

ENGL S127E 01 (SB24): Readings in American Literature

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 Edit

This course serves as both an introduction to as well as an exploration of American literature from the nineteenth century to the present. We will ask many questions of these texts, not the least of which is “what do we mean when we say ‘American?’” Given the wide range of the body of work that comprises American literature, however, we will also periodically ask in passing what we mean by “literature,” so as to consider what roles the literary plays in creating and shaping the possibilities of social imagination, private and public discourse, as well as one’s own identity. Emphasis on analytical reading, critical writing, and class discussions.

Course Format

We will meet each class on zoom. Here is the link we will use each time:

<https://yale.zoom.us/j/98234983025>  (<https://yale.zoom.us/j/98234983025>)

Grading will be as follows:

- * Participation and presentation: 20%
- * Paper #1: 25%
- * Paper #2: 30%
- * Paper #3: 25%

* Part of your **participation** will involve a classroom (zoom) **presentation** during the semester. On a day of your choosing, you will prepare a short (10-minute) presentation on either: a) the assigned reading for that day, or b) a text that is *not* on the syllabus but that you feel offers a compelling addition to that day’s reading assignments (or, as a call-back to one of our previous readings). The most successful presentations will be those that

- 1) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the assigned readings or additional texts
- 2) Summarize effectively the text and its relevance to our discussions
- 3) Introduce questions for discussion

Tues. May 28 :

- * Introduction to the class
- * Discuss Gary Snyder "[Axe Handles:](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/57150/axe-handles)" (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/57150/axe-handles>) (1983)

Thurs. May 30 :

- * Emily Dickinson, Poem #s 69, 153, 182, 185-193, 207, 211, 249, 287-288, 303, 311 (pdf [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/y95zb6qhs6361ny/Emily%20Dickinson%20poems%20day%201.pdf?dl=0) (<https://www.dropbox.com/s/y95zb6qhs6361ny/Emily%20Dickinson%20poems%20day%201.pdf?dl=0>))
- * Emily Dickinson, Poem #s 488, 500, 585, 709-712, 883, 986 (pdf [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/mhf7uu2wb5wnx0m/Emily%20Dickinson%20Day%202%20poems%20%282%29.pdf?) (<https://www.dropbox.com/s/mhf7uu2wb5wnx0m/Emily%20Dickinson%20Day%202%20poems%20%282%29.pdf?>))

[dl=0](#).)

Tues. June 4:

* *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (Norton Critical Edition, pdf [here](#)
(<https://www.dropbox.com/s/1peonbwu5w0k1tu/Frederick%20Douglass%20NARRATIVE%20%281845%29.pdf?dl=0>.)

Thurs. June 6:

* Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener" (pdf [here](#)
(<https://www.dropbox.com/s/albi36ux8gx3ceu/Melville%20BARTLEBY%20%26%20PARADISE-TARTARUS%20.pdf?dl=0>.)

* **Assignment #1 Due**

Tues. June 11:

* Zora Neale Hurston, *Moses (short story)* (1939) (link coming)

Thurs. June 13:

* Ezra Pound, Poetry, excerpts coming.

Tues. June 18:

* **Assignment #2 Due**

Thurs. June 20:

* Thomas Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, chapters 1-3 (paperback [online](#) (<https://www.amazon.com/Crying-Lot-Perennial-Fiction-Library/dp/006091307X/>)) (pdf [here](#) (<https://www.dropbox.com/s/59lsvbo419xqnt9/thomas-pynchon-the-crying-of-lot-49.pdf?dl=0>.)

Tues. June 25:

* Thomas Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, chapters 4-6

Thurs. June 27:

* Octavia E. Butler, "Bloodchild" (1984) pdf [here](#)
(<https://www.dropbox.com/s/3sypj0h7jqx3itg/Octavia%20Butler%20BLOODCHILD.pdf?dl=0>.)

Assignment #3 Due

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
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