

Literature, Mass Media, and Pop Culture

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[JennieCreatesClasses.com/Literature-Mass-Media-Pop-Culture](https://jenniestudies.com/Literature-Mass-Media-Pop-Culture)

This class is unlike any other English class I've taught at Thursday Connection. You will be pleased to know that the writing focus will be less on MLA format and more on taking in information, deciding what you think/feel about it, and transcribing those thoughts eloquently and concisely. I still ask that you use proper grammar and punctuation, as well as submit your work in Times New Roman, 12 pt., etc., but you will not need to cite sources or do the other grunt work of MLA formatting this year.

In addition to reading several books, you'll also be tasked with listening to songs, podcasts, and watching a few films. In the spring, we'll explore Shakespeare, Agatha Christie, and fairy tales. I sure hope we get to be together in person for those things.

Be prepared to do a significant amount of reading this year and answer weekly response questions in a shared Google Document. I don't anticipate the work being hard, but I do hope you'll take the time to consider what you think about the things we discuss before you write them down and email them to me.

Here's a biggie: This class only works if everyone engages in discussion. No one - *I repeat* - NO one wants to listen to me talk for 55 minutes every Thursday morning. **Please come to class prepared to talk.** I know that's hard for the introverts, but it's doable. I believe in you.

If you have questions or concerns, or if your work is going to be late, let me know. If you're going to be absent, let me know ahead of time so I can record the class lecture for you.

Below is the tentative plan for the fall semester. Assignments are subject to change, but I'll let you know if/when that happens. Always check the class page on Fridays so you know what's due the following week: <https://jenniestudies.com/literature-mass-media-pop-culture/>

Fall 2020	Topic Covered	Homework
1-Aug. 20	Class expectations, Semiotics	Write a 350-word essay about a consumer fixture. Explain what the produce/place is and explain why you think it's so successful. Share the doc with me by Wed., Aug. 26.
2-Aug. 27	Mediums and Media Literacy; Role of Mass Communication	Read the works linked on the class page. Then read Ch. 1-5 of <i>Into the Wild</i> . Answer the response questions posted on the class page by Wed., Sept. 2.
3-Sept. 3	Discussion	Read Ch. 6-15 of <i>Into the Wild</i> . Answer the response questions posted on the class page by Wed., Sept. 9.
4-Sept. 10	Discussion	Finish reading <i>Into the Wild</i> . Read the article posted on the class page. Then write a 600-word response essay that reflects your thoughts on Chris McCandless' journey, Jon Krakauer's work as a journalist, or other ideas you have. Share the essay with me by Wed., Sept. 16.

5-Sept. 17	The Evolution of Audio Media	Listen to “The Girl Who Doesn’t Exist” and “The Primitive Streak” by RadioLab. Answer the response questions posted on the class page by Wed., Sept. 23.
6-Sept. 24	Discuss podcasts	Listen to the podcasts linked on the class page. Answer the response questions by Wed., Sept. 30.
7-Oct. 1	Discuss music	Listen to “We Didn’t Start the Fire” by Billy Joel and “Everyone is Free to Wear Sunscreen” by Baz Luhrmann. Write a 600-word response essay that both summarizes what you heard and includes your reaction to the songs. Share the essay with me by Wed., Sept. 30.
8-Oct. 8	In-Class Test (open notes)	No homework
9-Oct. 22	Intro to Graphic Novels, Mary Shelley, and <i>Frankenstein</i>	Read half of <i>Frankenstein</i> and listen to the “Frankenstein: In Our Dark Mirror” podcast. Answer the response questions posted on the class page by Wed., Oct. 28.
10-Oct. 29	Discussion	Finish <i>Frankenstein</i> . Read the links posted on the class page and answer the response questions by Wed., Nov. 4.
11-Nov. 5	Discussion; Intro to H.G. Wells and <i>The Time Machine</i>	Read I-VIII in <i>The Time Machine</i> . Answer the response questions posted on the class page by Wed., Nov. 11.
12-Nov. 12	Discussion	Read IX-Epilogue in <i>The Time Machine</i> and answer the response questions by Wed., Nov. 18.
13-Nov. 19	Discussion	No homework
14-Dec. 3	Film from short stories	Read “Story of Your Life”, then watch <i>Arrival</i> . Read the article posted on the class page. Write a 600-word essay that compares and contrasts them. Be sure to include your opinions on both. Share by Wed., Dec. 9.
15-Dec. 10	Discussion	Read “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty”, then watch the 2013 film. Write a 600-word essay that compares and contrasts them. Be sure to include your opinions on both. Share by Wed., Dec. 16
16- Dec. 17	Semester Test	No homework

FALL BREAK Oct. 15 / THANKSGIVING Nov. 26