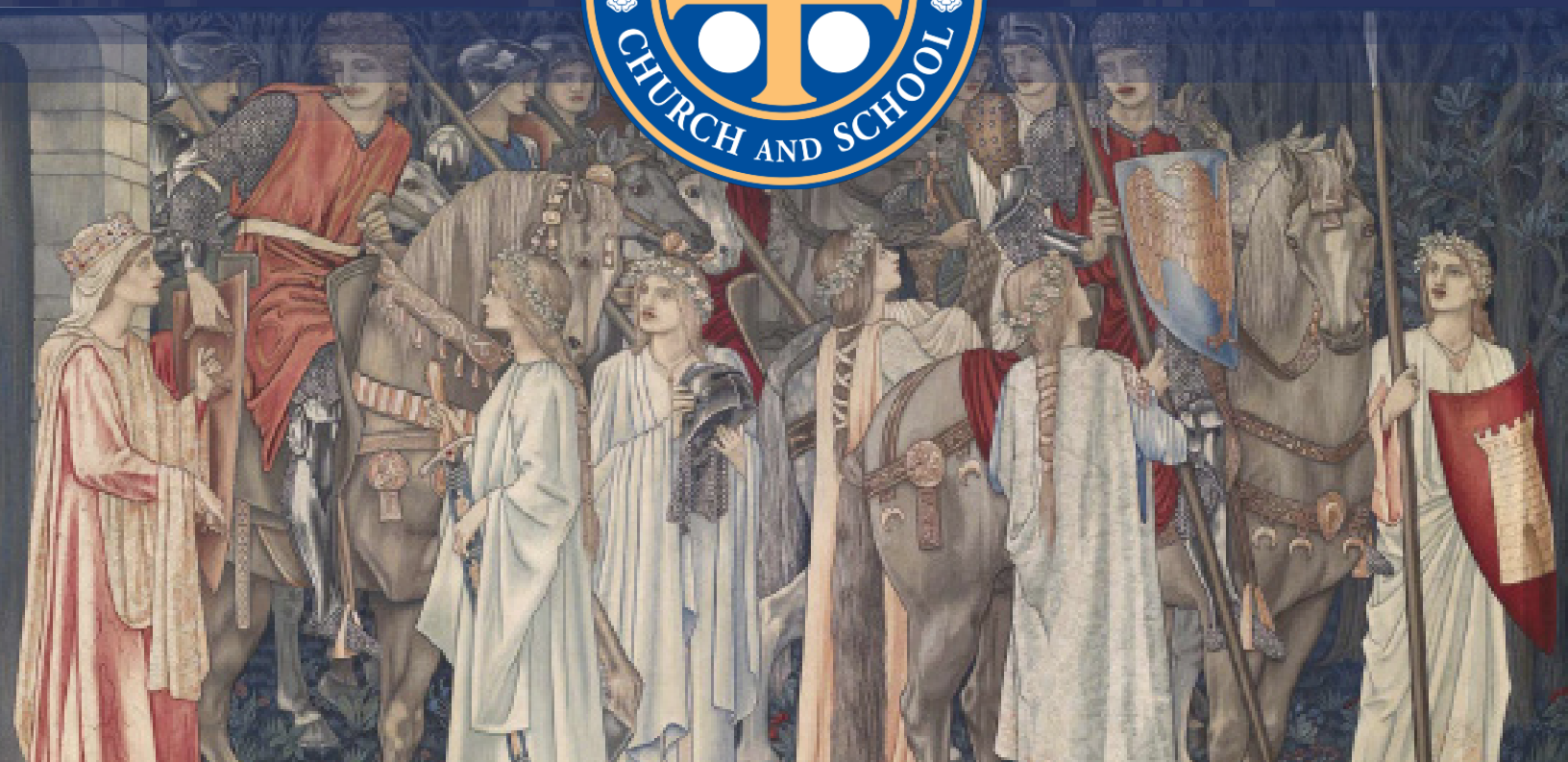
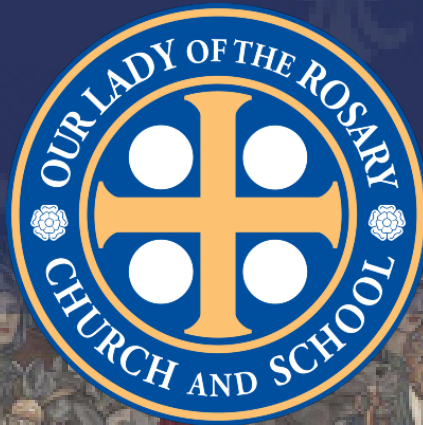




