal and External Struggles?

Summary

This unit focuses on internal and external struggles. It starts with a lesson in which you will evaluate point of view and structure in Amy Tan’s “Rules of the Games” and Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart.” In the next lesson, you will investigate the impact of word choice and structure in O’ Henry’s “The Gift of the Magi” and Giovanni Boccaccio’s “Federigo’s Falcon,” both of which are short stories with surprise endings. In the third lesson of this unit, you will examine theme and setting in Stephen Crane’s “An Episode of War.” Finally, you will investigate approaches for writing argumentative essays about works of fiction.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
5 days: 69–73	Point of View and Conflict with the Self in Short Stories <i>Evaluate point of view and structure in Amy Tan’s “Rules of the Game” and Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart.”</i>	Lesson
4 days: 74–77	Word Choice and Stories with Plot Twists <i>Investigate the impact of word choice and structure in two stories with plot twists, O. Henry’s “The Gift of the Magi” and Giovanni Boccaccio’s “Federigo’s Falcon.”</i>	Lesson
3 days: 78–80	Theme, Setting, and Cultural Conflict in Short Stories <i>Examine theme and setting in Stephen Crane’s “An Episode of War.”</i>	Lesson
4 days: 81–84	Writing about Short Fiction <i>Investigate approaches for writing argumentative essays about works of fiction.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 85–87	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 4	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 88	Posttest—Unit 4	Assessment
1 day: 89	End-of-Semester Review	

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
1 day: 90	End-of-Semester Test	Assessment

Virginia English 8, Semester B

Course Overview

English is the study of the creation and analysis of literature written in the English language. In Virginia English 8, Semester B, you will analyze nonfiction texts to explore what they reveal about the process of growing up. You will also analyze elements of poetry such as theme, structure, meter, language, and sound to help you read poems and compose a poem of your own. You will read novels and analyze their literary elements and their use of literary devices. In the final unit, you will reflect upon and evaluate certain aspects of your past, present, and future while reading Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Understand stages of human growth such as adolescence.
- Use nonfictional texts such as informative essays, scientific essays, and memoirs to explore aspects of growing up such as body image, gender matters, and body changes.
- Analyze theme in poetry.
- Explain structures, metrical patterns, and sound patterns in poetry.
- Examine language and sound techniques required to compose a poem.
- Draft a persuasive essay based on a topic related to poetry.
- Investigate literary elements such as character, setting, conflict, and theme in one of the following novels: Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, Lois Lowry's *The Giver*, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, or John Knowles's *A Separate Peace*.
- Analyze the use of symbolism in one of the following novels: Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, Lois Lowry's *The Giver*, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, and John Knowles's *A Separate Peace*.
- Draft an argumentative essay based on how you relate to the characters of the novel you choose.
- Reflect upon and evaluate aspects of your past, present, and future life as a student by reading Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*.

General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Complete basic operations with word processing software, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs.
- Complete basic operations with presentation software, such as Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Docs Presentation.
- Perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Communicate through email and participate in discussion boards.

For a complete list of general skills that are required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Student Orientation, found at the beginning of this course.

Credit Value

Virginia English 8, Semester B is a 0.5-credit course.

Course Materials

- notebook
- pencil or pen
- computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft PowerPoint or equivalent

Some course readings may require a visit to your school library or public library.

Course Pacing Guide

This course description and pacing guide is intended to help you keep on schedule with your work. Note that your course instructor may modify the schedule to meet the specific needs of your class.

Unit 1: How Do Your Mind and Body Change as You Grow?

