

BOOK LIST

English 3: American Literature & Writing

Fall 2024 / Spring 2025

Title	Edition	Author/Editor	ISBN	Available on the Academy's Bookstore?
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	See note on pg.2-3	Twain, Mark	978-0143107323	Yes – Find it here.
American Literature	3 rd **	BJU Press	978-1646264667 or 978-1606827338	Yes – Find it here.
Fahrenheit 451	*	Bradbury, Ray	978-1451673319	Yes – Find it here.
The Harvest Gypsies	2011	Steinbeck, John/Heydey	978-1890771614	Yes – Find it here.
The Old Man and the Sea	1952	Hemingway, Ernest/Scribner	978-0684801223	Yes – Find it here.
The Scarlet Letter	*	Hawthorne, Nathaniel	9780-553210095	Yes – Find it here.
Up From Slavery	2010	Washington, Booker T.	978-0451531476	Yes—find it here.
A Pocket Style Manual	9th edition	Hacker, Diane and Sommers, Nancy/St. Martin's Press	978-1319169541	Yes—find it here.
How to Write for Class – A Student's Guide to Grammar, Punctuation, and Style	2019	Meltzer, Erica L.	978-1733589505	Yes – Find it here.

Please note:

- > Books marked with * do not have required editions. Page numbers will differ between publishers.
- > **BJU updated the copywrite to *American Literature*, hence families may find either *American Literature, 3rd Edition* (2015) or *American Literature, 3rd Edition; Update Copyright* (2022). Either edition will work for this course.
- > Books and materials requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the instructors.
- > Book synopses and potential disclaimers can be found on the following pages of this PDF.

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The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain

SYNOPSIS: As Earnest Hemingway famously put it, “All modern literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*.” Set in the antebellum south, the novel features a young boy who, in escaping from an abusive father, befriends a runaway slave. Many adventures and challenges greet them as they sail down the Mississippi River, but none so great as the one Finn must face within himself. Does he defy his conscience, which demands he obey the law of society and turn his friend in, or does he follow his heart, which learns and insists all men are equal and deserve to be free?

→ **REASON FOR TEACHING:** This novel marks an important shift in the American literary canon, one that truly gave a unique identity to American literature which previously imitated European authors in style. As an author focused on conveying Realism by writing authentic American voices through use of colloquialism, Twain ushered in a movement in which authors sought to reflect both real-life people and social institutions in need of reformation. Twain’s incomparable use of satire condemns the

hypocritical and racist society in desperate need of a makeover. However, in adhering to this Realist genre, he employed a derogatory term, reflecting the dialect of the time (see note in the disclaimer below). His humorous characters will move the student to evaluate how education and religion have shaped American society. Most importantly, students will learn—through Huck’s loyalty and compassion for his friend—that one is never too young to effect positive change in another’s life.

DISCLAIMER: This story contains use of a derogatory racist term, trickery, deceit, use of alcohol and some aspects of violence.

Parents who are concerned about the use of racially derogatory language in the novel are free to consider using the [NewSouth Edition](#).

American Literature from BJU Press

SYNOPSIS: This is a well-known and popular publisher of curriculum that seamlessly integrates a biblical worldview with academic excellence. BJU’s *American Literature* textbook presents the writings of America from its colonial beginnings to the present. Students will study the poetry, short stories, speeches, and essays that reflect the dynamic heritage of the American people. Covering the historical context, literary movements, and principal players which have defined America, the anthology rounds out the study of the individual works in this course. Students will learn about the ideas which have shaped America, and, more importantly, they will learn how to discern those as either a vehicle of biblical truth or divergence from it. A few titles include Jonathan Edwards’ “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” Washington Irving’s “Rip Van Winkle,” Edgar Allen Poe’s “The Raven,” Stephen Crane’s “The Open Boat,” and John Steinbeck’s “Flight.”

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

SYNOPSIS: This science fiction novel is categorized as a dystopian tale, set in a futuristic world where books are forbidden by law. Ray Bradbury explores how censorship thrives in darkness, showing that—when there is no light—people lose the ability to create, explore, analyze, and question. The protagonist of the text, with the help of newfound friends, realizes how ideas are absolutely necessary for a free society.

→ **REASON FOR TEACHING:** Students will learn about the literary elements of science fiction, specifically within the dystopian genre. *Fahrenheit 451* describes a stale and dismal society designed to stifle debate and censor thought; a society where only one narrative is allowed and any who dissent are silenced before disappearing. Through this novel, students will explore key ideas like safeguarding free speech, the free dissemination of information, and the impact that protecting those freedoms exerts within current American society.

DISCLAIMER: This text explores common elements of the dystopian genre, including science-fictional elements and darker themes such as oppression, violence, and death. There is a reference to a suicide attempt (not graphic), it includes some violence typical to the genre, and contains a few uses of profanity.

