ENGL 2131 – American Literature I

Assigned Reading Selections

No primary text. Multiple external readings assigned. Please see below.

Disclaimer: The reading selections provided below are intended to offer a general overview of the content to be covered in ENGL 2131. These readings are subject to change based on individual course and instructor assignments.

Unit 1: Course Introduction
  o There are no textbook reading assignments associated with this unit.

Unit 2: Pre-Colonial America and Colonial Settlements
  o Lesson Content
  o Sioux Creation Story
  o Navajo story, "Coyote, Skunk, and Prairie Dogs"
  o Christopher Columbus, selections from Letter to King Ferdinand (1493)
    o Custom selections embedded in course.
  o Christopher Columbus, selections from Letter to King Ferdinand (1503)
    o Custom selections embedded in course.
  o John Smith, General History of Virginia (1624)
    o Custom selections embedded in course.
  o John Smith, Description of New England (1616)
    o Custom selections embedded in course.
  o John Winthrop, selections from A Model of Christian Charity (1630)
    o Custom selections embedded in course.
  o John Winthrop, selections from Journal (1630-1649)
    o Custom selections embedded in course.
- John Winthrop, selections from "Speech to the General Court" (1645)
  - Custom selections embedded in course.
- Excerpts from Anne Hutchinson’s trial
  - Custom selections embedded in course.
- Mary Rowlandson, *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (1682)
- Anne Bradstreet, "The Prologue" to *The Tenth Muse* (1960)
- Anne Bradstreet, "To My Dear and Loving Husband"
- Anne Bradstreet, "A Letter to Her Husband, Absent Upon Public Employment"
- Anne Bradstreet, "The Author to Her Book"
- Anne Bradstreet, "In Honour of that High and Mighty Princess, Queen Elizabeth"
- Anne Bradstreet, "Contemplations"
- Anne Bradstreet, "In Memory of My Dear Grandchild Elizabeth Bradstreet, Who Deceased August, 1665, Being a Year and Half Old"
- Anne Bradstreet, "Here Follows Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House July 10th, 1666"

**Unit 3: Toward a National Literature**

- Lesson Content
- Jonathan Edwards, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* (1741)
- Benjamin Franklin, "The Way to Wealth" (1765)
- Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography* (1741)
- Thomas Jefferson, "The Declaration of Independence" (1776)
- Jean de Crevecoeur, “What is an American?”, *Letters from an American Farmer* (1783)
- Phillis Wheatley, "On Being Brought from Africa to America"
- Phillis Wheatley, "To the University of Cambridge, in New England"
- Phillis Wheatley, "On the Death of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield, 1770"
- Phillis Wheatley, "Thoughts on the Works of Providence"
Unit 4: The American Renaissance: Transcendentalism and Romanticism

American Romanticism texts:
- Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Birth-Mark" (1843)
- Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener" (1853)
- Edgar Allan Poe, "Sonnet--To Science" (1829)
- Edgar Allan Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839)

Transcendentalist texts:
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance" (1841)
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature" (1836)
  - You are required to read the following selections only from this text: "Introduction," "Nature," "Language," "Spirit," and "Prospects"
- Henry David Thoreau, Walden, "The Ponds" (1849)
- Henry David Thoreau, Walden, "Civil Disobedience" (1849)

Unit 5: Nineteenth Century Critical Perspectives

Frederick Douglass, The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself (1845)
  - You are required to read the following chapters in the text only: Chapters I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, X and XI.
- Harriet Jacobs, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl: Written by Herself (1861)
  - This link provides the full-text of Incidents in the Life of Slave Girl: Written by Herself. You are required to read the following chapters in the text only: Chapters I, II, V, X, XXXIX, XL & XLI.
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Declaration of Sentiments" (1848)
- Margaret Fuller, Woman in the Nineteenth Century (1845)
- You are required to read the "Preface" only.
- Rebecca Harding Davis, "Life in the Iron-Mills" (1861)