**East Meadow School District**

**Curriculum Area Project**

**Sports Literature**

**Grades 11 and 12**

**English Elective**

**School Year 2009-2010**

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**Abstract:**

Sports Literature

Grades 11 and 12

The Sports Literature Course at W.T. Clarke High School, grades 11 and 12, is a multi-dimensional approach using “sports literature” to inspire writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills. Students will engage in a variety of activities and lessons that will expose them to the wonderful writings of the sports journalist, novelist, coach, and columnist. Some of the writers that students will be exposed to are: Mike Lupica, John Feinstein, Red Smith, Jack Tobin, Rick Reilly, John Wooden, and Joe Paterno. The course will also take a close look at today’s sports teams and players, and the ethics that play a huge part in society. In addition, the students will also be exposed to a number of sports films and their importance in interpreting the written word of the writer. Students will be asked to write for a variety of purposes, engage in critical discussions, and develop power point presentations.

All of the units, daily lessons, and assessments include reference to the four New York State Standards:

- Standard 1 “Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding”

- Standard 2 “Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression”

-Standard 3 “Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation”

-Standard 4 “Students will read, write, listen, and speak for social interaction”

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**Rationale:**

Sports Literature

Grades 11 and 12

The purpose of this class is to educate students about the world of *Sports Literature* as it applies to today’s society, as well as in the past. A great number of today’s students are in love with the sports that they participate in and an equal of number have a deep passion for their favorite teams and players. However, there isn’t a connection between the above mentioned students and those writers, who write about the sports they play and those writers, who write about their favorite teams and players. Therefore, this course will bridge this gap and create a deeper appreciation for those who compose in the sports world. Furthermore, this course will answer why sports are so popular in today’s society.

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**Sports Literature - Syllabus**

A multi-dimensional approach using sports literature to enhance writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills.

**Pre-Course Survey:** Since Sports Literature is a new course at Clarke, it is important to assess the students’ sports backgrounds. In addition, it is equally important to understand expectations and determine the best way to make the course valuable.

1. What are your expectations for a sports literature course? What do you expect to read?   
   What types of writing do you like? What do you expect to learn?
2. What kinds of sports books have you read in the past?
3. Who are some of your favorite journalists?
4. Who are some of your favorite athletes? Coaches?
5. Do you love sports? Explain why they are important to you and your life.
6. How would you like to see the class unfold?
7. Would you be willing to go on a field trip?

**Framework of the Course**

1. Discussion of Annotated Readings
2. Presentations of articles from Newsday, NY Post, NY Times, and Daily News
3. Chart Analysis and Discussion
4. Variety of sport films and documentaries
5. Journal Writing
6. Contemporary reporter presentations
7. Historical reporter presentations
8. Extreme Sports – analysis of these sports and why they are so popular
9. Sports Ethics – evaluation of the NCAA and various people of sports
10. Essay from film analysis
11. Group Project – DVD presentation using film clips – movies that say something about a sport
12. Advice from coaches, annotation of chapters and discussion of those chapters
13. Vanguard Connection – coverage of school sports and publishing of articles

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**Class Dynamic:**

1. Sports in America – Why is it so important to us?

* Use ditto to assess students’ views
* Class discussion - Which sports are most popular in the United States?
* Annotate and class discussion of article “What makes extreme sports so popular?”
* Extreme Sports Questionnaire
* Annotate and Discuss articles about our favorite sports

1. Ethics and Sports

* Use ditto to assess students’ views and opinions
* Class discussion of Athletes in Society
* Are athletes role models? Explain.
* Class Discussion and Journal Entry about the NCAA – focus on ethics and fairness of the NCAA
* Read and Reaction of Rick Reilly’s “Of Mice and Morons” the Nick End story
* Read and Annotate chapter 2 *What College Football Means to Me* by Joe Paterno - By the Book
* Read and Annotate chapter 16 A Heisman with Tears by JoePaterno – By the Book
* Read and Annotate chap. 8 Poster Boy by John Feinstein – A Season on the   
  Brink (Bobby Knight and the relations hip with his players, especially Steve Alford)
* Culminating Activity – Ethical Presentation (2 to 3 min., student chooses topic, use of technology, power point presentations