The Harvest Gypsies by John Steinbeck

SYNOPSIS: In 1936, John Steinbeck was given an assignment by The San Francisco News to report on migrant farm workers in California, those who had been part of the horrendous Dust Bowl migration from the Midwest during the Great Depression. As an investigative journalist with the skill of a novelist, Steinbeck conveys through these seven articles the misery, but fierce pride and hope he witnessed among the migrants in the camps and “Hoovervilles” of California. Their stories would not only serve as the foundation for his masterpiece, *The Grapes of Wrath*, but as a tool to advocate for labor policy reform.

→ **REASON FOR TEACHING:** While serving to inform the student of the tremendous upheavals during the Great Depression, this collection of articles will introduce the student to the elements of journalism, specifically investigative journalistic writing with a literary flair—facts relayed as compelling story and used as a tool of advocacy—which has profoundly impacted American literature.

DISCLAIMER: The story grapples with the living and working conditions of the migrant workers during the Dust Bowl. It includes some darker themes such as depression, racism, and the effects of starvation.

The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway

SYNOPSIS: This Pulitzer Prize winning novella showcases a hard-working fisherman who, though beaten down by life’s challenges and lack of success in fishing, never gives up and never loses hope. Through fisherman’s friendship with a young boy, Hemingway crafts a simple but beautiful story of the redemptive power of relationships and the importance of courage and perseverance in the face of defeat.

→ **REASON FOR TEACHING:** Winning a Nobel Prize for the “mastery of the art of narration,” Hemingway is known for his economic prose and journalistic style. His writing was revolutionary in its directness and simplicity. In contrast to earlier writers such as Melville and Hawthorne, the syntax of his sentences is lean, using very few adjectives and adverbs, but powerful. As such, students will not only be treated to a stark contrast in writing style but learn, in reading Hemingway, how to discern thematic elements and characters’ thoughts and motivations through what is implied via the action and dialogue rather than described in lengthy and poetic prose.

DISCLAIMER: This text includes context for fishing, such as gutting a fish and fighting sharks, but is not overly graphic. There is a small handful of coarse language.

The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne

SYNOPSIS: Arguably Nathaniel Hawthorne’s most famous novel, *The Scarlet Letter* is set in the Puritan colony of Boston in middle of the 17th century and explores a range of human responses to sin. From the guilt-ridden Reverend Dimmesdale, who has committed adultery with his parishioner, Hester, to the angry Chillingworth, a husband bent on revenge, to the independent spirit of Hester who is caught between the two, Hawthorne reveals the complexities of faith and the ultimate desire of humans for love and redemption.

→ **REASON FOR TEACHING:** This novel will provide the student, not only a glimpse into the early Puritan life of colonial America, but also introduce the reader through complex characterization, themes, and symbols the manner in which a skillful author engages and moves his readers to consider universal issues—the nature of good and evil, truth and error, and faith in an unseen God. It will also shed light on and help the

student evaluate the tension between the Biblical worldview still dominant in that era and secular perspectives that began to creep in and vie for American hearts and minds.

DISCLAIMER: Contains themes such as adultery (no explicit content) and period related material including prejudice against Native Americans. Witches, Satan, and superstitions are referenced as well.

Up From Slavery by Booker T. Washington

SYNOPSIS: This is the autobiography of one of the most influential Americans of the late 1800s-early 1900s. Booker T. Washington recounts his life's story from slavery to becoming an advisor on racial relations to President Theodore Roosevelt. Students will read selected chapters that provide a glimpse into the life of a faithful servant of Christ. The establishment of Tuskegee Institute (one of the first institutions of higher education for African Americans) provides one such example of Washington's work to support African Americans.

→ **REASON FOR TEACHING:** Besides appreciating Washington's rich use of imagery and concrete details to convey his personal struggle, students will evaluate a landmark speech he gave in 1895 at the Atlantic Exposition, a fair showcasing the economic progress of the south. Washington's influential speech sought to encourage partnership aimed at improving the southern economy. It is a masterpiece of rhetoric, featuring a skillful use of ethos, logos, and pathos in a bid to persuade his audience towards his goals. Students will study and employ such rhetorical devices towards a multi-media project requiring them to consider an issue in current society they want to address and effect change in.

DISCLAIMER: Washington refers to a few examples of the physical and mental terrors that African Americans endured during slavery and the years that followed.

A Pocket Style Manual, 9th Edition

SYNOPSIS: A handy writing and research guide, this pocketbook will serve the student into the college years. It features the various documentation styles and how to accurately cite a myriad of

sources from print to web. It provides examples of integrating those sources into essays, information on evaluating legitimate sources, avoiding plagiarism, crafting a solid thesis and paragraphs proving it along with examples of stylistic and clear sentences. This handbook complements the grammar book used in this course.

How to Write for Class – a Student’s Guide to Grammar, Punctuation, and Style

SYNOPSIS: This grammar book written by popular SAT study materials author, Erica Meltzer, includes practice exercises that move students beyond reviewing grammar basics to helping them understand how these basics may be employed to craft engaging and thoughtful prose that is clear and concise.