

# **Fair Lawn Public Schools**

**Fair Lawn, NJ**

## **Comedy in Literature: An English 12 CP Elective**

**August**

# **2017**

**Aligned to NJSL 2017  
Revised August 2012**

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The English 12 CP/H Comedy in Literature Elective is a Literature-based course that was developed by the Fair Lawn English Language Arts Department and aligned to the Grade 11-12 New Jersey Students Learning Standards.

# **Fair Lawn School District**

## **Committee Credits**

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## English 12 CP Short Story Elective

### I. Course Synopsis

This course will explore the role of comedy and humor in literature, as well as in the contemporary American “pop” culture. It will pose the essential questions, “What makes us laugh? Why? How have the comic sensibilities of the culture changed and evolved over the centuries?” Students will consider the social and political impact of humor, as well as its various forms, including: satire, farce, parody, and irony. The course will consider literature of the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries (all necessary social and historical contexts will be considered). Various literary genres will be analyzed within a series of specific units of study. These genres will include essays, plays, novels, television shows, movies, and comic strips. Students will also be expected to compose their own humor pieces.

### II. Philosophy & Rationale

In that literature provides students a lens onto the world, it is the goal of the English Department to provide the students in this course with an understanding of the historical/cultural/social contexts of department-selected essential texts. This course will enable students to develop and refine all of the necessary college-level skills provided in a “traditional” English course while, at the same time, allowing them the unique opportunity to focus on a specific area of study. In doing so, students will achieve mastery of the subject matter, thus enhancing and informing their future learning in all subjects. Ultimately, our aim is for students to develop the skills to fulfill the requirements of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and, in doing so, gain increased rigorous competence in reading, writing and critical thinking.

Differentiated instruction for students at different levels of achievement and specific learning needs (e.g. special education, English language learners, at-risk and Gifted & Talented) is embedded in targeted scaffolding based on knowledge of each student’s interests and assessment data.

**A. Reading Scaffolding**

Based on research on reading from the past forty years, the Fair Lawn English Department supports the three reading principles reported by Richard Allington (2003). Specifically, 1) students read better when they read more; 2) students learn from their reading when they have consistent opportunities to discuss and write about their reading; and 3) students need explicit instruction in reading comprehension strategies.

**Reading More**

In addition to curriculum-driven reading activities, independent reading is provided to support the various interests and learning needs of all students. Teachers facilitate student opportunities to read books-of-choice and timely texts as part of classroom curriculum and instruction. In particular, reading conferences and, at times, project-based assignments foster a meaningful reading experience with differentiated rigor.

The following questions support proficient reading reflection:

[A good reader asks...]

- What reading strategies impact comprehension?
- How does what you experience in life impact your interpretation of text?
- What additional perspectives are necessary for an enhanced understanding of the text?
- What parts of the text are most significant? Why?
- What is the author's purpose?
- What do you want to know more about?
- How is the study of academic vocabulary and vocabulary words in texts vocabulary so vital to a rigorous exploration of a text?

**Sharing Ideas about Reading**

In addition to written discussion and small-group collaboration, the Fair Lawn English Department engages students in purposeful paired discussions to share and process information more effectively. The following process may be used to operationalize "Turn and Talk" (Harvey & Daniels, 2009) as part of the classroom culture.

1. Explain the importance of actively sharing our thinking with a partner.
2. Teach the practice of partner conversation by reading a short text silently and modeling turn-and-talk guidelines. Ask students to notice the following: use eye contact; listen attentively, ask follow-up questions, disagree politely, share connections, and express reactions.
3. In guided practice, ask students to report their noticings. Create a classroom anchor chart that provides expectations for partner conversation. Choose a student-friendly topic and give it a go.

4. Provide consistent opportunities for partner conversations with deliberate student pairings. Whereas some prompts may be open-ended (e.g. What do you wonder about the text?), other prompts may be more specific (e.g. What was the main character's motivation? Or, what is the most important information in the text?)

