

# High School British Literature Course 2025-26

## (Regular, Honors, or AP Track)

Amy Ruff's Homeschool Tutorials

[amy.ruff@outlook.com](mailto:amy.ruff@outlook.com)

(919) 219-4338

**Prospectus:** Amy Ruff leads this **challenging, exciting journey** into many beloved works of **British Lit!**

- Thanks to **PlayMakers Repertory Co.**, we'll experience a **high-quality drama** at UNC-Chapel Hill during the educational matinee of ***Macbeth*** by William Shakespeare (date to be announced): "A warrior's quest for power leads him down a dark and bloody path. As ambition clashes with guilt and paranoia, the lines between reality and illusion blur. Dare to behold this haunting, spirit-filled exploration of what it means to hold the crown." ~ PRC
- For the **glory of battle**, we'll encounter **formidable foes**—like ***Beowulf's*** Grendel.
- We'll encounter a **traumatized female protagonist** in C.S. Lewis's ***Till We Have Faces***—a **medieval retelling** of the classical myth of **Cupid & Psyche**.
- At times, imposing gothic shadows may overwhelm us, such as the ***Wuthering Heights*** of the haunted Heathcliff.
- Thankfully, our pace will slow during occasional **interludes with poetry** to awaken our perception of both ***Sound & Sense***, including these great poets, among others:
  - Pope      →Wordsworth      →Coleridge      →Byron      →Shelley
  - Keats      →Tennyson      →Johnson      →Blake      →Johnson
- We'll approach the precipice of **Milton's *Paradise Lost*** & discover **heaven-sent hope** which will **supply us with courage** throughout our literary journey.
- Our journey would not be complete without **these literary geniuses & their powerful works**:
  - Chaucer's ***Canterbury Tales*** (Selected)      →Christopher Marlowe's ***Doctor Faustus***
  - Jane Austen's ***Pride & Prejudice***      →Mary Shelley's ***Frankenstein***
  - Joseph Conrad's ***Heart of Darkness***      →***The Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa***
  - William Golding's ***Lord of the Flies***      →**"The Dead"** by James Joyce (from *Dubliners*)
- From heights of joy to depths of despair, we'll **wrestle with complex & intense** great lit by:
  - Identifying themes    →Tracing plots    →Dissecting conflicts    →Analyzing characters

### **Class Location/Time/Dates:**

- Brit Lit is **Tues 945-11 AM from 8/26/25-12/16/25 & 1/6/26-5/12/26** with **10/14/25 fall break, 11/25/25 Thanksgiving break, & 3/10/26 spring break.**
- Brit Lit is at **Grace Church in room #118:** 200 Sage Rd, Chapel Hill, across from Lowe's & just off I-40 at 15-501.

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### Testimonies about Class with Mrs. Ruff:

*Mrs. Ruff's English classes **prepared me exceptionally well** for the **writing demands of Harvard**.*

*I thrived in my required freshman writing course, earning an A.*

*Specifically, I found **my ability to structure a paper to far exceed that of my peers**.*

*Now, **as a senior**, I am **known among my peers as an excellent editor** and have edited several senior theses.... However, to say Mrs. Ruff's courses improved only my writing ability would be insufficient. The **benefits of her courses have extended beyond English classes**. All courses at Harvard require the ability to think clearly and formulate a sound argument. **I attribute my success at Harvard**, in large part, **to Mrs. Ruff's development of my critical-thinking skills**.*

~ Kendrick, **Harvard Grad** (Majors in Economics & Computer Science)

*I took two of Mrs. Ruff's literature classes in high school & **loved every second** of each. She **nurtured my love of literature & writing** while engaging everyone in the class...in lively discussions about each work studied. **Debates got heated in a friendly way**, & Mrs. Ruff wasn't afraid to **let the conversation digress** into more contemporary & relevant subjects, like Star Wars or Harry Potter, **if it tied back to the day's theme**. Mrs. Ruff's classes **set me up to succeed at UNC's School of Journalism**, as a full-time **newspaper reporter**, & now as a **freelance content marketer**. I couldn't recommend her classes more!*

