

Literature Institute Study Guide

LIT 411 Ancient Literature

Bedford Anthology of World Literature, Books 1-6. Boston: Bedford-St. Martins, 2004.

UNIT	WEEKS	TOPICS	READINGS
I		Overview	
	1	The Ancient World Mesopotamia Egypt Hebrews India China	Book 1, 1-14 Book 1, 15-22 Book 1, 93-103 Book 1, 127-133 Book 1, 1323-1331 Book 1, 1563-1572
II		Greece	
	2	Ancient Greek Literature Hesiod Theogony Works and Days	Book 1, 247-258 Book 1, 259-262 Book 1, 263-271 Book 1, 272-277
	Author	Please provide an overview of Hesiod's life and works.	
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: mythology	
	Essay Topics	E1. Provide an overview of Theogony. Describe Greek gods, father-son conflict amongst three generations of Greek gods. E2. Provide an overview of "Works and Days." Describe Hesiod's five Ages of man and the concept of "the Golden Age." E3. Discuss the mythic stories of Prometheus and Pandora.	
	3-4	Homer The Iliad	Book 1, 277-287 Book 1, 288-420
	Author	Describe Homer's life and works.	
	Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description for the narrative of the Iliad and include the themes, character analysis of Achilles, critical scenes.	
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: epic poem	
	Essay Topics	E1: Provide an overview of the <i>Iliad</i> . E2. Provide an overview of <i>The Odyssey</i> . E3. Describe the mythic story of the Trojan war. E4. Discuss Greek Gods in <i>The Iliad</i> . Describe their similarities, differences and relationships with the human beings. E5. Discuss the theme of war and violence in the play. Describe how war effects civil population in the case of Hector's family. E6. Discuss the theme of heroism and heroic code of Ancient Greece. What were the values and beliefs that shaped the actions of the characters in the Iliad? What role did honor and glory play for the warriors and how they could they obtain it?	
	5	Sappho Love Lyrics	Book 1, 791-797

Author	Please describe Sappho's life and works.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: lyric poetry	
Essay Topics	E1. Please answer the following questions for each of Sappho's poems: Who is the narrator? What is the poet describing? Discuss the narrator's experience in terms of perceptions and emotions. Can you see any ideas and themes in the poem? Please list specific elements of the poem to support your argument.	
6	Aeschylus Agamemnon Eumenides	Book 1, 798-805 Book 1, 806-857 Book 1, 858-890
Author	Please describe the life and works of Aeschylus.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot of Agamemnon, themes, character analysis of Clytemnestra, the critical scene.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: revenge tragedy	
Essay Topics	E1: Provide an overview of Oresteia. E2: Discuss the theme of justice in Oresteia. How does the concept of crime and punishment change over time? What were the different types of punishment proposed for the same crime of killing?	
7	Sophocles Oedipus Rex	Book 1, 891-898 Book 1, 899-951
Author	Please describe the life and works of Sophocles.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot of Oedipus Rex, themes, character analysis of Oedipus, critical scene.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: in medias res, oedipal	
Essay Topics	E1: Describe the mythic story of the House of Thebes. E2. Discuss the theme of fate vs. free will in Oedipus Rex. E3. Discuss Oedipus' journey of self-discovery and quest for truth. Describe Oedipus' process of growth as he transitions from arrogance to humility. Trace how he goes from having a firm belief in his own innocence to suspicion and fear, and then to the moment of recognition and self awareness of his own guilt.	
8	Euripides Medea	Book 1, 999-1003 Book 1, 1004-1043
Author	Please describe the life and works of Euripides.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, character analysis of Medea, critical scene.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: tragedy, catharsis	

Essay Topics	E1: Describe the mythical story of Jason and Medea. E2: Discuss the theme of revenge in Medea. Describe Medea's emotions and behavior after rejection by Jason, and how her love for Jason turns into hatred.	
9	Aristophanes Lysistrata	Book 1, 1044-1048 Book 1, 1049-1082
Author	Please describe the life and works of Aristophanes.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, character analysis of Lysistrata, critical scene.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: old comedy, middle comedy	
Essay Topics	E1: Discuss the theme of war vs. peace in this play. How are the ideas of pacifism and militarism contrasted? What is Greek women's view of the war and how do they think they can bring about its end? Give examples from the play.	
10	Plato	Book 1, 1083-1116
Author	Please describe the life and works of Plato.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: allegory	
Essay Topics	E1: Describe Socrates' experience as described in Apology. What does Socrates feel and say when he is faced with an unjust accusation and threatened by death? E2: Describe Socrates' experience as described in Phaedo. What does Socrates feel and say before dying?	
11	Aristotle	Book 1, 1149-1155
Author	Please describe the life and works of Aristotle.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: catharsis, comedy, mimesis, tragedy, tragic hero	
Essay Topics	E1: Define tragedy. What are the six parts of the tragedy? What are the three characteristics of plot?	
III Rome		
12	Ancient Roman Literature Catullus	Book 1, 1157-1163 Book 1, 1164-1173
Author	Please describe the life and works of Catullus.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: lyric poetry	
Essay Topics	E1. Please answer the following questions for each of the poems: Who is the narrator? What is the poet describing? Discuss the narrator's experience in terms of perceptions and emotions. Can you see any ideas and themes in the poem? Please list specific elements of the poem to support your argument.	
13	Virgil Aeneid	Book 1, 1174-1180 Book 1, 1181-1264
Author	Please describe the life and works of Virgil.	

Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, character analysis of Aeneas, critical scenes.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms:	
Essay Topics	E1: Discuss the concept of piety. Elaborate with examples from the Aeneid. E2: Discuss Aeneas's journey to the underworld. E3: Discuss the suffering due to the war from the view of the losing side, the Trojans. How does Aeneas describe the fall of Troy to Dido?	
14	Ovid Metamorphosis	Book 1, 1265-1269 Book 1, 1270-1292
Author	Please describe the life and works of Ovid.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: mythology	
Essay Topics	E1: Discuss the mythic story of Lycaon's crime, Jove's anger and the flood. E2: Discuss the theme of love in the mythic stories of Apollo vs. Daphne, Orpheus vs. Eurydice, Hippomenes vs. Atalanta. E3: Discuss the mythic story of Adonis.	
15	Petronius Satyricon	Book 1, 1293-1296 Book 1, 1297-1321
Author	Please describe the life and works of Petronius.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of themes, and a character analysis of Trimalchio.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: satire	
Essay Topics	E1: Discuss the materialism and materialistic worldview and contrast to the spiritual and intellectual emptiness and poverty illustrated by the people in Satyricon. How do the people depicted in Satyricon demonstrate power of money? Why do the topics of conversation center on food, money, games and gossip? E2: Discuss how the "Carpe Diem" philosophy introduced by Horace is illustrated in this work, and how the characters discuss the idea that life is transitory and death inevitable. Give evidence from the text.	

V

Finals

16 Review, Essay, Exam