English Curriculum

Grade 07



Course Overview

Course Description

This course guides students through the legends, poetry, and drama of the Medieval world, inviting them to enter an age where faith, honor, and imagination shaped the soul of a civilization. Through the exploits of chivalric knights, the mystery of Arthurian legend, the haunting vision of poets, and the wit of Shakespeare's stage, students will see how the medieval mind sought to order life toward God and the common good. They will study how the Christian imagination transformed older heroic ideals, blending courage with humility, justice with mercy, and power with service. Along the way, students will develop skill in close reading, rhetorical expression, and oral recitation, learning to interpret not only what a story says, but what it loves.

Why We Teach It...

We teach Medieval Literature because it is the meeting place of the ancient and the modern—where the courage of pagan heroism is baptized by the grace of Christian virtue. These stories, shaped by the monastery and the marketplace, by courtly love and the call to holiness, reveal a civilization seeking to order all things toward the City of God. In the legends of Arthur's knights, the poetry of the medieval imagination, and the drama of Shakespeare's stage, students encounter a world that wrestles with temptation, honors sacrifice, and delights in beauty. To study these works is to recover a vision of honor rooted not in self-glory, but in service; not in conquest, but in fidelity. Such a vision forms students to discern the noble from the base, to love the good for its own sake, and to live as heirs of a tradition that still speaks to the restless heart.

Course Objectives








By the end of this course, students will be able to:



Trace the development of medieval literature and drama, noting how Christian belief reshaped heroic ideals and poetic form.



Course Objectives | Continued...

-  Identify and analyze major literary elements—plot structure, character, setting, theme, and conflict—across multiple genres.
-  Recognize and explain the use of key poetic and rhetorical devices, including meter, rhyme, alliteration, personification, symbolism, and allusion.
-  Evaluate how legends, poetry, and drama convey moral truths and reflect the virtues and vices of their age.
-  Compare differing visions of heroism, love, and honor through the lens of natural law, classical philosophy, and Catholic tradition.
-  Demonstrate mastery of classical rhetoric through Socratic discussion, literary essays, oral recitation, and dramatic performance.
-  Develop habits of close reading, interpretive charity, and moral reflection through sustained engagement with primary texts.
-  Articulate the meaning of key texts, characters, and themes within the broader narrative of Western civilization's moral and spiritual heritage.

Source Material

Why Read Literature by David M. Wright

The Blood-Red Crescent by Henry Garnett

"The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe

King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table by Roger Lancelyn Green

A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare

"Lepanto" by G.K. Chesterton

"The Lady of Shalott" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

"Sonnet 29" by William Shakespeare


Selected supplementary poetry and excerpts as provided in class




Key Concepts


Plot Structure	Meter and Rhythm	Soliloquy
Types of Conflict	Rhyme and Rhyme	Aside
Protagonist / Antagonist	Schemes	Stage Directions and
Dynamic vs. Static Characters	Alliteration	Blocking
Point of View	Symbol and Allegory	Dramatic Irony
Theme vs. Moral	Enjambment	Character Foil
Legend vs. Myth	Personification	Monologue vs. Dialogue
	Allusion	


Central Themes


 Faith and Heroism – True heroism is measured not by power or victory, but by fidelity to God, the common good, and the defense of the innocent.

 The Transformation of Honor – Medieval literature reshapes the pagan warrior's code into a Christian vision of courage joined to humility and mercy.

 The Power of Story – Legends, poetry, and drama transmit a culture's deepest values, shaping the moral imagination across generations.

 Love and Loyalty – Lasting bonds are forged through trust, sacrifice, and constancy, even in the face of betrayal or loss.

 The Moral Imagination – Works of beauty train the soul to see beyond mere pleasure or utility, toward what is true, noble, and eternal.

 The Drama of the Human Heart – Literature reveals the struggles of conscience, the testing of virtue, and the hope of redemption in every age.



On Writing | *The Progymnasmata*

All written work in this course is integrated with Classical Composition (Memoria Press), a program rooted in the ancient art of the progymnasmata—the graded exercises in eloquence used by the Greeks and Romans. In 7th Grade, students will continue building upon the skills gained in previous years with Fable and Narrative, Chreia/Maxim, & advancing to Refutation/Confirmation. This stage trains students to develop a concise statement of wisdom or moral truth, expand it with examples, and defend it with reasoned argument.

