
Great Books Syllabus

Unit 1 Sophocles, *Electra*

- Greek Drama
- The Greek Chorus
- Acting Conventions in Greek Drama
- Rhetoric Used in Greek Plays
- Modes of Expression in Greek Plays
- Men and Women in Greek Drama
- Special Effects on the Greek Stage

Unit 2 Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*

- Setting
- Dante and Virgil
- Beatrice
- Imagery
- Literary Terms
- Major Characters
- Limbo
- Terza rima
- Philosophy

Unit 3 William Shakespeare, *King Lear*

- Themes and Motifs
- Major Characters
- Literary Terms
- The Subplot
- Elizabethan Concepts
- Poetic Devices
- Symbolism
- Madness
- Folio and Quarto
- Fate
- Animal Imagery
- Human Selfishness

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Unit 4 Voltaire, *Candide*

Satire and Parody
Leibniz's Philosophy
The Enlightenment
The Lisbon Earthquake
Allegory
Comedy and Comic Relief
Deism
El Dorado
Optimism and Pessimism
Epic
Meliorism
Gardens in *Candide*

Unit 5 Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*

Major Characters
Literary Terms and Themes
Dialect
Dickens' Writing Style
Victorian Child Rearing
Byronic hero
Melodrama
Influence of Shakespeare and the Bible
Victorian morality
Dickens' attitude toward work
Donkeys in *David Copperfield*
Flower Imagery
Middle Class in Dickens
Literary Innovations
Stream of Consciousness
Symbolism
Elements of autobiography in *David Copperfield*
David Copperfield as a social novel
Victorian attitudes toward sex
The family unit in Dickens' works
Dickens as an early feminist
Australia

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Unit 6 Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*

- Themes
- Cyrano before he enters
- The Nose Speech
- Alexandrine Verse
- Pastry Shop
- Gascon Creed
- Balcony Scene
- Suspension of Disbelief
- Chivalry
- Intrigue in Cyrano
- Contrivances in Cyrano

Unit 7 Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw*

- Mystery
- Freudian imagery
- Point of View
- The Governess
- Characteristics of the Ghosts
- The Identification of Peter Quint
- Motifs
- Governess' character
- Language
- Theme Development

Unit 8 Luigi Pirandello, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*

- Literary Terms
- Real characters vs. fictional characters
- Dramatic Irony
- The role of the audience
- Verisimilitude

Appendix Unit 9 Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*

- Introduction to Gulliver's Travels
- Understanding Satire
- Satire on the War of Spanish Succession
- Lilliputian Justice
- Lilliput Contrasted with Brobdingnag
- Parallels between Brobdingnagian and English Society
- Gulliver's Introduction to the Houyhnhnms
- Law Practice in England
- Gulliver and Pride
- Houyhnhnm Society
- Gulliver's Return

Appendix Unit 10: *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

Introduction to the Epic of Gilgamesh

Preparation for Battle

The Cedar Forest

Ishtar

Enkidu's Death

Gilgamesh's Search

Utnapishtim

Ending