

# Kolbe Academy Home School

## BRITISH LITERATURE

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**Resale & Copying Policy:** This course plan and all accompanying materials are not intended for resale or copying. Copying represents copyright infringement, which is illegal. Regarding reselling the materials, Kolbe Academy relies upon the continued purchase of our course plans for financial stability. As a Catholic Apostolate, we ask you to refrain from reselling Kolbe's course plans. While we cannot stop you from copying or reselling this course plan, we do strongly implore you not to do so.

COURSE TITLE: British LiteratureCOURSE TEXTS (in chronological order):

SHAKESPEARE	*William Shakespeare, <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> . Ignatius Press: San Francisco, 2011.
SHAKESPEARE	*William Shakespeare, <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> . Ignatius Press: San Francisco, 2009.
SHAKESPEARE	*William Shakespeare, <i>King Lear</i> . Ignatius Press: San Francisco, 2008.
DEFOE	*Daniel Defoe, <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> , New York: Penguin Group, 2008. Print.
SWIFT	*Jonathan Swift, <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> , San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010.
AUSTEN	*Jane Austen, <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> , San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012.
SHELLEY	*Mary Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i> , San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008.
DICKENS	*Charles Dickens, <i>Oliver Twist</i> , New York: Signet Classics, 1961.
BRONTE	*Emily Bronte, <i>Wuthering Heights</i> , San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008.
DICKENS	*Charles Dickens, <i>Great Expectations</i> , San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010.
WILDE	*Oscar Wilde, <i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> , San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008.
LEWIS	*C.S. Lewis, <i>Out of the Silent Planet</i> , New York: Scribner, 1938.
LEWIS	*C.S. Lewis, <i>The Screwtape Letters</i> , San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2001. Print.
ORWELL	*George Orwell, <i>Animal Farm</i> , New York: Penguin Group, 1996.
MLA	* <i>MLA Handbook Eighth Edition</i> . Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS:

**Summa Cum Laude** students may take the British Literature course for the (K) designation as an elective in addition to the courses required to complete their graduation requirements. **Magna Cum Laude** and **Standard** diploma candidates may choose to pursue the (K) designation, but are not required to do so. If not pursuing the designation, the parent has the option of altering the course plan as desired.

KOLBE CORE (K) COURSES:

- ❖ Students pursuing the **Kolbe Core (K)** designation should read eight novels, four per semester. **Kolbe Core students need to complete at least 4 of the weekly papers;** they should have discussions or write informal essays in response to the rest of the weekly paper topics as these cover major themes and will appear in some way on the final exam.
- ❖ For students who are not seeking the Kolbe Core (K) designation for this course, parents may alter the course as they wish.

REQUIRED SAMPLE WORK:

Designation*		K
Course Title	British Literature	British Literature
Semester 1	1. Any Two (2) written samples of work	1. The complete exam for 3 novels and/or plays
Semester 2	1. Any Two (2) written samples of work	1. The complete exam for 3 novels and/or plays

\*Designation refers to designation type on transcript. K designates a Kolbe Academy Core course.

The Kolbe academic advisor will verify that the required work was completed successfully and award the Kolbe Core (K) designation. The Kolbe academic advisor has the final decision in awarding the designation for the course. **If no designation on the transcript is desired, parents may alter the lesson plan in any way they choose and any written sample work is acceptable to receive credit for the course.** If you have any questions regarding what is required for the (K) designation or diploma type status, please contact the academic advisory department at 707-255-6499 ext. 5 or by email at [advisors@kolbe.org](mailto:advisors@kolbe.org).

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Kolbe Academy's British Literature course introduces students to works that have enlarged our aesthetic and moral understanding of the world. The novels and plays in the course are classics because they both delight and instruct as they comment on the human condition. Students reading these works will learn to examine them based on genre and structure. In addition, students will be able to examine in depth the themes of these works, often with the help of critical essays provided in the books themselves.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- ❖ Students will gain an acquaintance with fine works in the English language
- ❖ Students will learn to examine works for their aesthetic and moral meaning
- ❖ Students will learn to examine works based on their genre and structure
- ❖ Students will learn to write persuasive essays and creative pieces in response to the works studied

### **COURSE PLAN METHODOLOGY:**

Kolbe Academy, operating under the principle of subsidiarity, provides course plans as a suggested course of study. It is still up to the parents to select suitable titles for their child to study. Parents considering a title may want to read the week-by-week synopsis provided in the course plans.