1. Sports Journalist Assignment

* Students will write sport articles for the Clarke Newspaper – *The Vanguard*
* Fall updates for a number of sports
* Focus on players, coaches, records, statistics, and quotes
* Research of records and *Newsday* related articles
* Work with Editors of   
  *The Vanguard*
* Submit articles on line or hard copy

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**Class Dynamic** – Continued

1. The Reporters Assignment

* Follow one writer for one week
* Writer can be from *NY Post, The Daily News, The New York Times, or Newsday*
* Focus on Writing Style, Individual Style, Author’s Point of View – Discussion of these in class
* Clip articles, annotate them for analysis
* Culminating Activity - Development of Presentation of Journalist (2 to 3 min., picture of writer, names of articles, writing style, and point of view)

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**Curriculum Units and Lessons for Sports Literature**

**Unit One:** Introduction of Sports Literature

**Lesson 1** Why are sports so important to us?

Who are your favorite sports teams?

Who are your favorite athletes?

Who are your favorite sports writers/journalists?

**Lesson 2** Extreme Sports vs. Sports

What makes extreme sports so popular today?

**Lesson 3** Role of the athlete

Are athletes good role models? Should they be role models?

Discussion of today’s athlete

**Lesson 4** Role of the coach

High school Coaches

College Coaches

Professional Coaches

Volunteer Coaches

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**Unit Two: Sports and Ethics**

**Lesson 5** Definition of Ethics and application to sports

Journal entry

NCAA, focus on fairness?

Read, Annotate, and Discuss chap. 2 By the Book by Joe Paterno

**Lesson 6** Ethics in College Sports

Read, Annotate, and Discuss chap. 8 A Season on the Brink by John Feinstein

Read, Annotate, and Discuss various chap. They Call Me Coach by John

Wooden

Read, Annotate, and Discuss chap. 16 By the Book by Joe Paterno

Culminating Activity – Ethical Presentations, 2-3 min. (powerpoint)

**Unit Three:** Sports Journalists/Writers

**Lesson 7** Who are the some of the famous sports writers?

Read and annotate pieces from the following writers: Angell, Cavanaugh,

Feinstein, Leavy, Lupica, Reilly, and others

Sports Reporters Assignment – follow a writer and his or her articles for 1

Week, Power point presentations

Focus on writing style, author’s point of view, angle

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**Lesson 8** Becoming a Journalist

Students will write a sports article for the Clarke Newspaper – *Vanguard*

Fall updates

Focus on players, coaches, records, statistics, and quotes

Students will work with Editors of the *Vanguard*

Articles submitted on line or hard copy

**Unit 4: Sports and Film**

**Lesson 9** Sports movies

What are some of your favorite sports movies?

What makes a film about a sport a good one?

Focus on theme, morals, plot development, message

Culminating Activity – Film Presentations in groups, students may

choose their own movies

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**Course Outline** – **Sports Literature**

**Course Overview:** A multi-dimensional approach using sports literature to inspire writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills.

**Writing:** Literature-based

1. Journals
2. Newspaper Articles
3. Quizzes
4. Game Analysis
5. Player Profiles
6. Creative Writing
7. Annotation

**Readings:** Novels, Periodicals, Newspapers

1. *Newsday* and *The New York Times*
2. Numerous Novels, including: By the Book, They Call Me Coach, Heat, and others
3. Sports Journalists: Rick Reilly, Mike Lupica, John Feinstein, Red Smith, and others
4. *The Sporting News, ESPN, and Sports Illustrated*
5. Authors: Jane Leavy, Leigh Montville, Jack Tobin, Jimmy Breslin, and Jack Cavanaugh
6. Players: John Daly, Tom Coyne, and others
7. Coaches: Joe Paterno, John Wooden, Pat Riley, and others

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**Sports Literature** - Breakdown

1. Philosophy of Sports – Driving question, Why are sports so important in today’s society?
2. Literature of Sports
3. Film and Sports
4. Coaches
5. Sports Journalism – Baseball, Basketball, Football, Hockey, Boxing
6. Ethics – Players, Code of Conduct, Behavior
7. Vanguard – Game Report, Player Profiles
8. Field Trips

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Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Harclerode Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Ethics and Sports Questionnaire**

1. How do you define ethics?

2. In your opinion, what role do ethics play in professional sports?

3. What are some of the current ethical sports stories?

4. Should professional athletes be held to a higher standard in our society because some believe athletes are role models for young people? Defend your answer.

