



WEST HARPETH CHRISTIAN TUTORIAL

All About Shakespeare

Tutor:

Penelope Krouse
pkrouse@westharpeth.org

Prerequisites/Additional Information:

- This course is for grades 9-12.
- Students should be reading at or above grade level.
- Students should be familiar with how to compose a simple five-paragraph essay.
- Students should be capable of discussing weighty topics such as suicide and desire with maturity and sensitivity.

**Course Description**

In this full-credit English course, we will study a number Shakespeare's works from the perspective of a Christian worldview, considering historical context, genre, performance, and literary qualities and conventions. The plays will ask us to explore issues of divinity, morality, violence, social and civic power, familial and romantic relationships, and more. The academic goal of the class is two-fold: we will develop a thoughtful understanding of the history, aesthetic, and content of the Shakespearean canon by focusing on a handful of his important works, and we will practice analysis and interpretation of a complex text—a critical life skill. As a bonus, we will become more humane persons through imaginative engagement of our faculties of reason, empathy, and creativity!

Parents should familiarize themselves with the course content, and recognize that we will address challenging themes such as murder, suicide, racism, and desire. Parents should discuss with their student whether he/she is able to engage these topics with maturity and sensitivity.

Books & Supplies

The following are all by William Shakespeare and are all the Oxford School Shakespeare:

- *Midsummer Night's Dream*, ISBN/ASIN: B00D08G3QU
- *Much Ado About Nothing*, ISBN/ASIN: 9780198328728
- *Macbeth*, ISBN/ASIN: 9780198324003
- *Hamlet*, ISBN/ASIN: 9780198328704
- *Othello*, ISBN/ASIN: 9780198328735
- *The Tempest*, ISBN/ASIN: 9780198325000
- Selected sonnets supplied by instructor
- *Supplies*: Pocket folder or 3-ring binder, note-taking paper, writing utensil
- Students may choose to supply props or costumes for in-class scene study

Commitment

- This class meets once a week.
- Students will be asked to read every week. Note: The reading load in this class is not challenging in terms of quantity—a play is much shorter than a novel—the challenge is the quality, it is profound writing that requires attentive reading and study.
- Students will also write/complete short assignments every week. These might be analytic or creative. Creative assignments might include imitations, memorized recitations, or dramatic interpretations.
- Students will compose a 2-4 page literary analysis upon completing the study of each play. Additionally, there will be two in-class exams.
- We will enjoy some dramatic activities such as table reads, speech-recitation and short scene performances.
- Students should anticipate spending 2-4 hours outside of class in preparation for class meetings.

A typical class will look like...

Class time will be spent primarily in lecture, discussion, and activities, consequently in-class participation will form a substantive part of the student's grade.