1. Asking the student to retell the portion of the work he or she has read that day is a good way to cultivate a solid memory of the work and develop the student's ability to focus on the salient details.
2. Asking the student to predict what will happen next or in what way the main character might grow or change is a good way to foster a deeper moral understanding of the work.
3. In a first read-through, a firm grasp of the literal events is essential. In discussion, however, the ability to see thematic elements should be cultivated so that the student might gain a deeper understanding. Parents may use the Discussion ideas found under the ➔ **Key Points** section included each week in the course plans.
4. Examining the structure based on a standard plot chart that includes the inciting incident, complicating obstacles and setbacks, rising action, climax, and resolution is a very good way to unearth the deeper meaning of a work and discover the artistry of the writer.
5. There is a final exam for each book. It may be given in whole or in part at the discretion of the parent. Some of the final exams have longer short answer portions than others (10 questions). Trimming these longer sections might be in order. A good rule of thumb is to ask the student to answer those questions that came up in

discussion and to which he should know the answer and/or to include one or two questions that might challenge him, but which he should be able to answer if he reasons his way through.

6. The weekly essays are optional. However, pondering the essay topics and writing a response is a very good way to grow in analytical and reasoning ability and in the ability to give shape to one's thoughts.

7. Use the last week of the course plan to catch up on reading, writing the essay, or reviewing for the exam.

#### **CHOOSING BOOKS FOR A YEAR'S COURSE OF STUDY:**

Parents, along with students, should choose **six to eight titles to read over the course of the school year** and record them on the Course of Study form that parents must submit to Kolbe Academy at the start of the high school year. Choose titles based on the student's interest, the time allotted for the novel or play, the correspondence to thematic elements in history or theology, or the suitability of the reading level of the book in question. Parents are free to select books as they see fit. If they choose approximately half of the books listed in one year (6-7) and the same the following year, they will find that there is enough material here for two years of course work.

The chronological list below tells its own story. Shakespeare wrote plays that were presented to a wide audience; they were meant to entertain and teach in a public setting. He dealt with universal themes and drew heavily on stories that were already well known. Of course, he brought his own magnificent insights of the world and of human nature to his work, but he did not publish his own work in his lifetime. When publishers took up his work, they were hoping to earn a profit. Although Shakespeare was not one to sneer at turning a profit, he did not think to do so by publishing his plays. By the time Daniel Defoe wrote his novels the middle class in England was burgeoning. The novel was born under conditions that almost guaranteed that it would flourish. Literacy was on the rise, a new class of people had money in its pockets to spend on leisure, and a demand was present for stories of contemporary life, stories that did not exactly follow the patterns established by the writers of epics or medieval romance, stories that would instead emphasize the place of the individual in society. Of course, the change did not happen completely all at once. Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* could be termed a kind of *Odyssey*; however, his later novels could not be thought of as related to what had come before. Swift who was commenting on Defoe and other writers who wrote about exotic new locales in a way to appeal to the popular imagination (world exploration was in full-swing), did write with reference to the ancient writers, specifically Terence, the great satirist, and Homer, the great epic writer. When we meet Jane Austen, however, we are entering an artistic world that is engaged in thoroughly charting the moral growth made by the individual over time. In Mary Shelley, we see an author who, in drawing on the science of her time, is giving birth to a new genre—science fiction. In doing so she managed to comment on mankind in a way reminiscent of the Faust legends. Dickens perfected the art of the novel by creating a fictional world that mirrored the real world in the variety of its characters and complexity of its society. Oscar Wilde created a moral tale amid the moral drift of his times. C.S. Lewis added a spiritual dimension to the science fiction genre, and did the same for the epistolary novel, a form that had first appeared in the English speaking world with the novels of Samuel Richardson in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. George Orwell gave us the model of the failed utopia or dystopia. He created a fable that was rooted in history, capable of unmasking the totalitarian leanings of our modern, secular, materialistic age. He was, of course, writing about the U.S.S.R., but his work suits our time as well.

