

Humanities University

Readings

LIT 511 Ancient Literature

Bedford Anthology of World Literature, Books 1-6. Boston: Bedford-St. Martins, 2004.

UNIT	WEEKS	TOPICS	READINGS
I		Overview	
	1	The Ancient World Mesopotamia Egypt Hebrews India China	Book 1, 1-14 Book 1, 15-22 Book 1, 93-103 Book 1, 127-133 Book 1, 1323-1331 Book 1, 1563-1572
II		Greece	
	2	Ancient Greek Literature Hesiod Theogony Works and Days	Book 1, 247-258 Book 1, 259-262 Book 1, 263-271 Book 1, 272-277
	Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
	Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of key stories and include any ideas and themes.	
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: mythology	
	Essay Topics	E1: Describe the world of the ancient Greeks. What were the main city states? How did the Greek civilization emerge? E2: How did the poet Hesiod differ from Homer? What were the types of myths that interested Hesiod? E3: What are the stories in Theogony about? E4: When Prometheus steals fire, in exchange for the blessing, what are the curses?	
	3-4	Homer The Iliad	Book 1, 277-287 Book 1, 288-420
	Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
	Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description for the narrative and include the themes, main characters, character analysis of Achilles, critical scenes.	
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: epic poem	
	Essay Topics	E1: In Book I, what universal traits are addressed when Agamemnon leads an army to fight Troy, and then makes the decision to sacrifice his daughter, Iphigenia, in order to have enough wind to sail the warships? E2: How does Homer address the notion of hero and heroism? E3: What is the significance of the immortal shield in Book 18? E4: How does the narrative explore the idea that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the sons?	
	5	Sappho Love Lyrics	Book 1, 791-797

Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description for each poem: poetic form, subject, figurative language, and impression on the reader.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: lyric poetry	
Essay Topics	E1. How is Sappho's poetry lyric poetry? E2. Discuss the way that Sappho explores the relationship between people in her poetry. E3. Describe how Sappho achieves a sense of intimacy with her poems. E4. Discuss themes of love and desire in Sappho.	
6	Aeschylus Agamemnon	Book 1, 798-805 Book 1, 806-857
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, main characters, character analysis of Clytemnestra, the critical scene.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: revenge tragedy	
Essay Topics	E1: What does the drama suggest about the nature of justice, and whether or not blood crimes will ever fully restore balance. E2: How does the murder of Agamemnon set off a cycle of revenge? What are the characteristics of the revenge drama? E3: What are the attributes that Clytemnestra exhibits? E4: Discuss themes of betrayal in Agamemnon.	
7	Sophocles Oedipus Rex	Book 1, 891-898 Book 1, 899-951
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, main characters, character analysis of Oedipus, critical scene.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: in medias res, oedipal	
Essay Topics	E1: Discuss fate vs. free will in Oedipus Rex. E2: What drives Oedipus to kill his father and to take his mother as his wife? E3: How does Sophocles use the quest as an illustration of the journey one takes for self-knowledge? E4: Explore the function of violence in Oedipus Rex.	
8	Euripides Medea	Book 1, 999-1003 Book 1, 1004-1043
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, main characters, character analysis of Medea, critical scene.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: tragedy, catharsis	

Essay Topics	E1: What are the roles of love and sacrifice in Medea? E2: What are some of the ideas about women, motherhood, and femininity that Medea explores. E3: Who does Medea kill? Why? What kind of chain of events does it set off? E4: Explore the function of violence in Medea.	
9	Aristophanes Lysistrata	Book 1, 1044-1048 Book 1, 1049-1082
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, main characters, character analysis of Lysistrata, critical scene.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: old comedy, middle comedy	
Essay Topics	E1: What does the play say about the value of war? E2: Explain the role of coercion, persuasion, and reconciliation in Lysistrata. E3: What is the play saying about the power (or powerlessness) of women? E4: of war and the desire of the women to stop the war by withholding sex until peace accords are signed.	
10	Plato	Book 1, 1083-1116
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description for each of the readings including an overview of the key ideas and structure.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: allegory	
Essay Topics	E1: What was the relationship between Plato and Socrates? How were the ideas of Socrates preserved? E2: What is the structure of the Apology? What is Plato's purpose in writing it? E3: According to Plato, how is knowledge gained? E4: Describe the allegory of the cave. What is its significance?	
11	Aristotle	Book 1, 1149-1155
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description for each of the readings including an overview of the key ideas and structure.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: catharsis, comedy, mimesis, tragedy, tragic hero	
Essay Topics	E1: What is the function of comedy? What is the impact on the audience? E2: What are the characteristics of a tragic hero? When is a character who meets a bad end not a tragic hero? E3: What is the function of tragedy? What is the impact on the audience? E4: What does Aristotle say is the nature of wisdom? Please describe.	

III**Rome**

12	Ancient Roman Literature Catullus	Book 1, 1157-1163 Book 1, 1164-1173
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description for each poem: poetic form, subject, figurative language, and impression on the reader.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: lyric poetry	
Essay Topics	<p>E1. How is Catullus' poetry lyric poetry?</p> <p>E2. Discuss the way that Catullus approaches the topic of sexual intimacy in his poetry.</p> <p>E3. Describe how the theme of love and desire appear in "Come, Lesbia, let us live and love."</p> <p>E4. Discuss themes of loss and grief in "If man can find rich consolation".</p>	
13	Virgil Aeneid	Book 1, 1174-1180 Book 1, 1181-1264
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, main characters, character analysis of Aeneas, critical scenes.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms:	
Essay Topics	<p>E1: How is the Aeneid an epic poem?</p> <p>E2: Discuss the betrayals that Aeneas learns of when he arrives in Carthage (Book 1).</p> <p>E3: How do the Greeks deceive the Trojans, and how does it lead to the fall of Troy? (Book 2)</p> <p>E4: Discuss the role of prophecy in the Aeneid.</p>	
14	Ovid Metamorphosis	Book 1, 1265-1269 Book 1, 1270-1292
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of key stories and include any ideas and themes.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: mythology	
Essay Topics	<p>E1: What are the Metamorphoses? What occurs in them?</p> <p>E2: Describe the Creation story as it appears in Metamorphoses.</p> <p>E3: Describe the behavior of the gods toward humans in Metamorphoses.</p> <p>E4: Discuss the role of symbolism as a reminder of the story that led to a metamorphosis.</p>	
15	Petronius Satyricon	Book 1, 1293-1296 Book 1, 1297-1321
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, main	

Analysis	characters, character analysis of Trimalchio, critical scene.
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: satire
Essay Topics	<p>E1: What is Trimalchio trying to accomplish by hosting a dinner?</p> <p>E2: Describe items in Trimalchio's home that show his pride of being a self-made man, and rising up from a low station.</p> <p>E3: Discuss the role of food. What is Petronius saying about Trimalchio and his character through his selection of food items?</p> <p>E4: List a few scenes in which Trimalchio plays tricks on or jokes with his guests.</p>

V	Finals
16	Review, Essay, Exam