

What is My Lens as a Reader and Writer in America?

Exploding the Canon

11th Grade ELA...Unit 2 Overview: November-January

can·on¹

/ˈkænən/ ⓘ

noun

1. a general law, rule, principle, or criterion by which something is judged.
"the appointment violated the canons of fair play and equal opportunity"
synonyms: principle, rule, law, tenet, precept; [More](#)
2. a collection or list of sacred books accepted as genuine.
"the formation of the biblical canon"

The first question we're asked when people find out we teach 11th grade English is always, "what are they reading?" The experience most people have in high school English class is reading a "classic" text that is part of the Western Literary Canon. What does this say about what we value in America? As readers and writers, what do *you* think we should all be reading? Should it be mostly classics? A mixture? Do you believe there should be a "canon" of literature at all?

For the next few weeks, you are going to begin explore who we are as readers and writers in America by participating in a whole class read of *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison, considered a classic must read in many high school curriculums. Then, you'll participate in literature circles using texts that show up in high school English classes across the United States. You will read and analyze one (maybe two!) of these texts with a small book club. Along the way, we will write literary analysis and argumentative essays to practice for the both college and the common core regents exam, part of your identity as readers and writers in America!

A (very brief) overview of the next few months

October 27th-December 9th: **Intensives begin December 10th*

- Reading:
 - Whole Class Text - *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison
 - Book Club- "Classic" Texts
 - Short "classic" Texts (poetry and short stories) to practice literary analysis
 - Short non-fiction texts related to our fiction texts
- Writing
 - Tumblr portfolio continues
 - Goodreads commentaries continue for each text, folding in literary analysis skills for the common core exam
 - Literary analysis short responses
 - Argumentative essay writing in the style of the common core exam on topics related to the texts we are reading
- Discussion
 - Socratic seminar debating the high school literary canon and whole class text using essential questioning and outside resources
 - Book club discussions

January 5th- January 26th

**Regents is Monday, January 26th at 1:15pm*

- Continuation of prior work
- Explicit common Core Regents preparation