Title	Author	Year of Original Publication	Course Plan Weeks##	Book Page Code	Kolbe Rec. Reading Level
<i>Romeo &amp; Juliet</i>	William Shakespeare	1597	4 weeks*	A	9-12
<i>Merchant of Venice</i>	William Shakespeare	1600	4 weeks*	B	9-12
<i>King Lear</i>	William Shakespeare	1608	4 weeks*	C	12
<i>Robinson Crusoe</i>	Daniel Defoe	1719	4 weeks	D	9-12
<i>Gulliver's Travels</i>	Jonathan Swift	1726	5 weeks*	E	11-12
<i>Pride and Prejudice</i>	Jane Austen	1813	4 weeks	F	10-12
<i>Frankenstein</i>	Mary Shelley	1818	4 weeks*	G	11-12
<i>Oliver Twist</i>	Charles Dickens	1838	6 weeks	H	9-12
<i>Wuthering Heights</i>	Emily Bronte	1847	5 weeks*	I	9-12
<i>Great Expectations</i>	Charles Dickens	1860	6 weeks*	J	9-12
<i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i>	Oscar Wilde	1890	5 weeks*	K	12
<i>Out of the Silent Planet</i>	C.S. Lewis	1938	3 weeks	L	9-12
<i>The Screwtape Letters</i>	C.S. Lewis	1942	3 weeks	M	9-12
<i>Animal Farm</i>	George Orwell	1945	3 weeks	N	9-12

##Including a review week

\*An **optional** additional week is included for those who want to read a critical essay on the work and complete a writing assignment based on it.

#### LITERATURE GENRES AND THEMES:

**Adventure/Intrigue:** *Robinson Crusoe*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Oliver Twist*

**Science Fiction:** *Frankenstein*, *Out of the Silent Planet*

**Love/Marriage:** *Romeo and Juliet*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Wuthering Heights*

**Failed Utopia:** *Animal Farm*

**Coming of Age:** *Great Expectations*

**Thematic Contrasts:** **Justice vs. Mercy**—*The Merchant of Venice*; **True power vs. False power**—*King Lear*;

**Appearance vs. Reality**—*The Picture of Dorian Gray*; **Good vs. Evil (the spiritual battle)**—*The Screwtape Letters*; **The Fallen World vs. the Unfallen World**—*Out of the Silent Planet*

◆◆◆ **ROMEO AND JULIET** ◆◆◆

**COURSE PLAN METHODOLOGY:** *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare is represented by the abbreviation **RJ**. The student should become familiar with the course plan, determining, with the help of parents, whether to read each synopsis beforehand, afterward, or as a study aid. The final week will offer students the opportunity to read and respond to one of the critical essays that follow the novel--**doing so is optional**.

**COURSE TEXTS:**

- RJ** ❖ Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet*. Ed. Joseph Pearce. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011.
- RJSG** ❖ Kolbe Academy Study Guide to *Romeo and Juliet*. Kolbe Academy Press: Napa, 2014. (The two-book set includes a student book with questions and a teacher book with questions and answers.) Optional

**A NOTE ON IGNATIUS CRITICAL EDITIONS:** Kolbe Academy is fortunate in having *Ignatius Critical Editions* to offer for many titles in its British Literature Course, including for *Romeo and Juliet*. The *Critical Editions* series "represents a tradition-oriented approach to reading the Classics of world literature." It "concentrates on critical examinations informed by our Judeo-Christian heritage."<sup>1</sup> We at Kolbe could not hope for a better tool to help students of all ability levels learn to appreciate the beauty, artistry, and wisdom to be found within the pages of a great book. Those students who are inclined to a deeper study of literature will thrive on learning how to examine a work to gain insights like those contained in the critical essays; those not so inclined will discover how to examine a text to learn what it truly has to say.

**CHARACTERS:****Chorus:**

**Prince Escalus:** Prince of Verona. He is unable to keep the peace of the city.

**Romeo Montague:** A youth whose name is synonymous with one half of a pair of star-crossed lovers who are caught in the middle of warring families. Romeo is dreamy, sensitive, intelligent, and in love with Rosaline at the beginning of the play. When he falls in love with the daughter of his father's greatest enemy, he cannot know that his love will end in tragedy.

**Montague:** Romeo's father and head of the Montague clan.

**Lady Montague:** Romeo's mother.

**Benvolio:** Nephew of Montague. A friend to Romeo.

**Abraham:** Servant to Montague.

**Mercutio:** Romeo's friend, a natural wit, a brawler. He is a kinsman of the prince.

**Balthasar:** Servant to Romeo.

<sup>1</sup> *Romeo and Juliet*. Ignatius Press (San Francisco) 2011. Back Cover.

**Juliet Capulet:** The famed maiden in her early teens who is destined to a tragic end. Her resourcefulness, determination, and bravery are used in the service of a passion for which she is not mature enough to understand.

