



# Literature & Our Teens

*Social and aesthetic nourishment for homeschooled students*

ROY SPEED  
hcollegebound.com

## PART 1

### How we're teaching literature

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#### Three common approaches:

- *The technical approach*
- *Moral judgement*
- *Literature as cultural artifact*

*From the Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism:*

*Literary texts, like other artworks, are neither more nor less important than any other cultural artifact or practice. Keeping the emphasis on how cultural meanings are produced, circulated, and consumed, the investigator will focus on art or literature insofar as such works connect with broader social factors, not because they possess some intrinsic interest or special aesthetic values.*

## Benefits unique to the study of literature

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### 1) Great artists explore the inner life.

- In what other subject are students able to explore the inner life?  
*Early examples: Marie de France, late 1100s; Shakespeare, 1590–1610.*
- The novel, a later form, portrays the inner life with unprecedented ease.
- We watch characters go through their lives, hear their thoughts, know their secrets, their hopes, their disappointments.
- Reading a novel almost becomes a practice run at life ...  
— *one that's completely safe. You feel like a participant, but you're actually just observing, experiencing things vicariously.*

### 2) The novel teaches and gives students practice in *empathy*.

- We learn what it is like to be someone else.
- The empathy we practice in novels is transferable to real life.  
*We learn to infer, even from the slightest of clues, a person's mental or emotional state.*
- In the novel, these inner landscapes become visible.  
*Once visible, they become **discussable**.*

# Principles of effective instruction

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## 1) In literature, the work of art is *not* the words on the page.

- The true work of art is the experience we have as we read ...
  - *what happens in readers' minds & hearts.*
- To write a novel is to design such experiences for the reader.

## 2) The job of the English teacher is to help students *have the experience the writer designed.*

Depending on the work, teachers may have to supply:

- historical background;
- cultural information;
- literary background;
- details on the use of language.

But that's not all:

- The teacher reads aloud, *performs* the work for the students.

## 3) The teacher must be dedicated to the students becoming skillful readers — insightful and articulate.

- The teacher schools students in the practices of *close reading*.
- The teacher encourages *annotating the text* (scribbling in the book!).
- The teacher fosters *live discussion*:
  - What's going on in this scene? — What's this character not saying? —*
  - What does this writer want us to see? — What's she trying to show us?*

# Online courses

*Live & interactive*

<https://hscollegebound.com/Online-Courses.htm>

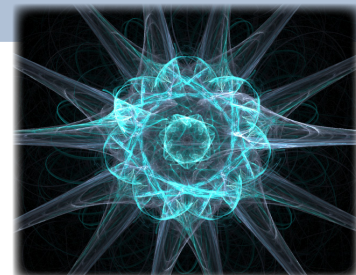
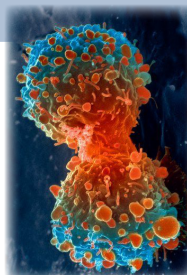
## SCIENCE INTENSIVES — 8 weeks, 16 sessions

- **Ecology w/lab** — begins Sept. 26, 2022
- **Genetics w/lab** — begins Jan. 16, 2023
- **Botany w/lab** — begins March 27, 2023



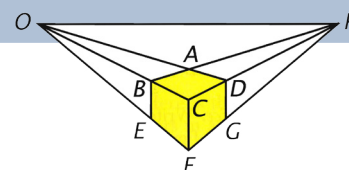
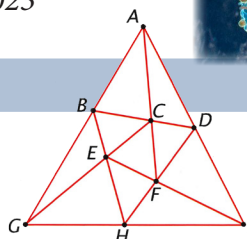
## SCIENCE — Year-long, honors-level instruction

- **Honors Biology with lab** — begins Aug. 29, 2022
- **Honors Chemistry with lab** — begins Aug. 29, 2022  
*Includes instruction in writing lab reports*
- **Honors Physics with lab** — *returning fall 2023*



## MATH — Year-long courses

- **Geometry** — begins Aug. 30, 2022  
*Honors track available*



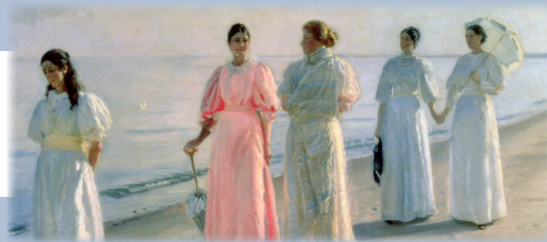
## WRITING — Year-long, honors-level instruction

- **Writer's Guide to Grammar** — begins Aug. 31, 2022
- **Logical Communication** — two sections, beginning Aug. 29 & 30, 2022
- **Essay Writing & Appreciation** — begins Aug. 31, 2022



## LITERATURE — Year-long, honors-level instruction

- **Novels by Women** — begins Aug. 30, 2022
- **History & Literature of the Middle Ages** — *returning 2023*



## SHAKESPEARE INTENSIVES — 7–10 weeks' duration

- **Twelfth Night** — begins June 3, 2022 (4 weeks, 8 sessions)
- **Romeo & Juliet** — begins Aug. 31, 2022 (10 sessions)
- **Hamlet** — begins Nov. 30, 2022 (10 sessions)
- **Macbeth** — begins Mar. 8, 2023 (7 sessions)