~ Olivia, **UNC-CH Grad & Professional Writer**

*Mrs. Ruff's lit classes were the best! Her **easy-to-follow teaching**...brings **each work to life & provokes deep reflection** on themes & issues. My favorite part of class was the **lively & engaging discussion**, where Mrs. Ruff would push us to **develop, discuss, & defend our own thoughts**.... Before taking Mrs. Ruff's classes, writing terrified me, but by working with Mrs. Ruff, I found my writing style. Her **constant encouragement & detailed, personal feedback** gave me the **skills** and, more importantly, the **confidence to tackle any writing task**. I went from loathing a simple paragraph to graduating college with **two writing-intensive majors & a 100+ page research paper under my belt**.*

~ Matthew (Who Met His Future Wife in Amy's Classroom), **Vanderbilt Grad & Lawyer**

*I hope every homeschooler encounters the care of Mrs. Ruff, the **most optimistic ball of sunshine**. She has consistently **pushed us academically to wholeheartedly pursue our aspirations**. She **sees greatness in every student** whom she encounters & never shies away from **pushing students to reach their maximum potential**, helping them **improve writing skills, expand vocabulary, & deepen appreciation of literature**. An **hour of time with Mrs. Ruff** will produce a **10-fold return in the quality** of your work.*

*Mrs. Ruff's Christ-like **kindness** & constant **encouragement** always result in her **student's success**.*

~ Bogdan & Natalia (Polish-American Siblings), **UNC-CH & International Design School**

*Mrs. Ruff's role in our lives has moved from teacher to what might well be described as a **highly qualified life coach**. From **teaching our first composition class to writing our teacher recommendations** for Duke & NCSU, Mrs. Ruff has been an excellent teacher & supporting figure, family friend, & academic mentor on everything from **excellent SAT/ACT prep to college-application essays**.... We are incredibly thankful for all Mrs. Ruff has done to prepare us for college.*

~ Jeffrey & Hannah (Siblings), **Duke Engineering Grad & NCSU Vet School Grad**

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**Course Unit Value & Student Age:** High school English = 1 unit. Amy Ruff doesn't weight honors or AP unit value, but parents may do so on transcripts. Student age ranges from advanced 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades.

**Bio:** Amy Ruff lives next to her **beloved alma mater, Duke University**, & enjoys teaching, tutoring, & test prepping students **in person** as well as **online** in her areas of specialty: **literary analysis; writing & composition; Spanish; psychology; philosophy & religion; SAT, ACT, & APs; executive-functioning & study skills.**

Having completed her **BA at Duke University with double majors in English & religion**, Amy also earned a **Certificate in Duke's rigorous interdisciplinary Women's Studies Program**. While an undergraduate & after graduation, Amy worked in **editing for the Duke University Press** & continues to **freelance edit**.

**Intuitive and seasoned at identifying & developing the potential in her students**, Amy's **energetic & engaging style** enables students to **grow in their knowledge of subject matter** while also **honing their critical-thinking skills & elevating their character**. Having **homeschooled her own children** through high school, Amy continues to **support the homeschooling community by offering group-class tutorials**.

Counseling students to **align self-understanding with their envisioned future**, Amy has aided many to **make wise choices** for their **post-high-school paths**. She has assisted students to **succeed on test prep & applications for acceptance** into a range of schools. From **Harvard, Duke, & Stanford to UNC & NCSU to community colleges across NC**, Amy's students **thrive in diverse academic, artistic, athletic, trade, & professional pursuits**.

