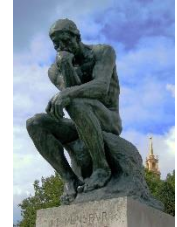


Why take Literature 12?

- English 11 Enriched / Literature 12 is the pre-requisite to Advanced Placement Literature and Composition in Grade 12. It can be taken as the grade 11 English course for Enriched students, and is also available as an elective for any student in Grade 11 or 12.
- You need an interesting Grade 11/12 elective that looks good on your transcript, prepares you for university and makes you sound like a well-rounded, intelligent person
- You like reading about heroes, monsters, and knights and the greatest literature ever
- You're interested in literature, history, the origins of words, languages, and ideas
- You like English and talking about books, and thinking deep thoughts about life
- Your soul is crushed by the weight of science and math courses
- You want to improve your writing skills
- Gain the esteem of your friends with historical trivia lines of verse



What is Literature 12?

Literature 12 is an overview of the greatest works of British literature of the last 1000 years, from the heroic tales of the Anglo-Saxons to the poetry of the modern age. The course views literature and emerging literary traditions through the lens of history, and traces the changes in Western Civilization through the window of moving and insightful texts that have stood the test of time.

- How does literature represent the values and ideas of the culture that created it?
- Why do authors write the way they do?
- What makes a “classic”?
- What is the “human condition”? How can literature help us to find meaning and make sense of a world that is constantly changing?
- What is truly important in life, and what about society needs to change?

The Anglo-Saxons (449 A.D. to 1066 A.D.):

Heroism, Honour, and Lots of Bloodshed

The course begins with the early Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf*, a tale of terrifying monsters, honour, bravery, monsters, and larger-than life heroes who rip the arms off of said monsters, written in Old English:

“Scolde Grendel thanan Feorhseoc fleon under fenhleothu
Secean wynleas wic”

Don't worry, students read the translation!

Beowulf – a lot tougher than he looks...



The Middle Ages (1066- 1485 A.D.)

- *The Canterbury Tales* (funny, satirical and often “colourful” tales from every walk of life)
- Knights, castles, and bad behaviour, chivalry...and girdle wearing and decapitation contests -- *Gawain and the Green Knight*



Chaucer – too cool
to write in Latin

“Time is a river and books are boats. Many volumes start down that stream, only to be wrecked and lost...in its sands. Only a few, a very few, endure the test of time and live to bless the ages following” (R.W. and Rev. Joseph Fort Newton)

The Renaissance (1485-1600) – The Rebirth of Culture, Learning, and Literature

- Love sonnets and lyrics (Wyatt, Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, Marlowe, Raleigh, Herrick, Suckling, Lovelace)



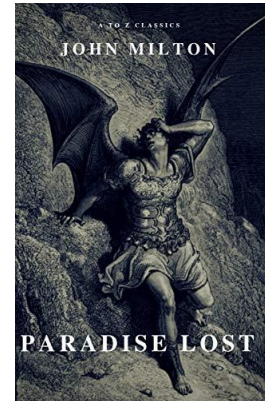
- *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare – revenge, ghosts, madness (“to be or not to be”), intrigue and plotting... and more revenge - (there’s not enough revenge these days)

"This Book
Is Really Cool,
It Has All Kinds
Of Blood And
Fighting Stuff"



17th Century

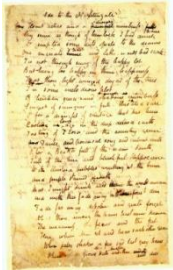
- The English Civil War – society falling apart – when is rebellion justified?
- Puritans (you thought your grandma was strict?) and John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (the story of Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden, Satan - - explains everything you ever wanted to know about the entire human race, the universe, why bad things happen to good people, and why you shouldn’t listen if strange creatures tell you to eat fruit)



Age of Reason in the 18th Century

- wit, satire, and humour...and ladies with big hair...
- Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift, a man who actually suggested that people eat babies to solve the problem of hunger and poverty

19th Century – the Romantics



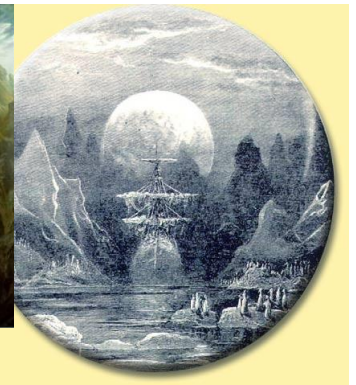
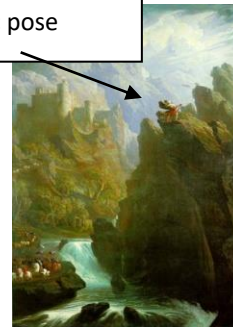
The poetry of this age is not romantic in terms of cheesy “romance”...

....unless your idea of romance includes nightmares, the undead, running away from ghosts in a haunted castle trying to escape the demons of your own horrific sins, setting people on fire while they sleep,

trying to start a rebellion to change the injustice in the world, or fighting to avoid the destruction of all you hold dear while standing on a mountaintop claiming that you and only you understand the mysteries of the universe!

- Emotion, passion, imagination, and individualism, visionaries and madmen – poetry is “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (Wordsworth)
- Gothic literature (raising the dead – what could go wrong? Frankenstein!)

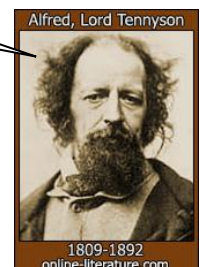
Overly dramatic pose



I *am* smiling

Victorian Age – An age of bleak optimism (is that an oxymoron?)

- Tennyson, Brownings, Bronte, Thomas Hardy, Matthew Arnold
- “wandering between the two worlds, one dead / The other powerless to be born” (Matthew Arnold)



The 20th Century

- Revolution, war, and changing forms in literature (Wilfred Owen, W.B. Yeats, T.S. Eliot, Dylan Thomas)
- “Bleak optimism” – is that an oxymoron?