Summary

This unit focuses on the changes a growing adolescent's mind and body go through. To explore this topic, you will look at evidence from informative essays about body image and develop your own personal narrative. You will analyze structure and technical

meaning in scientific texts about the role hormonal and chemical changes in the body have on mood. You will evaluate structure and reasoning in informative texts about gender development in relation to biology and society. At the end of the unit, you will explore techniques for writing your own short memoir and examine the benefits of peer review.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
1 day: 1	Syllabus and Plato Student Orientation <i>Review the Course Syllabus and Plato Student Orientation at the beginning of this course.</i>	Course Orientation
4 days: 2–5	Growing Up: Maintaining a Healthy Body Image <i>Identify the main idea and supporting evidence in informative essays.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 6–10	The Ups and Downs of Adolescence <i>Analyze structure and technical meaning in texts about the role hormonal and chemical changes in the body have on mood.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 11–14	Gender Matters: Navigating Biological and Social Influences <i>Evaluate structure and reasoning in texts about gender development in relation to biology and society.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 15–19	Documenting Change: Memoirs Revisited <i>Explore techniques for writing your own short memoir and examine the benefits of peer review.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 20–22	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 1	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 23	Posttest—Unit 1	Assessment

Unit 2: How Can You Change Your Perspective?

Summary

This unit focuses on various elements of poetry. You will investigate theme and structure in Robert Frost’s poem “The Road Not Taken” and examine the impact of meter and punctuation in Emily Dickinson’s poem “I’m Nobody! Who Are You?” You will explore the language and sound techniques used in Claude McKay’s “America” and Carl Sandburg’s “Theme in Yellow” to compose a poem. Finally, you will prepare and revise a persuasive essay on a topic related to poetry.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
5 days: 24–28	Decision Making, Theme, and Structure in Poetry <i>Investigate theme and structure in Robert Frost’s poem “The Road Not Taken.”</i>	Lesson
5 days: 29–33	Meter, Punctuation, and Self-Understanding in Poetry <i>Analyze the impact of meter and punctuation in Emily Dickinson’s poem “I’m Nobody! Who Are You?”</i>	Lesson
4 days: 34–37	An Introduction to Poetry Writing <i>Explore the language and sound techniques used to compose a poem.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 38–41	Writing Persuasively about Poetry <i>Prepare and revise a persuasive essay on a topic related to poetry.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 42–44	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 2	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 45	Posttest—Unit 2	Assessment

Unit 3: Who Are You?

Summary

This unit explores literary elements such as character, setting, conflict, and theme in Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women*, Lois Lowry’s *The Giver*, Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*, or John Knowles’s *A Separate Peace*. You will select one of these four novels and explore how novelists add meaning to their works by referring to other pieces of

literature. You will examine the use of symbols in novels. You will also explore how you relate to the characters in a novel by writing an argumentative essay.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
4 days: 46–49	Characters and Setting in Novels <i>Identify the characters and setting in novels.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 50–52	How Novelists Reference Other Works <i>Explore how novelists add meaning to their works by referencing other pieces of literature.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 53–56	Key Conflicts in Novels <i>Examine key conflicts in novels.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 57–60	Themes and Symbols in Novels <i>Investigate themes and symbolism in novels.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 61–64	Writing about Characters in Novels <i>Explore how you relate to the characters in a novel by writing an argumentative essay.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 65–67	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 3	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 68	Posttest—Unit 3	Assessment

Unit 4: Who Do You Want to Be?

Summary

This unit focuses on Charles Dickens’s narrative approach with regard to the past, present, and future in *A Christmas Carol*. You will read the novel and evaluate your identity as a student. You will reflect upon your past, present, and future reading, study, and writing habits.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
5 days: 69–73	Who You Were: Learning from Your Past <i>Examine Charles Dickens’s narrative approach to considering one’s past in A Christmas Carol and apply that type of self-exploration to an investigation of your past study, reading, and writing habits.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 74–77	Who You Are: Assessing Your Present <i>Explore Charles Dickens’s narrative approach to assessing one’s present in A Christmas Carol and reflect on your current identity as a student.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 78–80	Who You Will Be: Predicting Your Future <i>Analyze Charles Dickens’s narrative approach to predicting one’s future behavior in A Christmas Carol and consider how your past and present behavior can help you determine the type of student you will be.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 81–84	Who You Want to Be: Shaping Your Identity <i>Investigate Charles Dickens’s narrative approach to shaping one’s own identity in A Christmas Carol and brainstorm ways that you can change your behavior to become the type of student you want to be.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 85–87	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 4	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 88	Posttest—Unit 4	Assessment
1 day: 89	End-of-Semester Review	
1 day: 90	End of Semester Test	Assessment