

EHS IB Academy
Language A: Literature (HL)
Summer Reading 2023

Welcome to the inaugural year of IB English! I'm excited to work with all of you as we explore the world of ideas and global issues through literature.

OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

This course will challenge students to make connections between readers, writers, and texts across time and space. Course readings and discussion will also encourage students as they continue to develop into self-directed, motivated, and curious learners.

Learning will begin with this year's summer reading assignment. It is designed to expose students to texts and ideas that will support global awareness as well as prepare them for the first of four IB English assessments, the IO (Individual Oral), typically assessed in Year One. The IO is a fifteen-minute oral presentation that addresses a global issue. Support for student ideas is drawn from course readings.

GLOBAL ISSUES

Central to the course is the concept of Global Issues. The IB defines this term as:

- something that has significance on a wide scale (but is not necessarily a problem or a threat)
- something that is transnational in scope, and may also be a social phenomenon (e.g. life in a digital society)
- something with an impact that is felt at the local level as well as across larger levels of society

Global Issues easily encompass a wide range of potential topics and ideas, which fall into the five categories listed below. As the school year progresses, students will explore these areas more in depth.

GLOBAL ISSUES TOPIC AREAS	POTENTIAL TOPICS OF INQUIRY
Culture, Identity, Community	How does the work explore aspects of family, class, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, and/or sexuality, and how do these impact individuals and societies? How does the work explore issues of migration, colonialism, and nationalism?
Beliefs, Values, Education	How does the work explore the beliefs and values nurtured in particular societies and the ways they shape individuals, communities, and educational systems. How does the work explore the tensions that arise when there are conflicts of beliefs and values, and ethics?
Power, Politics, Justice	How does the work explore aspects of rights and responsibilities and the workings and structures of governments and institutions? How does the work explore hierarchies of power, the distribution of wealth and resources, the limits of justice and the law, equality and inequality, human rights and peace and conflict?
Art, Creativity, Imagination	How does the work explore aspects of aesthetic inspiration, creation, craft, and beauty? How does the work explore the changing and challenging of perceptions through art, and the function, value, and effects of art in society?
Science, Technology, Natural World	How does the work explore the relationship between humans and the environment? How does the work explore the implications of technology and media for society? How does the work explore the idea of scientific development and progress?

ASSIGNMENT, PART I: READ

The chart below lists the five categories of Global Issues, and offers a variety of short texts (both fiction and nonfiction) for each. From this list, students must choose at least TWO texts to read: one novel, and one text classified as either poetry, essay, or full-length nonfiction. The texts students choose may align with the same Global Issue, or they may be from two different Global Issues.

Students need to find their own copies of the texts. Depending on personal preference and accessibility, students may either check out a library copy, purchase a hard copy, or access a digital or audio format of each text. I've added links to the four essay selections for ease of access.

GLOBAL ISSUES TOPICS	NOVELS (T = translated work)	POETRY, ESSAYS, NONFICTION TEXTS
Culture, Identity, Community	Between the World and Me – Ta-Nahesi Coates Pedro Páramo – Juan Rulfo (T)	Borderlands/La Frontera – Gloria Anzaldúa Promesas de Oro – Jose Olivarez
Beliefs, Values, Education	Siddhartha – Hermann Hesse (T) Sophie's World – Jostein Gaarder (T)	If They Come for Us – Fatima Asghar The Line Becomes a River -- Francisco Cantu
Power, Politics, Justice	Association of Small Bombs – Karan Mahajan The Stranger – Albert Camus (T)	Black Body -- Teju Cole Intimations – Zadie Smith
Art, Creativity, Imagination	Ella Minnow Pea – Mark Dunn Ru: a Novel – Kim Thuy (T)	Bluets – Maggie Nelson The Blue of Distance – Rebecca Solnit
Science, Technology, Natural World	Exit West – Mohsin Hamid Station Eleven – Emily St. John Mandel	Under Old Nell's Skirt – William Least Heat-Moon World of Wonders – Aimee Nezhukumatathil

ASSIGNMENT, PART II: WRITE

Students need to take notes as they read using the system that works best for them (sticky notes, [Cornell Notes](#) system, [Bard College](#) prompts, etc.). Notes should cover the basic literary elements (setting, plot, POV, character, imagery, symbols, allusions, themes, etc.), track important (or confusing) ideas, make connections to other texts, and evaluate how structure informs meaning. Students should also mark a minimum of three important passages (1-2 paragraphs in length) for later analysis and discussion.

It's important to read closely and carefully (and not necessarily quickly) in order to prepare for discussion and the formal writing assignment (essay) that will be administered within the first two weeks of the semester.

ASSIGNMENT, PART III: DISCUSS

When classes begin, students will work in small groups to discuss the texts they've read. Once groups feel they have a solid understanding of their chosen text – and the way(s) in which it illustrates its corresponding global issues topic area – they will present their findings to the class.

For ease of access to links in this document, this assignment (and all summer assignments for all classes) is posted to the EHS IB Academy website at <https://ehsgiftedacademy.weebly.com/>. Students may also contact the instructor with questions at lisasmith@u-46.org.