In preparation for the 8th Grade study of the full sequence of the progymnasmata, students will also begin learning how these exercises provide the foundation for the Classical Oration—the structured form of essay writing used throughout the classical tradition. By practicing these forms, students will learn to write with clarity, order, and persuasive force, discovering that writing is not merely a skill but a means of seeking truth and communicating it rightly.

Assessments

Summative: 45%

- Unit Exams
- Classical Composition Projects (Fable, Narrative, Chreia/Maxim)
- Essays in the Classical Oration form
- Recitations
- Quizzes

Formative: 35%

- Weekly Classical Composition exercises
- Short written responses and narrations
- Draft components of Chreia/Maxim & Classical Oration
- Oral reading and performance practice
- Homework

Conscientiousness 20%

- Pop quizzes
- Homework
- Classwork
- Preparedness and participation



Scope & Sequence

Unit 1 | Literary Foundations

1 Week

Week 1

Overview

Students will be introduced to the fundamental structures and elements of literature. Through guided reading and discussion of *Why Read Literature*, they will explore why great works endure, how stories shape the soul, and the essential components of plot, conflict, and theme. Students will also learn the difference between literary genres, the relationship between form and meaning, and the role of the reader in engaging with a text.

Central-One-Idea

Conscience is not a personal feeling but a judgment rooted in truth. To obey one's conscience is to act in accord with divine and natural law, even when it demands great personal sacrifice. True freedom is found not in power or self-preservation, but in fidelity to the truth.

Great Question(s)

Why do we read stories that are older than ourselves?

Key Figures & Concepts

Plot Structure; Conflict Types; Protagonist; Antagonist; Theme; Point of View; Legend; Myth

Sources

Why Read Literature by David M. Wright



Week 2-9 Overview

Students will read *The Blood-Red Crescent*, a work of historical fiction set during the siege of Constantinople. They will examine how historical fiction blends fact and imagination to illuminate past events, and how the characters' moral choices reveal the human dimension of history. Students will practice identifying elements of plot, conflict, setting, and point of view, while also considering how faith, courage, and sacrifice are portrayed in the defense of Christian civilization.

Central-One-Idea

Historical fiction, when grounded in truth, reveals how courage and conviction can shape the course of history, showing that the defense of faith and freedom often demands personal sacrifice.

Great Question(s)

- What makes a story from the past worth remembering?
- How can fiction help us understand real history?
- What gives courage its strength in the face of fear?
- How do ordinary people shape the fate of nations?
- What role does faith play in moral decision-making?
- How does knowing the end of a story change the way we read it?
- Can history be told without heroes?
- What can a siege teach us about perseverance?

Key Figures & Concepts

Constantinople; Siege; Historical Fiction; Setting; Conflict; Protagonist; Antagonist; Point of View; Dynamic Character; Static Character

Sources

The Blood-Red Crescent by Henry Garnett



Week 10-13

Overview

Students will study Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" and selected biographical material, exploring how Poe's life and times shaped his unique style. They will analyze the use of irony, mood, and symbolism, as well as the concept of the unreliable narrator. Students will practice distinguishing between literal and inferential comprehension, and they will examine how narrative perspective shapes the reader's understanding of events.

Central-One-Idea

Poe's tales reveal that the human mind, when unmoored from truth, can become its own prison, where guilt demands confession even when escape seems possible.

Great Question(s)

- What makes a narrator trustworthy?
- Can guilt exist without being seen?
- How does fear shape what we believe to be true?
- Why do we find beauty in dark stories?

Key Figures & Concepts

Edgar Allan Poe; Unreliable Narrator; Irony; Mood; Symbolism; Conflict; First-Person POV; Suspense; Guilt; Confession

Sources

"The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe



Week 14-20 Overview

Students will read King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table, exploring how medieval legend blends history, myth, and moral idealism. They will compare the classical hero to the medieval knight, noting how Christian virtues transformed the warrior's code. Through close reading, students will analyze themes of loyalty, justice, and sacrifice, and examine how heroes shape the identity and values of their culture.

Central-One-Idea

Arthurian legend shows that true leadership is not measured by power or conquest, but by the defense of the weak, fidelity to one's word, and a willingness to sacrifice for the common good.

Great Question(s)

- What makes a hero worthy of imitation?
- How does a leader earn loyalty?
- Can honor exist without humility?
- How do legends shape a culture's ideals?
- Why do some heroes endure in memory while others fade?
- What is the cost of breaking one's word?
- Can a flawed hero still be great?