Of **Argentine-Italian descent** & hailing from **Italian roots in Pittsburgh, PA**, Amy attended boarding prep school on a **full scholarship & received a college scholarship from the Spanish National Honor Society**. Amy continued her **Spanish studies at Duke** & served on **short-term missions as a Spanish interpreter**. From the **rudiments of grammar & vocabulary** to encounters with **cooking & dancing**, Sra. Amy's students **learn to love Latina language & culture!**

Always eager to serve the local & global community, Amy is a supporter of two **overseas NGOs**, grad of **REI (Racial Equity Institute) training**, & volunteer with **The Honor Foundation** (helping special-ops retirees, like Amy's deceased big brother who was a decorated Navy SEAL).

**Directions on Academic Tracks:** Brit Lit students **select/follow 1 of the 3 tracks** detailed below:

- **Regular Track**
- **Honors Track**
- **AP Track**
- The course syllabus presents RT, **HT**, & **AP** homework in more detail than is explained below.
- Though listing RT, **HT**, & **AP** track HW below, **Mrs. Ruff defers to parents about what HW a student completes**, believing that parents are **in charge of** & have the **final say about the student's homeschool experience**; therefore, **any assignment** on the syllabus **may be omitted or customized** as the **parent sees fit** or the **student's schedule necessitates**.

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### **Regular Track (RT)** – Assignments for RT students include the following:

- 1) Write 3 papers of 3-7 pages in length.
- 2) Respond to prompts for multiple quick writes (QWs).
- 3) Take a few home-proctored quizzes throughout the year.
- 4) Follow the class syllabus.
- 5) Read all lit works by their due dates.
- 6) Take class notes to engage in spirited class discussion & easily accomplish 1-5 above.
- 7) Follow RT instructions on the Summer Reading Letter.

### **Honors Track (HT)** – In addition to numbers 2-6 for RT above, HT students also:

- 1) Lead some small-group QW submissions.
- 2) Write 4 papers of 3-7 pages in length—unless the average of papers 1-3 = 95+%.
- 3) Maintain a 90+% average.
- 4) Follow HT instructions on the Summer Reading Letter.

### **AP (Advanced-Placement) Track** – In addition to 2-6 for RT & number 2 for HT, AP students also:

- 1) Follow directions for AP students on the Summer Reading Letter.
- 2) Maintain a 93+% average.
- 3) As an AP team, present summaries to the class on plot, character, & theme for 1-2 lit works that are NOT read by RT or HT students.
- 4) Take 4 open-book, open-note exams on these literary periods & for which detailed study guides are provided: Middle Ages, 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Century, Romantic Movement, Victorian Period.
- 5) Write 4 TAPes (40-minute Timed AP Essays) in response to some of the lit works being read as preparation for taking the AP English Lit Exam &/or AP English Language Exams in early May in local public or private schools, noting that some students follow the AP track for 1-3 years in Amy Ruff's lit classes before sitting for either/both AP English exam(s). For a student who is seriously considering taking the AP English Literature Exam &/or the AP English Language Exam, a private-tutoring session with Mrs. Ruff may be arranged for planning & prep.

**Materials:** All registered students should receive the following three course PDFs, so please check with Mrs. Ruff if you're missing any of these PDFs:

- The **Brit Lit Course Overview PDF** outlines works of study within their historical context.
- The **Brit Lit Works of Study PDF** details the lit works students read & bring to class. Our poems & many longer lit works are available in electronic form as PDFs.
- The **Brit Lit Course Summer Reading Letter PDF** is self-explanatory.

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## Registration & Tuition:

1. The non-refundable **registration** & **tuition** are based on the track the student chooses to follow & should be paid via one of the following methods.

