High School Sequencing for English/Language Arts

(Effective 2012-2013)

“To become college and career ready, students must grapple with works of exceptional craft and thought whose range extends across genres, cultures, and centuries. Such works offer profound insights into the human condition and serve as models for students’ own thinking and writing. Along with high-quality contemporary works, these texts should be chosen from among seminal U.S. documents, the classics of American literature, and the timeless dramas of Shakespeare. Through wide and deep reading of literature and literary nonfiction of steadily increasing sophistication, students gain a reservoir of literary and cultural knowledge, references, and images; the ability to evaluate intricate arguments; and the capacity to surmount the challenges posed by complex texts” (CCSS).

The scope and sequence of literature for North Carolina high school students allows for a literary experience that carries not only a global perspective but an opportunity to view U.S. literature and literary nonfiction within that global lens. Literary nonfiction (a type of informational text) uses artistic and literary techniques often associated with fiction or poetry to report on actual persons, events, or places. In each English course (I – IV) students are required to study U.S. documents “of historical and literary significance” as well as one Shakespearean play. Please note that an entire play by Shakespeare should be studied at some point in high school but not necessarily every year. Teachers may use part of a play to enrich the study of complementing text or to conduct a close reading with the intent of digging deeper.

The literature selections provide a vehicle by which to teach the CCSS standards and ensure that students will have a rich and diverse understanding of literature by the end of their senior year:

The English I course provides a foundational study of literary genres (novels, short stories, poetry, drama, literary nonfiction). It should include influential U.S. documents and one Shakespearean play.

English II introduces literary global perspectives focusing on literature from the Americas (Caribbean, Central, South, and North), Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia, Oceania, and the Middle East. Influential U.S. documents and a Shakespearean play should be included.

English III is an in-depth study of U.S. literature and U.S. literary nonfiction especially foundational works and documents from the 17th century through the early 20th century. At least one Shakespearean play should be included.

English IV completes the global perspective initiated in English II. Though its focus is on European (Western, Southern, Northern) literature, this course includes important U.S. documents and literature (texts influenced by European philosophy or action). At least one Shakespearean play should be included.

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