### **Explicit Instruction in Reading Strategy**

In-class reading of grade-level texts is supported by the application of reading strategies as noted in Harvey Daniels and Nancy Steineke's *Texts and Lessons for Content-Area Reading* (2010), provided to all English department members. Teachers target Tier II words (i.e. high frequency words used across content areas) and Tier III words (content-specific vocabulary words) and teach the words before they are encountered in the text. Pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading strategies promote strategic thinking. For example, "Think Aloud" (p. 62), "Pair Reading" (p. 66), and "Text Annotation" (p.41) are explained within model lessons by Daniels and Steineke (2010). One culminating goal is to model proficient reading behaviors such as higher order questioning and an enthusiastic passion for inquiry while gradually releasing this skill work to more strategic-thinking students.

### **B. Writing Scaffolding**

Writing instruction in the Fair Lawn English Department includes a balance of student journaling, open-ended responses, and formative writing assessments. In the end, students complete summative processed and timed writing in designated writing genres. Teachers confer and write specific and individualized feedback to support revision during the writing process. Students will write on a variety of subjects, in a variety of genres, for a variety of readers.

The following questions support proficient writing reflection [A good writer asks...]:

- Why must the purpose of the writer be determined?
- What makes a piece of writing effective?
- Why is it important to have a cogent thesis statement or arguable claim?
- Why are supporting details essential in argument-based writing?
- How could voice be employed to engage the writer's audience?
- Why is it important, in terms of meaning, to use correct grammar conventions and organizational structure?

**Processed Writing Resources:**

The *Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL)* web site (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>) provides explicit writing instruction to foster the writing process: prewriting, drafting, sharing, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing. Some important teaching points that are detailed on the OWL web site include: an introduction to prewriting, tips for writing a thesis statement, paragraphing in academic writing, and an updated MLA formatting and style guide.

The PARCC web site provides resources including standards-aligned rubrics for narrative writing and expository writing. These rubrics serve as starting points for teacher-driven writing rubrics that are created with Fair Lawn English students in mind. For example, the Fair Lawn English Department created a common midterm essay exam rubric that delineates a standards-based expectation for literary analysis with explicit expectations for student voice.

Each writing assignment is supported with a clear writing expectation as represented in a writing rubric. The Fair Lawn English Language Arts Department has adopted the following expository essay criteria (posted on the next page) in partnership with the First Year Writing Program at Montclair State University (as published on the Montclair State University First Year Writing web site for students at: <https://www.montclair.edu/chss/first-year-writing/first-year-writing-program-students/student-writing-assessment/>). Individual teachers may present these standards in slightly different language, and their comments on student work may not address every item on this list.

**Fair Lawn English Department Writing Criteria**

- **Central Claim:** The central claim (also called thesis or main point) guides both writer and readers. This central claim should be reflected—sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly—in each paragraph of a successful essay. A good central claim is not obvious; it is debatable, worthy of discussion.
- **Development:** A successful essay is rich with examples, evidence, and discussion. The writer develops—substantiates, explains, and illustrates—all of his or her points.
- **Organization:** A successful essay is one that is organized clearly and logically. A well-organized essay provides readers with an engaging opening, well-constructed paragraphs, appropriate transitional cues between paragraphs and sections, and a satisfying ending.
- **Analysis:** A successful essay demonstrates analysis, when the writer is thinking on the page. It consists of the moments when the writer connects evidence to a central claim through logic and careful reflection. Analysis is evident when a writer connects one piece of evidence with a larger phenomenon or theorizes about a specific quality. Analysis is asking and addressing questions. Analysis is discussion.
- **Clarity of Prose:** A successful essay is characterized by clarity of prose, which comes not only from demonstrated mastery of English grammar, usage, and mechanics but also from careful proofreading. Clarity is further enhanced through elegant, well-constructed sentences.