**Capulet:** Juliet's father and head of the Capulet clan.

**Lady Capulet:** Juliet's mother. She seeks vengeance against Romeo.

**The Nurse:** Juliet's nurse and confidant. She is not wise enough to help Juliet act in a prudent way.

**Peter:** Servant to Juliet's nurse.

**Tybalt:** Nephew to Lady Capulet

**Sampson and Gregory:** Servants to Capulet

**Paris:** A young nobleman, kinsman to the Prince

**Friar Lawrence:** a Franciscan friar, confidante, and guide to both Romeo and Juliet. Friar Lawrence officiates at Romeo and Juliet's secret wedding hoping for peace between the two families. He is also an amateur maker of potions.

**Friar John:** A Franciscan friar.

**An apothecary:** a druggist

**Three Musicians:** Called upon to play Juliet's wedding song, they end by playing her dirge

**An Officer**

**Citizens of Verona; Gentlemen and Gentlewomen of both houses; Maskers, Torchbearers, Pages, Guards, Watchmen, Servants, and Attendants**

WEEK 1		
READING	RJ	Read Introduction to the book by Joseph Pearce Read Act I and Act II
Study Guide	RJSG	Do Study Guide Questions for Act I and Act II
Synopsis	<p>The feud between the Montagues and the Capulets sets the stage for our pair of star-cross'd lovers. The play opens in petty strife as two attendants of the house of Capulet, Sampson and Gregory, quarrel with two attendants of the house of Montague, Abraham and Balthasar. Benvolio, a Montague, tries to break up the quarrel which has escalated, but Tybalt, a Capulet, draws him into the fray. Soon the townspeople present attack both sides as public menaces. Capulet and Montague, the heads of the two households, arrive and barely restrain themselves from joining in. When Prince Escalus, lord of Verona, appears, he quells the brawl and pronounces the following sentence: "If ever you disturb our streets again,/Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace." (I.1.94—95). As the crowd disperses, Montague and his wife talk to Benvolio of their concerns about Romeo who seems melancholy. Romeo is lovesick for a young woman named Rosaline who wishes never to marry. Benvolio promises to cure Romeo's sadness by showing him other beautiful girls. Romeo is not interested. At the Capulets, the young nobleman Paris is paying suit to gain the hand of Capulet's young daughter, Juliet. Capulet encourages him, but advises him to win Juliet gently and to give her time to mature before they are married. Paris would prefer to hurry the marriage, but Capulet persuades him to make his desire known to Juliet at a lavish party he means to give that very night. Capulet has a servant issue invitations for the event, but the man cannot read. When Benvolio and Romeo chance upon the servant, the servant begs their help. Of course, Romeo learns of the party at</p>	

	<p>Capulet's house. Benvolio states that Rosaline will be at the feast. He and Romeo decide to break into the party—Benvolio hoping that Romeo will see another that makes him forget Rosaline, Romeo hoping to see his lady fair. In Scene 3, we meet Juliet. Lady Capulet and her nurse have called upon her to prepare her for the prospect of marriage. The nurse, who loves Juliet, conducts a running reminiscence on Juliet's life that borders on the bawdy, until censured by Lady Capulet. Juliet is informed of Paris' suit and told to consider it seriously. A servant announces the start of the party. Romeo, joined by a merry group of his friends, all in mask, enters the party. Benvolio is among them, and Mercutio, Romeo's witty and moody cousin. As the dance starts, Romeo catches his first sight of Juliet and realizes he had never loved until then. Tybalt recognizes his voice as that of a Montague and grows restless to punish him for invading the party. Capulet, however, forbids such action. Romeo, in the meantime, has spoken to Juliet and kissed her twice. As the nurse calls Juliet away, and as Romeo departs, they both discover to their horror that their chosen one is descended from the house of their most bitter enemy. Act 2 includes the famous balcony scene. While secreted in Capulet's garden, Romeo glimpses Juliet. Praising her as the sun, he listens avidly as she speaks his name. Juliet utters the famous "What's in a name?" speech. Juliet tutors Romeo to not swear by the oaths of common lovers, but by himself alone. After the nurse calls her away, Juliet returns. She tells Romeo that if he offers love in honorable fashion, she will marry him the next day. Romeo must make arrangements with Friar Lawrence to officiate at the marriage. The friar is shocked by his precipitous love and his choice of a mate. In scene 4, Benvolio and Mercutio wonder at Romeo's disappearance. Benvolio notes that Tybalt has written Romeo and assumes the letter contains a challenge to fight. Finally Romeo appears and reveals nothing. The Nurse arrives and is caught up in Mercutio's merciless jesting. At last she speaks to Romeo. He discloses his plan to marry Juliet that afternoon. In Scene 5, the Nurse discloses Romeo's plan. Later they meet and marry.</p>
<b>Paper Topic</b>	<p><b><i>Examine the Balcony Scene in Act II, Scene 2, and offer proof regarding whether or not Juliet and Romeo truly love. Keep your answer based on the text. Areas that you may want to examine are whether Juliet and Romeo have a solid basis for their love (The portion where Romeo swears his love may help you resolve this.), whether they decide on the right course of action, and whether or not they are in earnest.</i></b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">◆ ◆ ◆</p> <p>➡ <b>Key Points:</b></p> <p><b>Introduction:</b> <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> is one of the most famous and best known of Shakespeare's plays. In its rich poetic language Shakespeare invites us to witness the course of a passionate and doomed love. When one is young, one reads or views the play as though plot matters above all else. Why could not the Capulets have waited to arrange a marriage for Juliet? Why could not Tybalt have held his tongue? Why could not Mercutio have walked away from the brawl? Why could not Friar John have moved faster? Why could not Friar Lawrence have done the same? Why did that fool of a Paris have to go to the tomb? It is no good. Nothing could save the two lovers from their fatal end. That anxiety one feels throughout the swift action of the play provides the basis for asking a few key questions upon more calm reflection. Did all the characters play their</p>	



