



Early Literature – Part I

Syllabus

Course Description: An excerpt-based class, students are introduced to the epic through early historical literature including *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (circa 2100 BC), Homer's *The Iliad* (8th Century BC), *Beowulf* (circa 1000 AD), *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (circa 1400), *The Faerie Queene* (1590), and *Paradise Lost* (1667). All texts are included as part of the class; no materials are required for purchase.

Prerequisite: *Essay Basics* or equivalent experience writing five-paragraph essays.

Course Outline:

Week One: What Is an Epic?

- Overview of the Epic
- Characteristics of the Epic

Week Two: *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

- Historical Context
- The Human Experience

Week Three: Homer's *The Iliad*

- The Homeric Question
- Homeric Epitaphs
- Getting to Know Greek Gods/Goddesses

Week Four: *Beowulf*

- Old English & Translations
- Anglo-Saxon Poetry & Riddles

Week Five: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

- The Characters in King Arthur's Court
- Bob & Wheel Rhyme
- More About the Medieval Era

Week Six: *The Faerie Queene*

- The Renaissance
- Finding the Allegory
- The Spenserian Stanza

Week Seven: *Paradise Lost*

- An Unusual Epic
- Who Is the Hero?

Week Eight: *Paradise Lost* (cont.) and Final Response

- Tracing Character Development
- My Life is Like an Epic

Grading Information: All assignments will be graded using *The Growing Writer Rubric* and averaged to receive a final course grade.