5. Who is your role model? Why?

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Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Harclerode Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Sports in America – Why is it so Important to us?**

1. What is your favorite sport to play? Why?
2. What is your favorite sport to watch on television? Why?
3. Do you enjoy watching your favorite sport at a stadium or on TV? Explain.
4. What do you think is the most popular sport in America?
5. What are your criteria for your definition of “popular?”
6. Make a list of sports and rank them according to your opinion of popularity.
7. Why are sports so important to you? Write a paragraph explaining how sports affect your life.

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Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Harclerode Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Extreme Sports** – Why are they so Popular?

1. How do you define *extreme sports?*

2. Do you watch any extreme sports on television? If so, which ones?

3. Why do you watch extreme sports? Does danger play a role in you watching?

4. Do you participate in any alternative or extreme sports? If so, which ones? What makes you want to participate in this particular sport? If you do not participate, please tell why.

5. If you were to invent a new extreme sport, what would it be? Describe your new sport in detail. What is your new sport called?

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Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Harclerode Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Sports Journalist Assignment – Vanguard**

**Directions:** Write a short article, one extended paragraph in length, about one of Clarke’s athletic teams as a fall or winter update for the Vanguard. Be sure to include significant information about the team such as: the coach’s name (spelled correctly), team record, key players, noteworthy statistics, as well as a quote form the coach (if possible). You may write this by yourself or with a partner. All articles must be submitted by\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Once you have typed up your article, send it to the Vanguard at [wtclarkevanguard@gmail.com](mailto:wtclarkevanguard@gmail.com).

Fall Sports

Field Hockey, Boys’ Soccer, Girls’ Soccer, Girls’ Tennis, Cross Country, Boys’ Golf,

Swimming

Winter Sports

Boys’ Basketball, Girls’ Basketball, Wrestling, Winter Track, Boys’ Bowling, Girls’ Bowling

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Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Harclerode Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Sports and Film Assignment**

**Directions:** For the purpose of this assignment you will be placed in groups of two or three. After viewing your respective film you will develop a presentation showing the director’s comment as it pertains to sport and culture. You must support all claims in the presentation through clips of the film.

Possible Suggestions for Films are below, or you may choose a film as long as you receive permission from the teacher.

* *A League of their Own*
* *Breaking Away*
* *Seabiscuit*
* *Field of Dreams*
* *Eight Men Out*
* *Pride of the Yankees*

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Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Harclerode Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Sports Article - Newspaper Quiz

Directions: Choose a sports article from the paper and read it. You may wish to read it more than once. When you have finished, take the quiz below (25 points).

Name of Newspaper\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Title of Article\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Writer\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. In the space below, summarize the main idea of the story. (10 points)

2. What impact does your article have on you and society? If it doesn’t have an impact, explain why. Be sure to be very detailed in your writing. Start your answer here and use the back of this ditto for the rest of your answer. **Remember, this question is worth 15 points!**

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Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Harclerode Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Sports Literature – Ethical Presentation**

In the past few days, we have discussed several ethical topics in our class. Now it’s your turn to lead the class in a meaningful discussion concerning a topic of your choice.

**Directions:** Find two articles that deal with your topic. Be sure to annotate them, as they will be collected for a grade. Afterwards, plan a 2 to 3 minute presentation that clearly explains what the issue is, your feelings on this topic, how society is dealing with the issue, and what the future holds for this particular issue. You may also talk about any other facet that you deem necessary. It is also a good idea to find a video clip that will enhance your presentation (around 5 minutes). You will be graded on your ability to communicate effectively, so please plan carefully!

Below are some of the topics we have discussed

Steroids in Sports, Athletes and the law, Gambling, Point Shaving, Parental Conduct, Player’s interaction with spectators, Gender Issues, Title IX, Athletes and their egos, Athletes that overcome obstacles, Eligibility Requirements for Colleges

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Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Harclerode Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Sports Journalist – Presentations**

**Overview:** For the past week, you have read several articles from a journalist of your choice. Now, you need to prepare a Power Point Presentation using your annotated articles.

