

Fairfax Collegiate
2026 Summer Program
Reading for Meaning Course Syllabus
Rising Grades 7-9



Course Description

Practice close reading, note-taking, and summarizing.

Read short stories, journalistic writing, essays, and poetry.

Use literary tools including compare/contrast, cause/effect, and prediction to analyze texts.

Students in this course become stronger, more thoughtful readers and gain confidence in explaining what texts mean. They explore stories, poems, and nonfiction while sharpening the skills that help them understand an author’s choices. With steady guidance, discussion, and practice, students learn to read with greater attention and respond with clarity and insight.

Students read a wide range of texts to practice identifying key ideas, themes, symbols, and character traits. They make connections, compare and contrast stories, analyze figurative language, and consider how bias shapes nonfiction writing. Frequent writing tasks give students opportunities to explain their thinking, develop multi-paragraph responses, and build stronger analytical skills.

By the end of the course, students take home a binder filled with notes, essays, and original work that reflects their growth as readers and writers. They leave ready to approach complex texts with clearer strategies, deeper understanding, and greater confidence.

Learning Objectives

Course Goals	<p>Critical Reading: Students learn how to read closely and comprehend written work in a variety of genres.</p> <p>Written Analysis: Students analyze the material they read and learn to write critical responses.</p>
Course Topics	<p>Reading Comprehension: Students learn how to better comprehend the material they read.</p> <p>Connections: Students learn how to make connections in the material they read and how to compare and contrast elements of the text.</p>

	<p>Characterization: Students analyze characters in the stories they read.</p> <p>Essay Writing: Students write analytical responses to the material they read.</p> <p>Poetry: Students learn how to analyze poetry and the similes and metaphors it often contains.</p> <p>Symbolism: Students learn how to identify symbolism in written works.</p> <p>Bias: Students identify bias and learn to differentiate subjective and objective writing.</p>
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Course Schedule

<p>Class Meeting 1</p>	<p>Introductions: Students are introduced to each other and to the instructor.</p> <p>Around the Room: Students consider the purposes of reading and writing.</p> <p>Review Workbook and Pass Out Folders: Students receive a folder and workbook to use for the rest of the class.</p> <p>Building Background Knowledge: Students discuss the importance of background knowledge when reading texts and the different ways in which they can activate this knowledge.</p> <p>Review Frayer Model: Students review the Frayer Model that they completed on a literary genre.</p> <p>Anticipation Guide: Students complete an anticipation guide for the short story "All Summer in a Day" by Ray Bradbury.</p> <p>All Summer in a Day: Students read "All Summer in a Day" together, completing a think aloud.</p> <p>Connections: "All Summer in a Day": Students make connections to "All Summer in a Day."</p> <p>Writing Task: Students write to demonstrate their understanding of "All Summer in a Day."</p>
<p>Class Meeting 2</p>	<p>Making Connections: "Charles": Students make connections before reading a short story.</p> <p>Vocabulary in "Charles": Students identify vocabulary definitions prior to reading.</p> <p>Independent Reading: "Charles": Students read "Charles" by Shirley Jackson and complete comprehension questions.</p> <p>Review and Discuss "Charles": Students review the comprehension questions and plot of "Charles."</p> <p>Vocabulary Pictures: Students draw pictures for the vocabulary from "Charles."</p> <p>Introduction to Characterization: Students learn to define direct and indirect characterization.</p> <p>Writing Using Characterization: Students practice writing examples that demonstrate direct and indirect characterization.</p> <p>Characterization in "Charles": Students make indirect characterizations about Laurie/Charles.</p> <p>Charles Essay: Students write a multi-paragraph composition about "Charles."</p> <p>Review Essays: Students look over their essays from the previous day.</p>

<p>Class Meeting 3</p>	<p>Warm Up: Rebus Puzzles: Students complete rebus puzzles.</p> <p>Review Essays: Students look over their essays from the previous day.</p> <p>Introduction to Similes and Metaphors: Students review similes and metaphors.</p> <p>Finding Similes and Metaphors in Pop Songs: Students identify similes and metaphors in pop songs.</p> <p>Simile and Metaphor Analysis in Workbook: Students review examples of similes and metaphors from literature.</p> <p>Similes and Metaphors- All Summer in a Day: Students find similes and metaphors in "All Summer in a Day" by Ray Bradbury.</p> <p>Extended Metaphor Poetry Reading: Students read three poems and analyze for the extended metaphor in each.</p> <p>Writing About Extended Metaphors: Students analyze the metaphor in one of the poems.</p> <p>Review Essays: Students look over their essays from the previous day.</p>
<p>Class Meeting 4</p>	<p>Warm Up: Rebus Puzzles: Students complete rebus puzzles.</p> <p>Compare and Contrast Objects: Students compare and contrast objects that are different.</p> <p>Comparing and Contrasting Story Elements: Students discuss the elements of a story that can be compared and contrasted.</p> <p>Background: "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty": Students prepare to read the short story "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty."</p> <p>Read "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty": Students read "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" and answer comprehension questions.</p> <p>Compare and Contrast Graphic Organizers: Students fill in graphic organizers with content from the short story.</p> <p>Writing: "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty": Students write a multi-paragraph composition.</p> <p>Peer Edit Essays: Students review each other's essays.</p> <p>Review Essays: Students look over their essays from the previous day.</p>
<p>Class Meeting 5</p>	<p>Warm Up: Word Creation: Students get ready for the day with a spelling exercise.</p> <p>Introduction to Symbolism: Students discuss common symbols.</p> <p>Writing: Symbols: Students write about a common symbol.</p> <p>Symbolism: "Fences": Students read a short passage and determine the symbolism and its meaning.</p> <p>Building Background: "Lamb to the Slaughter": Students build background knowledge before reading "Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl.</p> <p>Read Aloud: "Lamb to the Slaughter": Students practice active reading with "Lamb to the Slaughter."</p> <p>Symbolism in "Lamb": Students understand the symbolism in "Lamb to the Slaughter."</p>

