

Dear Reader,

Thank you so much for taking a look at *Excellence in Literature*. I thought it would be handy if you had a one-sheet overview of the curriculum, so here it is. You'll find a few details about the curriculum, about how I chose the books, and a bit about me. I hope it helps you to quickly gain a birds-eye view of EIL.

The most important thing to know about the curriculum is that it's flexible. Although the books are arranged strategically, I want parents to feel absolutely free to pick and choose what to use when, whether to shorten assignments, take a little longer on a unit than suggested, or match literature levels with history studies. It's a curriculum that's meant to be a delight, and to spark joy in the discovery of wonderful stories, plays, and poems. I want students to emerge, not just knowing a lot about the literature of Western Civilization, but loving it. I hope you'll enjoy your time with EIL. If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail me at jceved@comcast.net.

Blessings,

Janice Campbell



How I chose the books

I've had many questions about how I chose the books for *Excellence in Literature*, so I wrote a nice, long explanation of all the factors that went into the final decisions. As you can guess, it wasn't an easy process to sort through many centuries of great literature to end up with 45 focus texts and about 45 honors texts, balanced between novels, drama, and epic poetry. It was fun, though— what a great excuse to read and read and read! Here are some of the questions I considered when choosing what to include:

- Is this work foundational to an understanding of Western Civilization and culture?
- Is it a classic work that is regularly alluded to in current conversation (including newspaper, radio, books, movies, etc.)?
- Does it tell the truth about life and consequences?
- Is there something compelling about this particular work that makes it, more than another, deserve a place in the curriculum?
- Does it offer a unique perspective on the culture of its time and place?
- Does it have the power to engage readers and cause them to think deeply about important issues?
- Is it well-written?
- Has it endured the test of time?

Read the complete article here: <http://www.janice-campbell.com/2010/02/09/how-i-chose-great-books-for-excellence-in-literature/>

What's Special About Excellence in Literature?

- Self-directed courses encourage independent learning and college-style study habits.
- There are nine four-week units with week-by-week lesson plans in each school year, which makes it easy to know what to do when.
- Every volume contains instructions, models, and a glossary, so you can start with any book and know exactly what to do.
- Context readings provide in-depth understanding of literature in its historic and artistic context (and links are regularly updated).
- Honors Option includes extra reading and provides the opportunity to earn advanced placement or college credit.
- Units may be mixed and matched to create a custom study plan.
- Honors books may be substituted for focus texts if desired.
- American and British Literature are co-published with Andrew Pudewa's Institute for Excellence in Writing.
- Each volume is available as a print book or e-book, and will soon be presented as online books on our beautiful new website (2012).
- Each one-year study guide is \$29; and it's \$139 for *The Complete Curriculum* (all five levels) in a binder (for easy mixing/matching of units)
- You can read more about it at www.ExcellenceInLiterature.com.

Who's Janice Campbell?

Janice and her husband Donald homeschooled their four sons from pre-school into college, with an educational philosophy most closely aligned with the Charlotte Mason and Thomas Jefferson schools of thought. She holds a B.A. in English (honors) from Mary Baldwin College, and has worked as a freelance writer, editor, and conference speaker since the 1980s.

Janice has focused on writing and speaking at about things that matter for over two decades. She is the author of the *Excellence in Literature* curriculum for grades 8-12, *Transcripts Made Easy* and *Get a Jump Start on College*. She is also Director of the National Association of Independent Writers and Editors (NAIWE). Whether teaching high school students to love literature or teaching writers and entrepreneurs how to create multiple streams of income, Janice's focus is on lighting lamps so that others can more easily find their way. Her websites offer inspiration, resources, and a free e-newsletter.



Websites:

- <http://Everyday-Education.com>
- Education blog: <http://Janice-Campbell.com>
- Entrepreneur Blog: <http://DoingWhatMatters.com>
- National Association of Independent Writers and Editors <http://NAIWE.com>

E1: Introduction to Literature

E2: Literature and Composition

E3: American Literature

E4: British Literature

E5: World Literature

Unit 1: Short Stories by-

- Sarah Orne Jewett: A White Heron
- Edgar Allen Poe: The Purloined Letter (This one is not scary, if you're concerned about that.)
- Guy de Maupassant: The Diamond Necklace
- O. Henry: The Ransom of Red Chief
- Eudora Welty: A Worn Path
- James Thurber: The Secret Life of Walter Mitty

Unit 2: *Around the World in Eighty Days* by Jules Verne

Honors: *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* by Jules Verne

Unit 3: *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* by Mark Twain

Honors: *The Prince and the Pauper* by Mark Twain

Unit 4: *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë

Honors: *Shirley* or *Villette* by Charlotte Brontë

Unit 5: *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw

Honors: *Murder in the Cathedral* by T.S. Eliot

Unit 6: *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson

Honors: *Kidnapped* by Robert Louis Stevenson

Unit 7: *Animal Farm* by George Orwell

Honors: *1984* by George Orwell

Unit 8: *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare

Honors: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare

Unit 9: *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift

Honors: *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan

Unit 1: *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel DeFoe

Honors: *The Swiss Family Robinson* by Johann David Wyss or *The Further Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel DeFoe