### III. Scope & Sequence

#### Unit 1: Satire, Parody & Political Humor <6 weeks>

- Selected Works by David Sedaris
  - “The Santa Land Diaries,”
  - “Season’s Greetings to Our Friends and Family!!!,”
  - “Diary of a Smoker,”
  - “Remembering My Childhood on the Continent of Africa,”
  - “What I Learned”
  - “6 to 8 Black Men” (texts)
- “Advice to Youth,” by Mark Twain (text)
- “Local News,” “Da Vinci: The Lost Notebook,” “Vincent and Theo on AOL,” and “Adolf Hitler: The Larry King Interview,” by Jon Stewart (texts)
- “Casey at the Bat (Road Game),” by Garrison Keillor (text)
- “In Persuasion Nation,” by George Saunders (text)
- Selected articles from “The Onion”
- Selected political cartoons
- Clips from The Daily Show
- Clips from The Colbert Report
- Make ‘Em Laugh: Satire and Parody (film)
- This Is Spinal Tap (film)

#### Unit 2: Observational Humor <6 weeks>

- Born Standing Up: A Comic’s Life, by Steve Martin
- Stand-up comedy clips (online; various)
- Make ‘Em Laugh: The Groundbreakers (film)
- Ferris Bueller’s Day Off (film)

#### Unit 3: Absurdist and Experimental Humor <4 weeks>

- Waiting for Godot, by Samuel Beckett
- “The Bald Soprano” and “The Lesson,” by Eugene Ionesco
- Monty Python and The Holy Grail (film)
- The Kids in the Hall, (selected episodes)
- “The Far Side,” by Gary Larson (selected cartoons)

#### Unit 4: The Evolution of the American Situation Comedy <4 wks>

- Make ‘Em Laugh: The Funny Business of America (DVD)
- “I Love Lucy” (selected episodes)
- “The Dick Van Dyke Show” (selected episodes)

- “The Brady Bunch” (selected episodes)
- “All in the Family” (selected episodes)
- “The Cosby Show” (selected episodes)
- “Everybody Loves Raymond” (selected episodes)

## IV. Sample Unit Description

### Enduring Understandings:

1. To understand that a deeper meaning resides within satire and parody, and that this meaning is often staid, despite the comical nature of the text.
2. To understand that the principle criticisms of society endure, regardless of the culture or time period in which the satire / parody is produced.

### Essential Questions:

1. In what ways is satire an effective tool in emphasizing the flaws of society?
2. What commonalities do all examples of satire share? What are the major differences we observe?
3. What is the purpose of parody and how does it differ from the role of satire?
4. How does political humor serve to reflect the time period in which it is created?
5. Why are satire and parody considered “cerebral” forms of humor?

### Learning Objectives:

Teachers use New Jersey Student Learning Standards to create specific, behavioral and measurable goals. Individual unit and/or lesson objectives will derive directly from the language of the grade-specific standards for Grades 11 and 12; teachers will look to the more general anchor standards for guidance. In turn, specific New Jersey Student Learning Standards have been designated as learning targets for this unit. The comprehensive are available at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2016/ela/>. Sample learning objectives are posted below the standards-aligned learning targets in each unit. The NJDOE model curriculum provides “ELL Scaffolded Student Learning Objectives” at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/modelcurriculum/ela/ellscaffolding/1112u5.pdf>.

**Learning Targets Aligned to Grade-Specific New Jersey Student Learning Standards:**

**RL.11-12.1.** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

**RL.11-12.2.** Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

**RL.11-12.3.** Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

**RL.11-12.4.** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

**RL.11-12.5.** Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

**RL.11-12.6.** Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

**RL.11-12.7.** Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)

**RI.11-12.1.** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

**RI.11-12.2.** Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

**RI.11-12.3.** Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

**RI.11-12.4.** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

**RI.11-12.5.** Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

**RI.11-12.6.** Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly

effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.

**RI.11-12.10.** By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

**W.11-12.1.** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

- Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
- Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
- Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

**W.11-12.2.** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

- Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.
- Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
- Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.
- Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

**W.11-12.4.** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

**W.11-12.5.** Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

**W.11-12.6.** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

**W.11-12.7.** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

**W.11-12.9.** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Apply *grades 11–12 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., “Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics”).