- **Venmo** [www.venmo.com/Amy-Ruff-8](https://www.venmo.com/Amy-Ruff-8)
- **Zelle** under 919-219-4338
- **Mail check** 1101 Anderson Street Durham 27705

2. The **registration** is due by June, & **tuition** is due as  $\frac{1}{2}$  in **August** &  $\frac{1}{2}$  in **January**:

- \$75 reg/\$750 tuition regular track
- \$100 reg/\$800 tuition honors track
- \$125 reg/\$850 tuition AP track

3. With **payment**, please **include pertinent details on form below**.

Names: Student's \_\_\_\_\_ Parents' \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Emails: \_\_\_\_\_

Phones: Student's \_\_\_\_\_ Parents' \_\_\_\_\_

<b>British Lit 945-11 AM</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Track \$75/750 <input type="checkbox"/> Honors Track \$100/800 <input type="checkbox"/> AP \$125/850		
<b>Spanish I Registration/Tuition</b> 11 AM-12 PM <b>Tues</b> at <b>Grace Church</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Track \$75/750 <input type="checkbox"/> Honors Track \$100/800	<b>Spanish II Registration/Tuition</b> 845-945 AM <b>Tues</b> at <b>Grace Church</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Track \$75/750 <input type="checkbox"/> Honors Track \$100/800	<b>Spanish III Registration/Tuition</b> TBD in <b>Amy's Home</b> or via <b>Zoom</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Track \$75/750 <input type="checkbox"/> Honors Track \$100/800
<b>Middle School Composition 12-1 PM Tues at Grace Church</b> <input type="checkbox"/> One Track <b>Reg/Tuition</b> \$100/850		
<b>Introduction to Literature 1-2 PM Tues at Grace Church</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Track \$75/750 <input type="checkbox"/> Honors Track \$100/800		
<b>YSA Young Spanish Adventure on Tues at Grace Church 2-245 PM</b> <input type="checkbox"/> One Track <b>Reg/Tuition</b> \$100/750		
<b>YWA Young Writers Adventure on Tues at Grace Church 245-330 PM</b> <input type="checkbox"/> One Track <b>Reg/Tuition</b> \$100/750		

<u>Times for Amy's Tuesday 2025-26 Classes – Hybrid offerings of each class are conducted in person &amp; via Zoom (per student preference):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tues/845-945 AM <b>Spanish II</b> (regular &amp; <b>honors</b> tracks) at Grace</li><li>• Tues/945-11 AM <b>British Lit</b> (regular, <b>honors</b>, &amp; <b>AP</b> tracks) at Grace</li><li>• Tues/11 AM-12 PM <b>Spanish I</b> (regular &amp; <b>honors</b> tracks) at Grace</li><li>• Tues/12-1 PM <b>Middle School Composition</b> (one track) at Grace</li><li>• Tues/1-2 PM <b>Intro Lit</b> with <b>Am Lit</b> twist (regular &amp; <b>honors</b>) at Grace</li><li>• Tues/2-245 PM <b>YSA Young Spanish Adventure</b> (ages 7-11) at Grace</li><li>• Tues/245-330 PM <b>YWA Young Writers Adventure</b> (ages 7-11) at Grace</li><li>• TBD <b>Spanish III</b> (regular &amp; <b>honors</b> tracks)</li></ul>	<u>Middle/High School 2025-26 Class Calendar:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>8/26/25</b> First Fall Tues 2025 Class</li><li>• <b>10/14/25</b> NO Class for Fall Break</li><li>• <b>11/25/25</b> NO Class for Thanksgiving Break</li><li>• <b>12/16/25</b> Last 2025 Tues Class</li><li>• <b>1/6/26</b> First 2026 Tues Class</li><li>• <b>3/10/26</b> NO Class for Spring Break</li><li>• <b>5/12/26</b> Last 2026 Tues Class</li></ul>
<u>YWA/YSA 2025-26 Class Calendar:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>9/9/25</b> First Fall Class    • <b>10/14/25</b> NO Class Fall Break    • <b>11/25/25</b> NO Class Thanksgiving    • <b>12/25/25</b> Last Class</li><li>• <b>1/13/26</b> First 2026 Class    • <b>3/10/26</b> NO Class for Spring Break    • <b>4/7/26</b> Last 2026 Tues Class</li></ul>	