SUBJECT : Language Arts
COURSE : Reading and Writing about Literature
COURSE CODE :
PROGRAMME : Secondary Year II
YEAR : 1
SEMESTER : 1
PRE-REQUISITE : CXC – CSEC English B
CREDIT HOURS : 3
DURATION : 45 Hours

RATIONALE:
The course is designed to sensitize students to different ways of reading and responding to literary texts. It also encourages the development of students’ reflective and analytic skills as well as prepares them to write well-developed and coherent essays with adequate documentation. Moreover, students will become aware of the value of multiple perspectives as they are introduced to some literary theories. This should encourage the valuing of their role as critics as well as the role of other critics and consequently, develop a tolerance towards others views which in turn will promote a healthy social environment.

OBJECTIVES
Students should:

1. become familiar with the tenets of a number of literary theories.
2. be made aware of the ways in which these theories affect the reading/understanding of a literary work.
3. be aware of the need for literature to be taught with an awareness of contextual realities including such contemporary socio-economic issues as HIV AIDS, violence, environmental concerns.
4. be able to write essays on the major aspects of a literary work e.g. technique, theme, setting, character etc.

5. be able to:
   a] write literary essays which demonstrate understanding of the basic literary genres.
   b] write literary essays which demonstrate skills of argumentation, analysis, application and criticism.
   c] use critical material effectively/appropriately.
   d] use correctly MLA citation styles.
   e] use correctly integrated quotations from a variety of sources.

6. be able to write essays using different organizational styles e.g. comparison-contrast, cause and effect.
7. be able to appreciate the need for using literacy language in reading and writing about literature.

8. be able to write literary reviews

UNIT 1 – (3 Hours)

TOPIC: Defining the literary text

• The text as construct/representation of life
• Exploration of students’ selection of literary texts – forms, conventions and their responses

UNIT 2 – (3 Hours)

TOPIC: Purpose of Literature (Why read books)

• Exploration of/discussion on students’ reflective notes on why they read

UNIT 3 – (15 Hours)

TOPIC: Ways of responding to/interpreting the text

• Discussion on students’ annotation on extract from the selected text (to include comparison of annotations)
• Analysis of critical material on the selected text to find out dominant perspective/point of view of critic (e.g. historical, feminist, reader-response) to show that there are multiple ways of reading/of interpreting

UNIT 4 – (5 Hours)

TOPIC: Reading and Writing the Literary Essay as Process

• Reading of selected texts – making annotations – paying attention to qualifying phrases, quotations
• Interpretation of the question – question on any of the elements on the text e.g. character theme
• Personal response to the question e.g. notes, discussion; writing a thesis statement
• Using critical material/reviewing the literature, in dialogue with the critic.
• Revising/refining response
• Writing a first draft; sharing your first draft
UNIT 5 – (8 Hours)
TOPIC: Making sense of the draft

- Discussion on/Exploration of students’ first draft in terms of:
  - Organization – Different approaches/styles e.g. thesis statement comparison/contrast
  - Coherence – paragraph unity, connectives between paragraphs
- Developing the ideas – e.g. select details, using the language of literature
- Tense usage
- Incorporating/using quotations from the selected texts, critical material..
- Using MLA citation style

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Students and teachers share favourite pieces of literature and discuss reasons for liking/disliking literature, reasons for reading/not reading literature

2. Present 2-minute talk reflecting opposing sides of a current rational issue. Discuss reasons for different perspectives and establish concept of bias.

3. Select literary texts and discuss with reference to relevant literary theories.

4. Read assigned critics on text of choice and say how their views affect one’s understanding of the text- whether they agree or disagree with the perspective and why.

5. Use of journals/learning logs. Include annotations – make this interactive – responses from peers – dialogue with tutor input at different junctures – on rotational basis – annotations to be made over period of time to reflect deepening insight into work.

6. Write essays on different elements of literary texts, e.g. character, using varying organizational patterns.

7. Use checklist to proofread literary essay.

8. Compare reviews of text done in “Gleaner” and “Observer”.

9. Select text, make collection of critical material and respond to both, giving their own views.
EVALUATION – totally by Course Work

1. A literary essay – to incorporate critical material, quotations, using literary language. 40%

2. Read assigned critics (at least 4) on text of choice and say how these perspectives affect their understanding of the text. 40%

3. Journal or Learning Log 20%

BOOK LIST

Edgan V. Roberts  Writing about Literature, 10th Ed.  Prentice Hall


Steven Lynn  Texts and Contexts. Longman

Kelley Griffiths  Writing Essays about Literature. 5th Ed. Harcourt Brace College Publisher

Robert DiVanni  Literature Reading Fiction, Poetry and Drama. McGraw Hill