

Tree of Life School

*"Wisdom is a tree of life to those to those who embrace her."
Proverbs 3:18*

British Literature Course Outline

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Course Outline

Introduction

This course will help you to trace the history of literature in the land we now call the United Kingdom, from the time of the Anglo-Saxons until the twentieth century. Along the way you will see how literature is influenced by the culture that produces it. Great literature also leaps outside the bounds of time and place and affects those who live in other parts of the world. Because of Britain's place as a major power in western civilization, its literature has probably more than any other shaped people's thinking. As you work your way through the days of the Anglo-Saxons, the Middle Ages, the Elizabethan Era, the Seventeenth Century, the Eighteenth Century, the Romantic Age, the Victorian Era, and the Twentieth Century, take the time to study and sincerely appreciate some of the greatest literature ever written.

Required materials:

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

Much Ado About Nothing, William Shakespeare (Oxford)

Hamlet, William Shakespeare (Oxford)

Robinson Crusoe, Daniel Defoe

Ivanhoe, Sir Walter Scott

The Importance of Being Earnest, Oscar Wilde

The Remains of the Day, Kazuo Ishiguro

How to Work Through The Course

This course comprises ten units. Each literature unit is comprised of an introduction that explains themes and provides contextual information, a daily schedule of readings, and essay topics. The readings are included in this course outline in the order they are listed in the units. You will read all the selections and answer the questions in your own notebook. Then print the confirmation page and have a parent sign it and mail it in with the unit essay. Alternatively, have a parent send an e-mail confirming that the questions have been answered. Suggested answers are included in this course outline to help you understand the readings better.

This course has been divided into a **140 day schedule**. This will allow the student to follow a **four-day school week** and still complete the course in a normal academic year. The **fifth day** of each week can be used to **catch up on assignments**, do **extra reading**, or simply **take the day off** from the course. If, however, a five-day school week is more desirable, the student is encouraged to pursue this course and will be rewarded by early completion of the material. Care has been taken to provide specific instructions for each day's work. Therefore, **all work is to be completed in the order presented in the daily schedule**.

If you find that you need more time to write the essays than to do the readings, feel free to start working on them earlier than the schedule requires.

Calculating Your Final Grade

Your final mark in the course will be based on the following percentages:

Readings (Confirmation Pages)	20%
Ten Essays	80%

Assignment Expectations

All the assignments in this course are essays. An essay differs from a report in that it will offer much more analysis of the topic from the student's perspective and opinion. This analysis will certainly be based on the information that s/he has gathered and presented. However, the very nature of the question asked for the assignment will require the student to do more than simply present the facts. Throughout the essay the student will be offering opinions and commentary that shows s/he has looked at both sides of the issue and has something to contribute to the discussion.

In an academic essay, the student should always avoid personal references to themselves and the reader, clichés and idiomatic language, or anything that might be construed as slangy/informal. This is often the hardest kind of writing for many students and it takes practice. However, this is where the give and take between student and evaluator is essential and has become one of the hallmarks of a *Tree of Life* education.

According to *Wordsmith Craftsman*, there are four main essay types:

Descriptive: Real estate ads and “wanted” posters describe, but what distinguishes a descriptive essay is the writer's desire to communicate a particular emotion or point about the object of the description.

Narrative: A narrative is a sequence of events. It may be a personal experience of your own, or of someone you know, or a historical or fictional event. The incidents happen in a well-defined order and usually lead to some sort of resolution.

Expository: Expository writing communicates information about any topic. Since the main purpose is to inform the reader, the style should be straightforward and factual. Textbooks, encyclopedias and much of what is called “non-fiction” are expository. The impressions and opinions of the writer may pop up here and there, but the main purpose to inform the reader.

Persuasive: These essays are written to provoke a response from the reader about a particular issue – if not agreement, at least further thought. They require reaching for a reader's head *and* heart, while presenting logical arguments in a style that's clear, interesting, winsome and reasonable. You will need to define a position, think it through, and present logical arguments in support of it. Some techniques to promote your position are: find “common ground” with your reader and proceed from there; appeal to legitimate authority; use empirical evidence in the form of studies, statistics, and facts; and refer to personal experience.

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Refer to the specific assignment to understand what type of essay is required. Then make sure your essay addresses the issues posed by the assignment. Even if you follow the instructions provided here, marks will be deducted if your essay does not focus on the topic and fully address the assignment requirements.