parts because the social order had broken down? (Chaos tolerated by Prince, Family Heads, Clergy); were they acting on false ideas (inherited feuds, false ideas of love, vengeance), were they truly star-cross'd (fate determine all)? The wonder of the play is that the answers can be discovered through close examination of the text and through the process of debate and argument. Of course, to enjoy the play as Shakespeare intended, one has to see the play.

**Setting:** Verona, Italy

**Themes:** Ancient Feuds; Romantic Love (particularly poking fun at the conventions of Petrarchan poetry )

**Symbols:** Names

**Conflict:** Man vs. Man

**Genre:** Tragedy

◆◆◆

**Discuss:** ◆ How the disorder in the streets in the opening scene runs from the highest to the lowest levels

◆ What is the character of Romeo's relationship with his parents? ◆ What is the character of Juliet's

relationship with her parents? ◆ Does Romeo know anything about love? ◆ Does Juliet know anything about

love? ◆ What are the failings of the authority figures in the play?

Notes

## WEEK 2

READING	RJ	Read Act III
<i>Study Guide</i>	<i>RJSG</i>	Do Study Guide Questions for Act III
<i>Synopsis</i>	<p>Act III begins in violence. Mercutio, Benvolio, and an assortment of friends are in the streets. It is hot. Benvolio fears Mercutio, who is mercurial, as his name suggests, will pick a fight, and urges him to go home. Mercutio refuses to leave. Tybalt appears with other members of the Capulet clan and attempts to provoke a fight with Mercutio. Mercutio trains his wit on Tybalt but refuses to fight. Romeo arrives, and Tybalt, angered over his violation of the Capulet home, taunts him. Romeo deflects every barb. Mercutio, however, offended for Romeo's honor, draws his sword and challenges Tybalt. Tybalt eagerly responds. Romeo steps between them to stop the fight, but Tybalt thrusts beneath his arm and kills Mercutio. Before he dies, Mercutio calls out a curse on both the Capulet and Montagues, and wonders of his friend, why he interfered. Benvolio carries him off, repeating his curse. Romeo fears that his love for Juliet has softened him to the point of cowardice. Benvolio announces Mercutio's death. The foolish Tybalt returns and Romeo kills him and then flees. The city is in an uproar, demanding that Tybalt be found. The Prince and his attendants, as well as Montague and Capulet and their wives, converge on the scene. The Prince demands an account. Benvolio steps forward to explain that Tybalt, now dead by Romeo's hand, slew Mercutio. Lady Capulet, Juliet's mother, demands justice—Montague blood must be spilled. Benvolio gives a further account, explaining Romeo's resistance to Tybalt's assaults. The Prince softens the death sentence to exile. In her home, Juliet is unaware of what has happened. Her Nurse enters and tells the girl the news. Juliet loved her cousin Tybalt, but grieves terribly for Romeo. With the nurse's help,</p>	