Apply *grades 11–12 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., *The Federalist*, presidential addresses]”).

**W.11-12.10.** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes

- **SL.11-12.1.** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
  - Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
  - Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.
  - Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
  - Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

- **SL.11-12.3.** Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
- **SL.11-12.4.** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.
- **SL.11-12.5.** Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
- **SL.11-12.6.** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
- **L.11-12.1.** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
  - Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.
  - Resolve issues of complex or contested usage, consulting references (e.g., *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary of English Usage*, *Garner’s Modern American Usage*) as needed.
- **L.11-12.2.** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
  - Spell correctly.
- **L.11-12.3.** Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
  - Vary syntax for effect, consulting references (e.g., *Tufte’s Artful Sentences*) for guidance as needed; apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts when reading.
- **L.11-12.4.** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grades 11–12 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
  - Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
  - Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., *conceive, conception, conceivable*).
  - Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.
  - Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- **L.11-12.5.** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
  - Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
  - Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.

*Technology Standards* (<http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/tech/8.pdf>):

- 8.1.12.A.2 Produce and edit a multi-page document for a commercial or professional audience using desktop publishing and/or graphics software

*Career Awareness, Exploration, Preparation Standards*

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/career/92.pdf>):

- 2.6 Access and assess information on specific topics using both technological (e.g., computer, telephone, satellite) and print resources available in libraries or media centers.
- 2.7 Use technology and other tools to solve problems, collect data, and make decisions.
- 3.8 Organize, synthesize, and evaluate information for appropriateness and completeness.
- 4.6 Describe actions that demonstrate respect for people of different races, ages, religions, ethnicity, and gender.

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Content Standards* (<http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/career/91.pdf>):

- 9.1.12.A.1 Apply critical thinking and problem-solving strategies during structured learning experiences.
- 9.1.12.B.1 Present resources and data in a format that effectively communicates the meaning of the data and its implications for solving problems, using multiple perspectives.

Sample Objectives	*Activities
<p><b>Students will be able to:</b></p> <p>Define satire and its different types</p> <p>Identify the target of a piece of satire</p> <p>Identify select literary devices and apply them to a variety of satirical essays and stories.</p> <p>Characterize the tone and style of satirical writers, such as David Sedaris, Jon Stewart, and others.</p> <p>Identify the characteristics of a political cartoon</p> <p>Identify plot, themes, and characterization present within the selected readings</p> <p>Identify the cultural impact of / relevance of The Daily Show and The Colbert Report</p> <p>List the similarities and differences between The Daily Show and The Colbert Report and mainstream media</p> <p>Demonstrate understanding of characterization and voice</p> <p>Identify the evolution of satire within American film and television</p> <p>Compose an original piece of satire</p> <p>Analyze the satirical elements of a film</p> <p>Demonstrate comprehension of selected readings as pieces of literature and as satires</p> <p>Read to cite and distinguish explicit, inferential and uncertain evidence using adapted text, T-Charts, and L1 support as noted on the NJ Model Curriculum ELL Support site (RL.11.1 WIDA ELDS 2-5 Reading and Writing):  <a href="http://www.nj.gov/education/modelcurriculum/ela/ell">http://www.nj.gov/education/modelcurriculum/ela/ell</a></p>	<p>Reading curriculum-driven texts and respond to each reading on a consistent basis.</p> <p>Read selected articles from “The Onion” and identify the intended target, as well as the humor present</p> <p>Discuss tone / style “The Santa Land Diaries”</p> <p>Analyze provided political cartoons</p> <p>Compose original punchlines to existing political cartoons</p> <p>Respond to analytical questions related to the satirical stories and essays (listed above)</p> <p>Compose FLHS-centric “knock-knock” jokes</p> <p>View “The Daily Show” and discuss the intent of the satire and how it is achieved</p> <p>View “The Colbert Report” and discuss the intent of the satire and how it is achieved</p> <p>Create a Facebook page for a select character from HHG and defend the content therein</p> <p>View “Make ‘Em Laugh: Satire” and answer provided study guide questions</p> <p>Compose a piece of original satire based on a provided topic / subject</p> <p>Complete a unit test on satire and parody, applying understanding of its components and types</p> <p>View “This Is Spinal Tap” and maintain a log of humorous dialogue</p> <p>Compose a reaction that analyzes a chosen item from the “This Is Spinal Tap” log</p>

