

Literary Appreciation

Overview

The purpose of this program is to gather people who share a common interest in literature, spanning from novels by Chuck Palahniuk and Michael Cunningham to Marjane Satrapi's graphic novels. We want to have people in this program who enjoy reading for leisure and want to have the opportunity to discuss literature with their peers in a relaxed environment. Community bookshelves and bulletins will be provided so members will have easy access to extra materials that they supply and share. This is *NOT* an all day English class! It is a chance to read a good book, get excited about it, and talk to other people who can offer different perspectives and equal appreciation. We want to create a comfortable environment in which our members can have fun by taking part in our program's activities. We also hope attend/host readings, discussions with authors, and visits to local venues and scenic settings.

In a world where less and less emphasis is placed on the value of printed text, this group hopes to get involved in the community by offering our services to organizations dedicated to increasing literacy in children or adults. Our group will volunteer at a youth center where we will read to young children and play an active role in their lives. Holding a book drive and donating our used books to charities is also a unique aspect of our program. We want participants in this program who care genuinely about improving the community and the world as they broaden their minds.

Learning Objectives

Improved analysis of literary text; making people feel more comfortable in their ability to insightfully understand text and speak about their opinions in front of others.

Action Steps

- Each member will be required to read the selected text and discuss its content in biweekly meetings.
- We would like our program advisor to occasionally attend meetings and to provide their personal interpretation. Other faculty members and guest speakers will also be found to speak about current topics.
- As program directors we will organize activities in hopes that members will become more comfortable in speaking their minds and not worrying about judgment from their peers.
- As directors we will also encourage all members to vocally participate in meetings, whether it be speaking in front of the entire group or just to a partner. We hope that this will allow people to feel more comfortable amongst one another and encourage further learning to take place.

The ability to understand the correlation between written text and its relation to society.

Action Steps

- Each suite will contain a bulletin board, which will be full of articles that relate to the text that we are reading and current events that pertain to our group. Members will bring in articles that they find interesting and relevant and speak about them to the group.
- Members will work with young children at the King Street Youth Center. This community service will involve reading to and interacting with children who need people to look up to in their lives. This will not only give the members of this group great satisfaction but it will also impact the lives of many young children. As a group we hope to stress the importance of literature in all stages of life.
- We have organized our planning timeline to correspond with events that will happen during the 2008-2009 school year. One important example of this is the 2008 presidential election. This will be an exciting time for all voters regardless of personal opinions. In the month before the presidential election, our group will find current articles and reports that shed light on ALL candidates and political parties. (Voting will be greatly encouraged)

Group members will gain extensive knowledge on the texts and authors that have been incorporated into this program. Resources for members to read and learn about less popularized authors will also be available so they can expand their minds and embrace a wider range of literature.

- Each member will give a brief presentation about one author that corresponds with a book or short story that the group is about to read. This presentation will include the author's early life, education, influences, and notable work.
- At the end of the year, each member will speak about a novel, and its author, that they have chosen as their "free read." This "free read" will be a book chosen by each member individually, and must be written by an author that the group has not yet learned about.
- Group members will have access to *The Bloomsbury Review*. *The Bloomsbury Review* has "dedicated itself to uncovering the rare, the unique, the unsung, the best in publishing—books and poets and authors—often overlooked by other national review and literary media." This independent magazine will

positively impact our program, by exposing everyone to a world of writing that would otherwise be overlooked.

Community Service

We hope to work with the children that are involved with the King Street Youth Organization. The King Street Youth Organization is an after school center for young children. We are in meetings with one of its directors, and hope to work with these children throughout the 2008-2009 school year. Our members will interactively read with these children and hopefully give them a better understanding of the importance of literature in their lives.

We also plan on having our members donate half of the books that we purchase (in hard copy form) to local charities or schools. We feel that this is important because it passes on our group's love of literature to the community, and to those who may not be financially fortunate. Our group will also organize a community/university wide book drive, to generate more books for charity.

Plans for interacting with other living and learning programs:

- There are two films that are based on novels that we will read, and one History Channel documentary that relates to another novel. We would like to collaborate with a film program to watch or present these films.
- We hope to watch the upcoming presidential election with the Media Literacy program (and any other group that is politically conscious).
- We would also like to invite the Living/Learning Science Fiction group to talk with our program about the scenario the book *A World Without Us* presents.