Key Figures & Concepts

King Arthur; Round Table; Chivalry; Quest; Loyalty; Betrayal; Honor; Classical Hero; Medieval Hero; Sacrifice

Sources

King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table by Roger Lancelyn Green



Week 21-25 Overview

Students will read *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, learning how Shakespeare weaves together comedy, romance, and transformation to explore the nature of love and illusion. They will study the structure and meter of the Shakespearean sonnet, recognize key poetic and dramatic devices, and identify Catholic elements subtly present in his works. Students will also examine the historical context of Elizabethan England, considering how faith, politics, and art intersected in the playwright's life and times.

Central-One-Idea

Shakespeare's comedies reveal that love, though often clouded by folly and misunderstanding, finds its fulfillment when ordered toward truth, harmony, and the good of others.

Great Question(s)

- How does comedy reveal truth?
- Can love exist without clarity?
- Why do we enjoy being fooled in a story?
- How does beauty help us recognize what is true?
- What can a play teach us about real life?

Key Figures & Concepts

William Shakespeare; Elizabethan England; Sonnet; Iambic Pentameter; Personification; Dramatic Irony; Comedy; Love; Illusion; Harmony

Sources

A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare
"Sonnet 29" by William Shakespeare

Week 26-29 Overview

Students will study selected poems, including G.K. Chesterton's "Lepanto" and Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott," exploring how poets use sound, rhythm, and imagery to convey truth and beauty. They will examine poetic structure—line, stanza, meter, and rhyme—and analyze the interplay of symbol, allusion, and theme. Through memorization and recitation, students will experience poetry as a spoken art, cultivating clarity, composure, and expressive delivery.

Central-One-Idea

Poetry unites sound and sense, moving both mind and heart to see the eternal within the temporal.

Great Question(s)

- Why do we remember poetry when we forget other things?
- How does sound shape meaning?
- Can beauty lead us to truth?
- Why is memorization still valuable in a modern world?

Key Figures & Concepts

G.K. Chesterton; Alfred, Lord Tennyson; Meter; Rhyme; Stanza; Alliteration; Symbol; Allusion; Enjambment; Recitation

Sources

"Lepanto" by G.K. Chesterton

"The Lady of Shalott" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson



Week 30-33 Overview

Students will continue their study of poetry with an emphasis on dramatic delivery and deeper thematic interpretation. They will complete the memorization and recitation of *The Lady of Shalott* and study Shakespeare's "Sonnet 29," examining how poets compress profound truths into carefully chosen words. Special attention will be given to emotional connection with the audience, mastery of rhythm, and the ability to convey meaning through tone and pacing.

Central-One-Idea

Poetry, when spoken with understanding, becomes a living work—shaping not only the listener's mind but also the speaker's soul.

Great Question(s)

- How does speaking a poem aloud change its meaning?
- Can a performance become part of a poem's truth?
- Why does beauty require both form and feeling?
- How does poetry teach us to see the world differently?

Key Figures & Concepts

William Shakespeare; Alfred, Lord Tennyson; Sonnet; Iambic Pentameter; Rhythm; Rhyme Scheme; Imagery; Tone; Pacing; Expression

Sources

"The Lady of Shalott" (Pt. 2–3) by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

"Sonnet 29" by William Shakespeare



Week 34-35 Overview

In the final unit, students will synthesize their learning through a combination of performance, recitation, and reflective analysis. They will present a dramatic monologue or scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and recite selected poetry, demonstrating mastery of interpretation, memory, and delivery. Students will also engage in review sessions to reinforce key literary concepts, figures, and themes studied throughout the year, preparing for a comprehensive final assessment.

Central-One-Idea

The study of literature reaches its fullest expression when knowledge, skill, and virtue are united in both speech and action.

Great Question(s)

- How does performance reveal the soul of a work?
- Can understanding be complete without expression?

Key Figures & Concepts

William Shakespeare; Dramatic Monologue; Recitation; Expression; Interpretation; Review; Synthesis; Virtue; Memory; Delivery

Sources

A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare (selected monologue or scene)

Previously studied poems and excerpts



Course Catechism

This section is structured as a series of questions and answers—intended to cultivate wisdom, virtue, and a love of tradition in the soul of the reader. Drawing from classical education, Christian orthodoxy, and the accumulated insights of Western civilization, this catechism aims to form not only the mind but the moral imagination.