	<p>Characterization - Mary: Students make indirect characterizations about Mary using textual evidence.</p> <p>Writing: "Lamb": Students write a multi-paragraph composition.</p>
Class Meeting 6	<p>Warm Up: Rebus Puzzles: Students complete rebus puzzles.</p> <p>Review Essays: Students look over their essays from the previous day.</p> <p>Cause/Effect Practice: Students practice identifying and creating cause-effect relationships.</p> <p>Vocabulary: A Sound of Thunder: Students understand vocabulary from the short story "A Sound of Thunder" by Ray Bradbury.</p> <p>Cognitive Reading Strategies: Students understand the various types of sentence starters one can use when trying to comprehend text.</p> <p>Reading: "A Sound of Thunder": Students read "A Sound of Thunder" and answer comprehension questions.</p> <p>Vocabulary: "The Interlopers": Students preview vocabulary for upcoming reading.</p> <p>Reading: "The Interlopers": Students read "The Interlopers" by Saki, respond to comprehension questions, and discuss cause-effect relationships in the story.</p> <p>Creative Writing: Students write an alternate ending or extension to one of the two stories they read today.</p>
Class Meeting 7	<p>Warm Up: Riddles: Students do riddles as an introduction to class.</p> <p>Literature Term Search: Students define important literary terms for understanding narrative poetry.</p> <p>Read "Casey at the Bat": Students read and analyze the narrative poem "Casey at the Bat."</p> <p>The Odyssey Vocabulary Preview: Students preview vocabulary for the upcoming work they will read.</p> <p>Read "The Challenge": Students read "The Challenge."</p> <p>Read "Odysseus' Revenge": Students read the excerpt "Odysseus' Revenge."</p> <p>Review "Odysseus' Revenge": Students review this section of "The Odyssey" with the teacher.</p> <p>The Odyssey Organizer: Students complete the chronological organizer in the workbook.</p> <p>Writing- "The Odyssey": Students write about the climax of these excerpts.</p> <p>Review Epic Similes: Students review epic similes from "The Odyssey."</p> <p>Writing: Epic Similes: Students write to demonstrate understanding of epic similes.</p>
Class Meeting 8	<p>Warm Up: Word Creation: Students get ready for the day with a spelling exercise.</p> <p>Review Essays: Students look over their essays from the previous day.</p> <p>Introduction to Non-Fiction: Students understand the characteristics of non-fiction and discuss examples.</p> <p>Vocabulary Review: Students pre-read vocabulary.</p>

	<p>Read "Mummies": Students read a non-fiction article and analyze for the main idea and supporting details.</p> <p>Fact V. Opinion: Students understand the difference between a fact and an opinion.</p> <p>Subjective vs. Objective Writing: Students understand the difference between subjective and objective writing.</p> <p>Reading for Bias: Recycling: Students read a pro/con newspaper article, identifying bias, main idea, and supporting details.</p> <p>Writing: Recycling: Students write a multi-paragraph composition.</p>
Class Meeting 9	<p>Review Essays: Students look over their essays from the previous day.</p> <p>Warm Up: Riddle: Students get ready for the day with a riddle.</p> <p>Introduction to Theme: Students discuss theme and how to determine the theme of a text.</p> <p>Reading: "The Sniper": Students read a short story and respond to comprehension questions.</p> <p>Review Theme: The Sniper: Students discuss topics and themes in "The Sniper" short story.</p> <p>Exploring Theme in Poetry: Students explore war themes in three different poems.</p> <p>Writing: Theme: Students write a multi-paragraph composition exploring the similarities and differences between the poems.</p>
Class Meeting 10	<p>Review All Materials Read: Students review stories that they have read over the past 2 weeks.</p> <p>Creative Writing: Final Project: Students write an original piece.</p> <p>Revising Writing: Students revise their creative writing.</p> <p>Share Creative Writing: Students share the pieces they wrote.</p> <p>Post-Assessment:</p>