**Requirements:** Your presentation should be 2 to 3 minutes in length. Be sure to find a picture of your journalist and include his or her name on the first slide. Next, prepare a slide for every article that you read (minimum of 3, maximum of 5). For each article, be sure to include pictures of the team or person the article is about; keep the wording to a minimum. Most importantly, focus on the *point of view* of your journalist and include valid information that supports *his or her view*.

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Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Harclerode Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Sports Literature - The Reporters**

**Directions:** For one next week, you will follow a writer of your choice. You will be able to choose any sports journalist from any of the following papers: *The New York* *Post, The Daily News, The New York Times, or Newsday.* The idea here is to track one specific author and focus on what he or she is writing about for one week.

**Requirements:** Each day that your selected reporter writes, you will clip out the article from the newspaper or you can print it from the computer. Next, you will read the article and do a brief annotation; focus on good writing and select a few strong quotes. Finally, you will lead a class discussion about your reporter by offering commentary about the content of the articles as well as your reporter’s point of view.

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Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Harclerode Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Guiding Questions for Viewing *Coach Carter***

1. Have you ever been coached by your mom or dad? Write about the experience. If you have not, would you like to be coached by either of your parents? Explain.

2. Can you understand why Carter’s son (Damien) would want to play for his dad? Explain.

3. Do you like the way Coach Carter handled the players coming late to practice? Explain.

4. If you were a coach, what would your policy be concerning players coming late to practice? What would the penalty be for coming late? Be specific.

5. Why do you think the players and parents feared signing the contract to play for Carter?

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6. Coach Carter never attended practice in sweat suits. He is always in a dress suit. Why do you think he did this? Would it bother you if your coach was always in a suit? Explain.

7. Coach Carter addressed all his players with “Sir.” Was it effective? Why or why not?

8. Did Carter set unrealistic goals for his players? Explain.

9. Do you think Carter’s team really did the suicides and push-ups for Cruz or was this the director’s way of building drama?

10. Respond to Carter’s ideas about humiliating and taunting players. Do you agree with his philosophy? Have you ever been taunted by a player? How did you handle it?

11. Respond to Carter’s reaction to his players using the “N word.” Do you agree or disagree with his view?

12. Carter is constantly stressing the importance of grades. Does your coach or advisor check up on your academics? If so, explain the process. If not, give your views in checking up on students’ academics.

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13. What would you do if your son was on a high school team and the coach cancelled 2 games due to poor academic achievement?

14. Talk about how our community supports the sports at Clarke. Is there enough support? Do you think the crowds are big enough? How could we increase the support?

15. How did you interpret Coach Carter’s decision to quit the team when the Board of Education voted to end the lockout?

**Journal Entries** – Answer these in your sports journals. Give plenty of support for your opinions.

1. Would you like to be coached by Ken Carter? Why or why not? Describe a coach that you have had that most resembles Carter. In what ways is your coach like Carter? In what ways is your coach not like him? Change the name of your coach and be appropriate.

2. The message in *Coach Carter* is quite clear – go to school and get a good education to further yourself. Although this film stresses the importance of education, there are other strong messages. Write about three other messages that are stressed in this film and give commentary on each.

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Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Harclerode Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Sugar*** – Guiding Questions

1. What is Sugar’s dream at the beginning of the film?

2. What advice do the coaches in the Dominican Republic give the players about reaching their goals? How are they different or the same from the advice from the American coach?

3. Do you think this is a realistic story? Why or why not?

4. What are some of the first things Sugar learns in America?

5. How might getting paid to play baseball change one’s attitude towards the game?

6. Why do you think Sugar leaves the team? Explain in detail.

7. Describe your feelings as you watched Sugar’s friend wave to him from the bus.

8. In what way do Sugar’s expectations about baseball differ from reality?

9. Do you think Sugar is treated fairly in baseball? Do you think he is treated fairly in New York? Explain.

10. In what way does Sugar achieve the American Dream? In what ways does he fall short?

**Journal Entries:** Below are 3 journal entries. Choose the 2 that you can relate to and respond to them in your sports journal. Each entry should be at least 1 page in length.

#1 Write about your dreams in each of the sports that you play. What is your final goal in each sport? In other words, what are your expectations for each sport?

#2 Sugar finds his American Dream in New York. Write an entry where you write about your American Dream. Where will you be in 10 years?

#3 React to the ending of the movie. Were you surprised that Sugar didn’t make it to the Royals or another major league team? Did you like the ending? Explain.

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