Each question is crafted to provoke contemplation, and each answer is more than mere information—it is a small liturgy of truth, designed to be memorized, internalized, and lived. In the tradition of ancient catechisms, this section assumes that learning is not just for passing tests, but for becoming someone.

Section I | Unit I

Q: What are the six elements of plot structure?

A: Exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, and denouement.

Q: What are the seven types of conflict in literature?

A: Man vs. man, man vs. self, man vs. nature, man vs. society, man vs. fate, man vs. technology, and man vs. the supernatural.

Q: What is the difference between a protagonist and an antagonist?

A: The protagonist is the central character who drives the story, and the antagonist is the opposing force or character.

Q: What is a legend?

A: A traditional story, often historical, that has been passed down and may be embellished over time.

Q: What is the purpose of reading great literature?

A: To shape the mind and soul toward truth, goodness, and beauty.



Section II | Unit II

Q: Where is *The Blood-Red Crescent* set?

A: During the siege of Constantinople.

Q: What is historical fiction?

A: A narrative that blends factual historical events with imagined details or characters.

Q: Who is the protagonist of *The Blood-Red Crescent*?

A: A young Christian boy caught in the defense of Constantinople.

Q: What is the main historical event in the novel?

A: The fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453.

Q: How does point of view affect the story?

A: It shapes how the reader understands events, emotions, and motivations.

Section III | Unit III

Q: Who wrote “The Tell-Tale Heart”?

A: Edgar Allan Poe.

Q: What is an unreliable narrator?

A: A narrator whose account is untrustworthy due to bias, mental state, or intentional deception.

Q: What type of irony is most present in “The Tell-Tale Heart”?

A: Dramatic irony, as the audience knows more about the narrator’s guilt than he admits.

Q: What sound drives the narrator to confess?

A: The imagined beating of the old man’s heart.

Q: What is the central conflict in “The Tell-Tale Heart”?

A: Man vs. self—the narrator’s battle with his own guilt and madness.



Section IV | Unit IV

Q: Who is the central figure in Arthurian legend?

A: King Arthur.

Q: What is the Round Table a symbol of?

A: Equality and unity among Arthur's knights.

Q: What is chivalry?

A: A moral and social code of honor, loyalty, and courtesy practiced by knights.

Q: What is the difference between a classical hero and a medieval hero?

A: The classical hero seeks glory through strength, while the medieval hero seeks honor through virtue and service.

Q: Who betrays King Arthur in many versions of the legend?

A: Sir Mordred.

Section V | Unit V

Q: Who wrote A Midsummer Night's Dream?

A: William Shakespeare.

Q: What is iambic pentameter?

A: A metrical pattern of five pairs of alternating unstressed and stressed syllables per line.

Q: What is a Shakespearean sonnet's rhyme scheme?

A: ABAB CDCD EFEF GG.

Q: What is dramatic irony?

A: When the audience knows something that the characters do not.

Q: In A Midsummer Night's Dream, who is the king of the fairies?

A: Oberon.



Section VI | Unit VI

Q: Who wrote “Lepanto”?

A: G.K. Chesterton.

Q: Who wrote “The Lady of Shalott”?

A: Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

Q: What is alliteration?

A: The repetition of initial consonant sounds in nearby words.

Q: What is enjambment?

A: The continuation of a sentence without pause beyond the end of a line of poetry.

Q: What is a stanza?

A: A grouped set of lines in a poem, often separated by a space.

Section VII | Unit VII

Q: What is a sonnet?

A: A 14-line poem with a set rhyme scheme and meter, often expressing a single theme.

Q: Which Shakespearean sonnet is studied in this unit?

A: “Sonnet 29.”

Q: What is imagery?

A: Language that appeals to the senses to create mental pictures.

Q: What is tone in poetry?

A: The poet’s or speaker’s attitude toward the subject.

Q: What does pacing refer to in recitation?

A: The speed and rhythm of delivering lines.



Section VIII | Unit VIII

Q: What is a dramatic monologue?

A: A speech by a single character expressing personal thoughts or feelings.

Q: What is interpretation in performance?

A: The actor's or reader's personal understanding and expression of the text's meaning.

Q: Why is review important before a final performance?

A: It reinforces knowledge and ensures accuracy in delivery.

Q: What is synthesis in literature study?

A: Combining knowledge from multiple works to form a unified understanding.

Q: How does recitation train the memory?

A: By committing words to heart through repetition and understanding.



