



## **Sample Syllabus/ Sample Assignment**

### **Through the Looking Glass**

**A Senior Elective at Malden High School, Malden, Massachusetts**

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How do the environments that we grow up in affect our perspectives? How does an individual resist culture and tradition? How can having multiple perspectives on a situation allow us to gain a deeper understanding? What is the role of heritage and culture on a person's perspective? How does a person's perception influence his or her understanding of a text? Why is it important to try to see ideas from another person's perspective? How does one recognize author's bias? What price is paid by resisting?

What does the author want us to see? What new insights have been generated?

In this course we will explore these questions through different literary genres (i.e. novels, short stories, and nonfiction). Quarterly topic titles include Global Awareness, War, Gender and Identity, and Fantasy as a Reflection of Reality.

The goal is to help students attend to an author's purpose, appreciating stories as providing the "looking glass" to see the lives of others and simultaneously for better self-reflection.

Some texts will include *Things Fall Apart*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, *Hamlet*, *The Stranger*, and *Alice Bliss*.

In addition to reading and responding to these novels as a class, students will read and discuss related nonfiction and additional works for independent reading and book clubs. There will also be a cinema component to the class, to include films ranging from *Slumdog Millionaire*, *Hotel Rwanda*, *Alice in Wonderland* and *The Matrix*.

Writing assignments will include the senior essay, literary analysis, creative projects, the use of "new media" and the completion of the senior research paper and writing portfolio. Students wishing to acquire honors level credit for the course will complete additional readings and critical review of selected authors' work.

### **A Sample Assignment for Alice Bliss:**

After reading *Alice Bliss*, you will assume one of the following character's perspective: Alice, Angie, Matt, or Ellie and write an epilogue to the story, from your character's perspective. The epilogue may begin right where the book ends, a year after, five years after, etc., but you must assume the role of your character. In order to really know the in and outs of your character, you will need to track them throughout the text. This may be in the form of post-its, journal entries, taking notes,

whatever way works. Your epilogue must contain textual evidence and primary sources.