As always, your essay must begin with an introduction that includes a thorough thesis statement. End with a conclusion that restates your thesis and gives some final personal insight or broader application of your topic. **Each essay in this course should be a minimum of five paragraphs.**

Each essay should make specific reference to the readings. This can include paraphrases, short quotations, and block quotations (long quotations that are indented from the paragraph). You may also want to use outside sources to help support your points. Even if you use only the assigned selection or novel, cite your source using footnotes and a bibliography.

As you write your essays, it is always a good idea to keep the acronym TOWER in mind:

Think
Organize
Write
Evaluate
Rewrite

Evaluative Comments and Grades

At the high school level, students are given numerical grades for each of their tests and assignments. We try to be as objective as we can be, but much of what we do is subjective by nature and with several people evaluating work, some will give higher grades than others. We make every effort to be on the same page (so to speak) so that there is not a wide disparity in grades from subject to subject (especially in those areas where much written work is submitted). We also make every effort to communicate to the student what was positive about the assignment and what needs work. If there is a question about a grade or comment on an assignment, we encourage you to communicate this to us. The best way is to send an e-mail or return the assignment with a note attached the next time you send work by mail. This way we can make sure that the evaluator who can best answer your question is notified and can have the opportunity to review the question and assignment and get back to you with what will hopefully be a satisfactory explanation.

Generally speaking, we employ the following percentages when marking work. We do not usually break down the mark to reflect this but hopefully the comments will reflect areas where the assignment may be improved.

Introduction 20%
Body 40%
Conclusion 20%
Style 10%
Mechanics 10%

Submitting Assignments for Evaluation

Email:

This is our highly preferred mode of submission, due to low cost and faster return rate of graded assignments.

1. Save each individual assignment as .doc or .rtf rather than as .docx, .pages, or .otd to enable people with other computers to read them. Do not save a batch of assignments in one file; this will be returned ungraded to you.
2. Name the file with your name, the course, and the assignment number. For example, "John Doe_WH I_Essay 4" or "Sally Brown_GI I_ Confessions Study Guide".
3. Attach each assignment in a **separate email to evaluation@treeoflifeathome.com**. **The subject line of your e-mail should be the same as the file name of your assignment.** This helps us organise the work and be sure it gets to the proper evaluator.

Regular mail:

Be sure *all* work is clearly labelled with your full name, course name, and assignment. Also, be aware this mode of submission will have the longest turnaround time.

Address: Tree of Life
443 Weston Road
Weston, NB
E7K 1B1

Requirements:

1. Assignments that do not satisfactorily adhere to these guidelines may be returned ungraded!
2. Length of assignments will vary based on the nature of the topic. The student ought to always answer in complete sentences, full paragraphs (generally 5 to 9 sentences), or well-structured essays. Almost all assignments require the essay format to complete the requirements.
3. Essay requirements
 - a. Use only Times New Roman or Arial black font, size 12. Avoid colours. Text should be double-spaced.
 - b. The essay format includes a well-written introductory paragraph that will set the context for the essay and end in a clear thesis statement. It will also have a *minimum* of three paragraphs (but usually more) that will develop the thesis fully within the context of the assignment. It will end with a concluding paragraph that will satisfactorily bring the essay to a close.
 - c. Title page. Include essay title, student name, course name, assignment number, and date.
 - d. Footnotes and bibliographies. Personal essays may be an exception, but the bulk of every academic essay is based on research that the student has learned from another source. Presenting this information in either quoted or paraphrased version without providing the proper citation is known as plagiarism. The student

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may think that s/he is sounding brilliant but this will get you kicked out of university (at worst) and significantly lower your mark (at best). The source for direct quotes or paraphrases should be cited at the bottom of the page in a footnote. The bibliography includes any and all resources used (regardless of whether they appear in your footnotes) and is placed on a separate page at the end of the essay.

Specific Guidelines:

The Title Page

Each assignment should have a title page with the essay title, student name, course name, assignment number, and date clearly displayed.

Title of Essay
Name of Student Course/Subject Assignment Date

Footnotes

There are far too many situations that need to be footnoted to show here, but below you will find some of the common examples that will show up in most research reports. Please note that you are required to cite any readings from the course outline that you use in your essay. Use the "Insert Reference" or "Insert Footnote" feature of your word processor to automatically insert the footnote number as well as place the citation correctly at the bottom of the page.