[scaffolding/GraphicOrganizersWorksheets/TChart.pdf](#)

7. Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize the ideas, views, and information presented in non-fiction works relative to the literary themes and context in whole class discussion and processed analytical essay writing (W.11-12.2; W.11-12.5).

*\*Teachers, please see the department Google Drive folder for sample lessons, assessments, essay assignments, benchmark student essays.*

Supplemental Resources:

Informative texts

- Teacher and Student-Selected Articles as Nonfiction Connections through the New York Times search engine at: <http://www.nytimes.com/section/education>

Recommended Websites:

- Purdue Owl Writing (department style guide): <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

## V. Course Materials

### Primary Texts

Selected works by David Sedaris, from his collections *Holidays on Ice*, *Naked*, *Me Talk Pretty One Day*, and *Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim*.  
*Born Standing Up: A Comic's Life*, by Steve Martin  
*Waiting for Godot*, by Samuel Beckett

### Secondary Texts

“Advice to Youth” (text)  
“All in the Family” (selected episodes)  
“I Love Lucy” (selected episodes)  
“Roseanne” (selected episodes)  
“Saturday Night Live” (selected episodes)  
“The Bald Soprano” and “The Lesson,” by Eugene Ionesco  
“The Brady Bunch” (selected episodes)  
“The Colbert Report” (selected episodes)  
“The Cosby Show” (selected episodes)  
“The Daily Show” (selected episodes)  
“The Dick Van Dyke Show” (selected episodes)  
“The Far Side,” by Gary Larson (selected cartoons)  
*Ferris Bueller's Day Off* (film)  
“In Persuasion Nation,” by George Saunders (text)  
*Kick Me*, by Paul Feig (selected stories)  
*Make 'Em Laugh: The Funny Business of America* (film)  
*Me Talk Pretty One Day*, by David Sedaris (selected essays)  
*Monty Python and The Holy Grail* (film)  
Selected works by Jon Stewart, from his collection *Drawings of Famous People*  
“The Simpsons” (selected episodes)  
*This Is Spinal Tap* (film)

## VI. Assessments

### Formative Assessments

- Vocabulary Practice
- Anecdotal Notes on Partner, Small-Group, and Whole-Group Discussion
- On-going Reader Response (e.g., multiple analyses of provided satirical articles from “The Onion”)
- Class Discussion / Lecture Notes / Participation
- Essay Drafts
- Quizzes with Reading Checks for Annotation and/or Notes
- Pretests

### Summative Assessments

- First Semester College Essays
- Analytical compositions:
  - Independently view and analyze the comedic style of a selected piece of satire.
  - Argue that “experimental” humor is an integral component of comedy.
  - Analyze the social commentary expressed in observational humor.
  - Analyze a provided piece of satire.
- Creative compositions:
  - Compose the skeleton script to the pilot episode of an original situation comedy.
  - Adapt an overheard conversation into an absurdist scene.
  - Comedic re-telling of a personal experience / memory.
  - Original satire.
- MLA Reaction Paper
- Unit Tests
- Independent Reading Project
- Projects/Presentations

## **VII. Interdisciplinary Connections and Alignment to Technology standards**

### **English/Media Arts**

Students choose books for independent reading projects in collaboration with the high school media specialist.

Technology-based process supports the construction of the MLA-research paper. This includes a media-driven lesson on acceptable academic sources and computer-based production of a formal research paper.