

Introduction to Literature Course 2025-26

(Regular or Honors Track)

amy.ruff@outlook.com

Amy Ruff's Home School Tutorials

(919) 219-4338

Prospectus: Amy Ruff will lead this journey into some of the most **beloved works of literature**. From **heights of joy to depths of despair**, literary adventure awaits us!

- We begin by climbing **thematic heights** & traversing **cultural ravines** with a novel that captured my junior-high soul when I was growing up in a neighborhood with both Hasidic & Orthodox Jewish communities. ***The Chosen*** by Chaim Potok will awaken our souls to understand faith & friendship on new levels.
- Continuing our probing into **spiritual depths**, we will study another favorite of mine (shared with me by my prep school geometry teacher): Hannah Hurnard's ***Hinds' Feet on High Places***. This **allegorical novel** will usher us closer to Jesus & build compassion within us for those who don't yet know Him as Shepherd.
- Thanks to **PlayMakers Repertory Co.**, we'll experience these **high-quality dramas** at UNC-Chapel Hill:
 - ***You Can't Take It with You*** by Hart & Kaufman on **Th 12/4/25 at 10 AM**: "Normal is not on the menu. Meet the Sycamores, a delightfully eccentric, freewheeling bunch with no regard for social norms. But when their daughter falls for the straight-laced boss's son, two worlds hilariously collide. Laugh out loud with this heartwarming, madcap classic that reminds us to love boldly, embrace joy, & live on our own terms." ~ PRC
 - ***Macbeth*** by William Shakespeare on **Fri 3/20/26 at 10 AM**: "A warrior's quest for power leads him down a dark & bloody path. As ambition clashes with guilt & paranoia, the lines between reality & illusion blur. Dare to behold this haunting, spirit-filled exploration of what it means to hold the crown." ~ PRC
- We'll **launch the New Year** with some fun, collaborative **lit-team analysis**, featuring options of either ***The Hiding Place*** by Corrie ten Boom or ***The Diary of Anne Frank***.
- Then—DRUMROLL—we will encounter Charlotte Bronte's ***Jane Eyre***. **Tracing plot, dissecting conflict, identifying theme, & analyzing characters**, we will tarry with heroic Jane & despicable Mr. Rochester.
- Our edifying study of the Bible as literature will focus on genres of history, wisdom, poetry, & parables.
- To keep up our energy on this literary journey, we will find **respite & sustenance** during **5 Poetry Intensives**—spaced at **timely intervals throughout the year**. From sweet & savory to spicy & sour, choice poetic selections will please every literary palate!
- Our **year will end** with a **deeply psychological study** of ***A Separate Peace*** by John Knowles, giving us **much to reflect upon** before saying our goodbyes.

Materials:

1. The **Summer Reading PDF** details summer-reading options.
2. The **Introduction to Lit Works of Study** details what works to purchase.
3. All registered students will receive the **following teaching docs** just before fall classes begin:
 - **Intro Lit Syllabus** • **Quick-Write (QW) Prompts** • **Outlines for the 5 Poetry Intensives**
 - **Prompts for Longer Lit-Analysis Papers** • **Outlines for the In-Class Writing Workshops**

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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 far exceeded 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 (Wh ☺ 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: Unweighted 1 unit English/language arts for 7th through 10th grade.

Fine Print on Which Track to Take: Though listing **regular** & **honors** assignments 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.

Regular Track (RT): Work for RT students includes the following.

1. In response to paper-prompt options, **write 2 papers of 3-5 pages** in length for which **students are amply prepared by Amy Ruff's in-class Writing Workshops**.
2. Create several **quick writes (QWs)** in response to specific **lit-analysis prompts**.
3. Take **2 quizzes on lit works**.
4. Take **2 lit exams** which are **preceded by in-class review** with the **aid of exam study guides**.
5. Follow the class **syllabus**.
6. **Read all lit works** by their due dates.
7. Take **class notes** in order to engage in **spirited class discussion** & easily accomplish 1-6 above.
8. **Follow regular-track directions** on the **Summer Reading PDF**.

Honors Track (HT): In addition to 2-7 above for RT, work for **HT students** includes the following.

1. In response to paper-prompt options, **write 3 papers of 3-7 pages** in length for which **students are amply prepared by Amy Ruff's In-Class Writing Workshops**; however, **if the average of papers 1-2 = 95+%, then the HT student is excused from writing Paper #3—unless the parent decides otherwise**.
2. **Lead some small-group QWs**, practicing collaborative analysis via **Google Docs**.
3. **Lead team-analysis presentations**.
4. **Maintain a 90+% average**.
5. **Follow directions for HT students** on the **Summer Reading PDF**.

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**.

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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).

Class Location/Time/Dates:

- Intro Lit is **Tues 1-2 PM** 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.**
- Intro Lit is at **Grace Church in room #118**: 200 Sage Rd, Chapel Hill, across from Lowe's & just off I-40 at 15-501.

Registration & Tuition:

- 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 • **Zelle** under 919-219-4338 • **Mail check** 1101 Anderson Street Durham 27705
- The **registration** is due by June, & **tuition** is due as **½ in August & ½ in January**:
 - \$75 reg/\$750 tuition regular track** • **\$100 reg/\$800 tuition honors track**
- With payment, please include pertinent details on form below.

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Names: Student's _____ Parents' _____

Address: _____

Grade: _____ Age: _____ Emails: _____

Phones: Student's _____ Parents' _____

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

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