Book	¹ Tom Smith, <u>Skating to the Music</u> (Hogtown: Ice Palace Publishers, 2010) 45.
Magazine	² Sally Smith, "Skating Is My Life," <u>Skating Magazine</u> 12 May 2009: 20-24.
Newspaper TV or Radio	Same basic format as that of magazine. ⁴ "An Interview with Zeke," Skaters' Forum, CBC, Toronto, 12 March 2010.
Personal Interview Internet	⁵ Bill Jones, personal interview, 23 August 2011. ⁶ Tom Camelspin, "Jumping for Glory," www.skate.com, 10 January, 2010.
Course Outline	⁶ Israel Zangwill, "To Die in Jerusalem," World Literature Course Outline: 138-148.
Bible	Place the reference in parentheses immediately following the quotation (either direct or indirect) right in the text of your essay, rather than in a footnote. You should note the version you are using the first time you

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quote, but after that it is not necessary to repeat unless you switch versions. E.g. It is good to remember the importance of hard work, as we learn from the wise King Solomon, "Diligent hands will rule, but laziness ends in slave labour" (Proverbs 12:24 NIV). This lesson is easily seen in the life of Joseph who rose from slavery to prime minister of Egypt (Genesis 39-41).

Bibliography

If you have used the ideas of others to help you form your thoughts for your essay, you need to cite them at the end of your essay in the bibliography. The format for the bibliography is different than for footnotes; merely copying and pasting your information will not be adequate. Following you will find some common examples to help you.

Book	Smith, Tom. <u>Skating to the Music</u> Hogtown: Ice Palace Publishers, 2010.
Work from Anthology	Clark, Jim. "Working the Judges." <u>Anthology of Skating Poems</u> . Editor John Doe. Boston: Ice Palace Publishers, 2001. 354.
Article from Reference Book	"Figure Skating," <u>Big City Encyclopedia</u> . 1988 ed. Reference on CD-ROM Macrotuff Multimedia Encyclopedia. Computer Software. Hogtown, ON: Macrotuff Software, 2001. CD-ROM.
Magazine	Smith, Sally, "Skating Is My Life," <u>Skating Magazine</u> 12 May 2009: 20-24.
Newspaper	Same basic format as that of magazine.
TV or Radio	"An Interview with Zeke," Skaters' Forum, CBC, Toronto, 12 March 2010.
Personal Interview	Bill Jones, personal interview, 23 August 2011.
Internet	Camelspin, Tom , "Jumping for Glory", www.skate.com, 10 January, 2010.
Oral Presentation	Champ, Ima. Speech. NB Figure Skating Convention, Fredericton, 21 May, 2002.
Course Outline	Zangwill, Israel. "To Die in Jerusalem," World Literature Course Outline: 138-148.
Bible	<i>The Holy Bible English Standard Version</i> . Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Bibles, 2001.

Daily Schedule

Unit 1: Anglo-Saxon England

DAY 1 – Read the introduction that follows:

The Anglo-Saxon period of English literature is traditionally dated from 700 to 1066. The language spoken by the people of Britain at this time is known as **Old English** or Anglo-Saxon. Not to be confused with the sometimes archaic language of Shakespeare, Old English is a separate language, more closely related to Icelandic and German, than to Modern English. Some works of this period were written in Old English and some in Latin, the language of the church.

Simple Timeline of Celtic, Roman, and Anglo-Saxon England

c. 700 BC – 40 BC	Celtic tribes (including the Britons) populate the British Isles
55 BC	Invasion of Britain by Julius Caesar
40 BC – AD 410	Britain is part of the Roman Empire
c. 450 – 600	Angles, Saxons, and Jutes come from Germany and Denmark and establish the kingdoms of Kent, Sussex, Essex, Wessex, Northumbria, East Anglia, and Mercia
597	Augustine of Canterbury arrives to convert the English to Christianity
c. 700-900	Viking raids
802 – 839	Egbert of Wessex rules as the first king of all England
871 – 899	Alfred the Great rules England
878	Alfred defeats the Vikings, who settle eastern and northern England (the Danelaw)
1016	Cnut King of Denmark becomes King of England
1066	Battle of Hastings (William the Conqueror becomes the first Norman king of England)



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Anglo-Saxon England was mainly an oral culture, in which bards (scops) were important figures, as they retold and passed down stories, history, and beliefs. However, King Alfred the Great (849–899) promoted literacy both in Old English and Latin. Today there are approximately four hundred existing manuscripts in Old English, most of them poetry, religious, or historical works.

Here is a short excerpt of Anglo-Saxon poetry, so you can see what the language looks like. The Old English alphabet has three characters no longer used in English: æ (ash – short “a” sound), þ (thorn – “th” sound), and ð (eth – “th” sound). You will also notice that the lines are characterized by a break midway; this is called a **caesura**.

“The Seafarer”

Mæg ic be me sylfum soðgied wrecan,
siþas secgan, hu ic geswincdagumhow
earfoðhwile oft þrowade,
bitre breostceare gebiden hæbbe,
gecunnad in ceolehave cearselda fela,
atol yþa gewearc, þær mec oft bigeatwher
nearo nihtwaco meæt nacan stefnan,
þonne he be clifum cnossað.

