

English Department Essential Questions

1. How is our understanding of culture and society constructed through and by language? In what ways are story, language, and power inseparable?
2. What factors shape our cultural values and beliefs? How do individuals reconcile competing belief systems within a given society? How do religion and spirituality shape a culture?
3. How do we form and shape our identities? When can a positive personality trait become a flaw? In the face of adversity, what causes some individuals to prevail while others fail?
4. What are the factors that move individuals, families, communities, and nations to great sacrifice? What are the consequences?
5. How are the various types of heroes culturally defined?
6. What is community and what are the individual's responsibilities to the community as well as the community's responsibilities to the individual? What does it mean to be an insider or an outsider?
7. How does perspective shape or alter the perception of truth?
8. To what extent does power or the lack of power affect individuals?