

Virginia Western Community College

ENG 258

African American Literature

Prerequisites

ENG 112, ENG 113, or departmental approval

Course Description

Explores the stories African American authors tell about themselves, their communities, and the world. Examines common and diverging themes within African American literary traditions through the study of diverse authors, genres, and literary movements from a variety of time periods. Emphasizes interpretive and critical analysis skills developed through close reading and consideration of historical and cultural contexts.

General Course Purpose

ENG 258 introduces students to the rich history of African American literary traditions. This course focuses on the fundamental skills of close reading, interpretation, and literary analysis.

Semester Credits: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Required Materials

1. Internet access
2. Canvas
3. Computer

Textbooks:

Wright, *Native Son*. Harper Perennial, 978-0-060-83756-3

Open Educational Resources.

[VCU Writes Citation guide](#) or comparable open educational resource as chosen by instructor.

Novels and books as chosen by instructor.

Other Required Materials:

None

Course Outcomes

Upon completing the course, the student will be able to:

Critical Thinking

- Evaluate, interpret, and use information, ideas and arguments from a variety of perspectives (including the written arguments of others) to analyze complex issues
- Interpret and combine information to reach and/or evaluate well-reasoned conclusions

Communication

- Explain the complex ideas of others
- Develop, convey, and exchange ideas in writing
- Develop writing that is appropriate to a given context and for a specific audience

Cultural and Civic Engagement

- Assess the impact of culture and difference across a variety of local, national, and global communities
- Use the humanities as a framework for developing knowledge and civic values necessary for contributing to civic life and the well-being of local, national, and global communities

Literary Traditions

- Describe salient features of the writers, literary movements, genres and/or texts within the African American literary tradition

Inquiry through the Humanities

- Construct and explore meaningful questions about diverse human experiences through the study of African American literature

Texts and Contexts

- Explain connections between literary texts and related historical, social, and literary contexts

Close Reading and Literary Analysis

- Analyze literary texts using appropriate vocabulary and a variety of methodological approaches or perspectives, exploring the ways literary texts reflect and challenge cultural values and beliefs
- Support interpretations of literary texts with valid textual evidence and use appropriate scholarly sources to further inquiry into literary texts

Writing

- Compose literary analysis that is well-organized and features substantial, logical, and concrete development of ideas with appropriate documentation

Major Topics to be Included

Critical Thinking
Communication
Cultural and Civic Engagement
Literary Traditions
Inquiry through the Humanities
Texts and Contexts
Close Reading and Literary Analysis
Writing

Notes to Instructors:

[ADA Statement \(PDF\)](#)

[Title IX Statement \(PDF\)](#)