I can make a true song about me myself,
tell my travels, I often endured
days of struggle, troublesome times,
[how I] have suffered grim sorrow at heart,
known in the ship many worries [abodes of care],
the terrible tossing of the waves, the anxious night watch
often took at the ship's prow,
when it tossed near the cliffs.

Alliteration is a prominent aspect of Anglo-Saxon poetry. Most lines repeat a consonant sound three times. Alliteration, rather than rhyme, sets up a pattern for the poem. Two other common devices are kennings and litotes. A **kenning** is a descriptive expression used instead of a simple name for a person or object. Examples include “sea-wood” (ship), “swan-road” (sea), “ring-giver” (king), “world’s candle” (sun), and “hoard-guard” (dragon). **Litotes** is a dramatic understatement, for example saying “not short” instead of “tall.” “That [sword] was not useless / to the warrior now” is an example from *Beowulf*.

In this unit you will read excerpts of several works translated from the original Latin or Old English into Modern English.

The readings for Unit 1 begin on page 32.

DAY 2 – *The Ecclesiastical History of The English People* was written in Latin by the Venerable Bede, a Northumbrian monk, and completed around AD 731. This five-volume work recounts the history of England from the occupation of the Romans up to Bede’s own lifetime. Read the excerpt provided, which tells the story of Caedmon, one of the few Anglo-Saxon poets known by name. Answer the study question.

DAY 3 – Both pagan and Christian themes are common in Anglo-Saxon poetry, often intertwined in the same work. Today you will read “The Seafarer,” a poem with a Christian theme, and answer the study question.

DAY 4 – The Exeter Book, the largest collection of Old English writings that exists today, contains over ninety riddles. Read the riddles in the Readings section and answer the study questions.

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DAY 5 & 6 – The most famous Old English text is the epic *Beowulf*. You may remember from English II that an epic is a long poem narrating the heroic exploits of an individual in a way central to the beliefs and culture of his society. Epics typically include fabulous adventures, superhuman deeds, and majestic language. The first epics, including Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, were transmitted orally. Scholars are unsure whether *Beowulf* was transmitted orally before being written down between the 8th and 11th centuries.

Just like other Anglo-Saxon poetry, *Beowulf* is made up of alliterative lines broken by caesuras and makes heavy use of kennings and litotes. Other epic conventions that are present include long formal speeches, retellings of previous episodes, and genealogies. The story takes place in Scandinavia and stars Beowulf, hero of the Geats (a North Germanic tribe from modern-day Sweden), who battles three antagonists – the monster Grendel, Grendel’s mother, and an unnamed dragon – before he is killed and buried by his people.

Unfortunately, the translation that you will be reading is written in paragraphs rather than lines. Note that the original looks very similar to the format of “The Seafarer.” This translation has been chosen for its balance between clarity and faithfulness to the original style. Read the excerpt from *Beowulf* (the first 871 lines of the poem) and answer the study question.

DAY 7 – **Assignment 1:** Choose one of the following essay topics and begin planning your essay. If you have not already done so, also check all your answers today; the suggested answers for Unit 1 are found on page 200.

- Write a short epic based on a similar storyline to the excerpt of *Beowulf* that you studied. Be sure to write in lines (not paragraphs) and include alliteration, several kennings, and at least one instance of litotes. Your epic should be a minimum of one typed page in length and include colourful illustrations (original artwork or clipart) in the margins.
- What role do pagan and Christian values play in *Beowulf*? Do you think the poet is trying to merge two irreconcilable worldviews? Defend your thesis with examples from the poem.

DAY 8 TO 12 – Write your essay and send it in for evaluation, along with the **Unit 1 Confirmation Page (p. 54) signed by a parent.**

<i>Tree of Life School</i> <i>British Literature</i>			
Confirmation	Essay	Description	Mark
1		Unit 1 Readings	
	1	Assignment 1	
2		Unit 2 Readings	
	2	Assignment 2	
3		Unit 3 Readings	
	3	Assignment 3	
4		Unit 4 Readings	
	4	Assignment 4	
5		Unit 5 Readings	
	5	Assignment 5	
6		Unit 6 Readings	
	6	Assignment 6	
7		Unit 7 Readings	
	7	Assignment 7	
8		Unit 8 Readings	
	8	Assignment 8	
9		Unit 9 Readings	
	9	Assignment 9	
10		Unit 10 Readings	
	10	Assignment 10	
		Confirmation Pages 20%	
		Essays 80%	
		Final Mark	