Section IX | *Recitations*

A Midsummer Night's Dream (Act V, Scene I, lines 418–433)

By William Shakespeare — “The lover, all as frantic...” (Theseus' speech)

“The Lady of Shalott” (Part I)

By Alfred, Lord Tennyson

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And through the field the road runs by
To many-towered Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Through the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.

“Lepanto” (Opening Stanzas)

By G.K. Chesterton

“White founts falling in the Courts of the sun,..”



Week 1

Weekly Logos

Why We Read...

Before stories can be enjoyed, they must first be understood as more than entertainment—they are the treasury of a culture's memory. This week, students will see that literature begins not with facts to memorize, but with questions: Why do we read? What does a great book give us that nothing else can? Through Why Read Literature, they will discover that the mind is shaped by the words it loves, and that the act of reading is both an intellectual and moral pursuit. Literature, rightly read, forms the heart as much as the mind.

What Are We Assessing?

The Facts

- ▣ Six elements of plot structure
- ▣ Seven types of literary conflict
- ▣ Definition of a protagonist and antagonist
- ▣ Difference between a legend and a myth

What Are We Assessing?

The Skills

- ▣ Six elements of plot structure
- ▣ Seven types of literary conflict
- ▣ Definition of a protagonist and antagonist
- ▣ Difference between a legend and a myth

What Are We Assessing?

The Truths

To Read Well is to Think Well...

These truths unify every element of the lesson:

- That literature is a mirror in which man sees both his glory and his frailty
- That to know great stories is to know the soul of a culture
- That the books we love will shape the kind of person we become



Assessments | *Suggested Types*

- ▣ Identification Quiz: Name the six plot elements and seven conflicts
- ▣ Short Written Response: “Why do we still read old stories?”
- ▣ Oral Recitation: List the plot elements in order and define each
- ▣ Classification Exercise: Identify the conflict type in short scenarios

Pacing | *By Week*

Day	Focus	Homework
Monday	Introduction to course; why literature matters	Read Why Read Literature, pp. 1–3
Tuesday	Plot structure: the six elements	Plot diagram of a familiar story
Wednesday	Seven conflicts in literature	Match conflicts to examples worksheet
Thursday	Protagonist vs. antagonist; legend vs. myth	Write a brief comparison paragraph
Friday	Review & Quiz	None



Teacher Tips

Begin by asking: What book has changed the way you think—and why?

Emphasize that reading is a formative act: it shapes affections and judgments.

Use familiar films or stories: illustrate plot structure before moving to literature.

Return often to the idea: The stories we tell reveal what we love and believe.

Catechetical moment: To read what is true, good, and beautiful is to train the soul to desire Heaven.



Appendix

Essays In This Course...

Each of the three major essays in this course will follow the structure and spirit of our Classical Writing Curriculum at Our Lady of the Rosary. Students are expected to write with clarity, order, and persuasive force, employing the Classical Oration form:

- Exordium – The introduction that gains attention and builds ethos
- Narratio – Background/context, statement of facts/narration of events
- Divisio – Outline of major arguments
- Confirmatio – 3 Proofs & Sub-Proofs (body paragraphs)
- Refutatio – Address and refute opposing arguments
- Peroratio – The conclusion: moving the heart, restating the truth

Each essay must be a minimum of 2 (except long essay) full pages, MLA formatted, and include a bibliography with at least five primary sources and three scholarly secondary sources. This level of work prepares students not only for collegiate academic writing, but more importantly, for thoughtful, ordered argument in service of truth, which lies at the heart of classical education.

Prompt I

Explain how Poe uses narrative structure and literary devices to reveal the narrator's mental state.

Objective: Analyze how plot events, pacing, and the unreliable narrator's voice work together to create suspense and communicate the central truth of the story. Support your analysis with direct textual evidence, noting how each structural choice shapes the reader's understanding of guilt and confession.

Prompt II

Drawing on *The Blood-Red Crescent*, explain how historical fiction can communicate both factual events and deeper truths about courage, faith, and sacrifice.

Objective: Describe at least three ways Henry Garnett blends historical detail with imaginative storytelling, and discuss how these techniques help the reader understand the people and events of the siege of Constantinople. Include direct references to scenes, characters, and historical context.

Prompt III

whether the moral and thematic lessons found in *King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* remain essential for shaping virtue and wisdom today.

Objective: Compare how each work portrays love, loyalty, honor, and reconciliation, and assess whether these portrayals still speak powerfully to the modern reader. Defend your position with at least three specific examples from the two texts, respond to one opposing view, and conclude with a vision for how these works should be used in education to form both intellect and character.