Optional: The book of *Jonah* (any translation) and *Grace Abounding to the Chiefest of Sinners* by John Bunyan

Unit 2: *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau

Honors: "Civil Disobedience" by Henry David Thoreau and "Self-Reliance" by Ralph Waldo Emerson

Unit 3: *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas

Honors: *The Man in the Iron Mask* or *The Three Musketeers* by Dumas

Unit 4: *The Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad

Honors: *Manalive* by G.K. Chesterton

Unit 5: *Till We Have Faces* by C.S. Lewis

Honors: *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis

Unit 6: *Death Comes to the Archbishop* by Willa Cather

Honors: *Country of the Pointed Firs* by Sarah Orne Jewett

Unit 7: *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare

Honors: *King John* by William Shakespeare

Unit 8: *Ivanhoe* by Sir Walter Scott

Honors: *Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare or *Rob Roy* by Scott

Unit 9: *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde

Honors: *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling

Unit 1: *Autobiography* by Benjamin Franklin

Honors: *The Autobiography of Thomas Jefferson*, *Letters From An American Farmer* by J. Hector St. John De Crevecoeur

Unit 2: *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* by Washington Irving; Works by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Honors: *Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.*, and *The Life of George Washington* or *Tales of the Alhambra* by W. Irving

Unit 3: *The Last of the Mohicans* by James Fenimore Cooper

Honors: *The Pioneers* by James Fenimore Cooper

Unit 4: *The House of Seven Gables* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Honors: *The Scarlet Letter* by N. Hawthorne; *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau

Unit 5: *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville

Honors: *Billy Budd* by Herman Melville

Unit 6: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain

Honors: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* by Frederick Douglass; *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain

Unit 7: *The House of Mirth* by Edith Wharton

Honors: *The Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton; *Daisy Miller* by Henry James

Unit 8: *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Honors: *My Antonia* by Willa Cather

Unit 9: *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway

Honors: *A Moveable Feast* by Ernest Hemingway

Unit 1: *Beowulf*

Honors: *The Dream of the Rood* and *Caedmon's Hymn* or *The Battle of Malden*

Unit 2: *Canterbury Tales* (selected) by Geoffrey Chaucer

- Prologue
 - The Nun Priest's Prologue and Tale
 - The Reeve's Prologue and Tale
 - The Pardoner's Prologue and Tale
 - The Magistrate's Prologue and Tale
 - The Canon's Yeoman's Prologue and Tale
- Honors: *Piers Plowman* by William Langland

Unit 3: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*; *The Faerie Queene* (Book 1) by Edmund Spenser; "Letters to Raleigh"

Honors: *Le Morte d'Arthur* by Thomas Malory

Unit 4: *King Lear* by William Shakespeare

Honors: *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare

Unit 5: *Paradise Lost* by John Milton

Honors: *Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan (if not read in English I) or *The Temple* by George Herbert (Poetry Collection)

Unit 6: *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen

Honors: *Persuasion* or other novel by Jane Austen and *Middlemarch* by George Eliot

Unit 7: *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens

Honors: *Oliver Twist* or *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens and *Vanity Fair* by William Makepeace Thackeray

Unit 8: *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë

Honors: *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* by A. Brontë or *Jane Eyre* by C. Brontë or *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

Unit 9: *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf

Honors: *Space Trilogy* by C.S. Lewis

Unit 1: *The Odyssey* by Homer

Honors: *The Iliad* by Homer

Unit 2: *Antigone* by Sophocles

The Burial at Thebes: A Version of Sophocles' Antigone by Seamus Heaney

Honors: *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles

Unit 3: *The Aeneid* by Virgil

Honors: *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* by Plutarch

Unit 4: *Divine Comedy: Inferno* by Dante

Honors: *Paradisio* and/or *Purgatorio* by Dante

Unit 5: *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes

Honors: *The Pickwick Papers* by Charles Dickens

Unit 6: *Les Misérables* by Victor Hugo

Honors: *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* by Victor Hugo or *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville

Unit 7: *The Portable Nineteenth Century Russian Reader* edited by George Gibian

Honors: *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky

Unit 8: *Faust* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Honors: *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis (if you didn't read it in English II) and *The Picture of Dorian Grey* by Oscar Wilde or *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley or *Doctor Faustus* by Christopher Marlowe

Unit 9: *Out of Africa* and "Babette's Feast" by Isak Dinesen

Honors: *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* by C.S. Lewis