### Essential Questions

- What is the American Dream and to what extent is it achievable for all Americans?
- In what ways does the American Dream mean different things for different Americans?
- How has the American Dream changed over time?
- Is the American Dream of individuality a destructive or empowering force, or a combination of both?
- Is the American Dream still a viable element today?
- As a teenager today, how are you affected by the American Dream? (Are you part of it, victimized by it, or redefining it?)

### Enduring Understandings

- The American Dream is a pervasive element of the American cultural identity.
- The American Dream represents a social, economic, and literary ideal that suggests that position, wealth, and power can be attained by anyone through hard work.
- While the American Dream rests on the need for a common set of beliefs or ideologies, its presence today is diverse, multi-faceted, and paradoxical.
- Fitzgerald’s cynicism strips the American Dream of its illusions, while still emphasizing the importance of man’s realistic pursuit of the dream.
- Literature is one artistic medium through which people grapple with the issues and conflicts of their time.
- Literature reflects diverse perspectives and reactions to similar events and themes.
- All good literature reveals truths about the human experience that transcends its time.

### Content

The Junior Honors American Literature course is an integrated language arts program which focuses on reading and interpreting literature of the various periods and genres of the American literary tradition as well as the other four modes of writing. Literature study includes pre-colonial American literature, literature of the American revolution, Neoclassical American literature, literature of the New England Renaissance, literature of the Civil War era, literature of realism and the frontier, literature of the Modern Age, and the literature of Contemporary America. The course also includes instruction in speaking, listening, and writing, with regular attention given to grammar, usage, and vocabulary development. Preparation for the SAT/ACT is also incorporated into 11th grade English as well as the study of William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*.

This course provides intensive instruction in critical reading, writing, speaking, and listening
Theme: The American Dream—The Great Gatsby
Junior Honors English Level III
Second Unit

through literary analysis of the genres of drama, fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Students will be familiarized with the literary conventions which appear in their assigned readings and be given the opportunity to practice these conventions in the expository, persuasive, self-expressive and literary modes of composition.

21st Learning Expectations
Students
- Communicate effectively for a variety of purposes: written, oral, and presentation skills emphasized.
- Value human, cultural and natural diversity
- Employ research and data-gathering skills effectively
- Take responsibility for their own learning and behavior.

21st Century Learning Skills
21st Learning skills in the Language Arts classroom include:
• Information and communication skills which include media literacy, information literacy and ICT literacy.
• Thinking and problem-solving skills which include critical thinking, problem identification formulation and solution, creativity and intellectual curiosity specific to the unit genre.
• Interpersonal and self-directional skills which include both Flexibility and Adaptability with regard to cooperative groupings and pairings, and literature circles.
• Initiative and Self-Direction
• Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
• Productivity and Accountability
• Leadership and Responsibility

Connecticut State Standards
✓ Content Standard 1.1 Students use appropriate strategies before, during and after reading in order to construct meaning.
✓ Content Standard 1.2 Students interpret, analyze and evaluate text in order to extend understanding and appreciation.
✓ Content Standard 2.4 Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.
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<th>Objectives</th>
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<td>Students will be able to:</td>
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<td>✓ Identify characteristics of postwar “Lost Generation” writers.</td>
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<td>✓ Discuss the effect of the Jazz Age on American society.</td>
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<td>✓ Evaluate the effect of class distinctions—old money versus “nouveau riche”—on social interactions and perceptions in the 1920s.</td>
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<td>✓ Analyze key symbols and symbol patterns.</td>
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<td>✓ Describe and analyze the narrative structure of The Great Gatsby.</td>
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<td>✓ Analyze contrasting elements in the novel.</td>
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<td>✓ Describe their own place in the American Dream.</td>
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<td>Assessment: Students will produce a 1920s’ style newspaper as a group project to illustrate their understanding of social, political, economic, moral and cultural issues of the day while reflecting the American Dream. Students will incorporate events from the novel where relevant (Rubric 1.1: Communicate—Student writes effectively for a variety of purposes; Rubric 3.0—Student makes decisions and solves problems in independent and collaborative settings). Select a passage from the novel that emphasizes the American Dream and rewrite it as a parody reflecting contemporary society (Rubric 7.0—Student employs research and data-gathering skills effectively; Rubric 1.1: Communicate—Student writes effectively for a variety of purposes) Reading Check Quizzes (Rubric 1.2: Communication—Student reads effectively for a variety of purposes) and Multiple Choice/Short Answer Unit Test (Rubric 1.2: Communication—Student reads effectively for a variety of purposes). Other evidence of learning may include dialectical journals, story maps, group discussion, reader responses, group and panel discussions.</td>
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<td>School-issued student laptops, selections from Prentice Hall Literature Common Core Edition as well as F. Scott Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby, <a href="http://www.shmoop.com">www.shmoop.com</a>; <a href="http://www.grammarbook.com">www.grammarbook.com</a>; supplemental essays and articles provided by the instructor such as “Miniver Cheevy,” “We Wear the Mask,” and “Harlem.”</td>
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