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**2025 Fall Session Junior English Genius Class Syllabus**  
**A 15-week Fall Semester Session; One Meeting Per Week**

Fridays 6-8 or Saturdays 1pm-3pm from 9/5-12/20/2023  
(No classes on the Thanksgiving weekend: 11/27 – 11/30)

**I. Purpose of the program**

This class is carefully designed by Dr. Gavin Wittje. The class is intended for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders, who are at the age when they should and can start reading and appreciating classic stories and poetry, with guidance. The benefits of exposure in early ages to the classic canon and the reading and understanding of these works will enhance their language ability and reading comprehension. By taking this class, 4-5<sup>th</sup> graders will be well prepared for their upcoming middle school academic challenges in language arts classes.

The intent of the class is to achieve the following overall goals:

- 1) Increasing students' skills in English vocabulary
- 2) Reading and appreciating classic books in their original or adapted versions
- 3) Enhance students' reading, writing, and grammar skills
- 4) Heighten students' capability to understand and enjoy life
- 5) Deepen students' all-round knowledge about humanities and social sciences
- 6) Enriching students' educational experience overall

**II. Major Contents of the program**

The class will consist of the following specific contents and learning objectives:

- 1) Intensive vocabulary-building
- 2) Guided classic English reading: read classic books/novels and classic poems
- 3) Guided and graded writing assignments
- 4) Feedback on each writing assignment for each student

**III. Textbooks and Study Materials**

The class requires a number of books and other materials. You need to purchase the books online, but the study guide will be sent to you:

- 1) *The Ivy College Guru Study Guide* (Fall 2023)
- 2) *Wordly Wise 3000 Book 6* (ISBN: 9780838876060)
- 3) *Grammar for Writing, Yellow Book* (pdf)
- 4) Four classic literature books:
  - ♦ *Holes* by Louis Sachar (ISBN: 978-0440414803)
  - ♦ *When You Reach Me* by Rebecca Stead (ISBN: 9780375850868)
  - ♦ *The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm* by Nancy Farmer (ISBN: 978-0545356619)
  - ♦ *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie (ISBN-13: 978-0062693662)
- 5) Various poems and other materials provided by the instructor

**IV. Schedule of the JEG Program (15 weeks)**

Class & Dates		Reading/Literature/Poems	Writing	Grammar	Wordly Wise B6
1	9/5 or 9/6	Life and Works of Louis Sachar <i>Holes</i> by Louis Sachar Life and Works of Rudyard Kipling Rudyard Kipling Poem "The Runes on Weland's Sword"	Instructions on Writing	Pp. 1-3	Lessons 1-2
2	9/12 or 9/13	<i>Holes</i> by Louis Sachar Life and Works of Robert Frost Robert Frost Poem "Nothing Gold Can Stay"	In-Class Writing Practice	Pp. 4-6	Lessons 3-4
3	9/19 or 9/20	<i>Holes</i> by Louis Sachar Life and Works of Carl Sandburg Carl Sandburg Poem "Chicago"	First Essay (Book Report) Due	Pp. 7-9	Review for Lessons 1-4
4	9/26 or 9/27	<i>Holes</i> by Louis Sachar Life and Works of William Carlos Williams William Carlos Williams Poem "The Dance"	Comments on Writing	Pp. 10-12	Lessons 5-6
5	10/3 or 10/4	Life and Works of Rebecca Stead <i>When You Reach Me</i> by Rebecca Stead Life and Works of D.H. Lawrence D.H. Lawrence Poem "The Hummingbird"	Creative Writing (1)	Pp. 13-15	Lessons 7-8
6	10/10 or 10/11	<i>When You Reach Me</i> by Rebecca Stead Life and Works of Hilda Doolittle Hilda Doolittle Poem "Helen"	Second Essay (book report) Due	Pp. 16-18	Review for Lessons 5-8
7	10/17 or 10/18	<i>When You Reach Me</i> by Rebecca Stead Life and Works of Yvor Winters Yvor Winters Poem "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight"	Book discussion and analysis	Pp. 19-21	Lessons 9-10
8	10/24 or 10/25	<i>When You Reach Me</i> by Rebecca Stead Life and Works of Theodore Roethke Theodore Roethke Poem "Wish for a Young Wife"	Creative Writing (2)	Pp. 22-24	Lessons 11-12
9	10/31 or 11/1	<i>The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm</i> by Nancy Farmer Life and Works of Robert Hayden Robert Hayden Poem "Perseus"	More discussion on writing	Pp. 25-27	Review for Lessons 9-12
10	11/7 or 11/8	<i>The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm</i> by Nancy Farmer Life and Works of Howard Nemerov Howard Nemerov Poem "The Consent"	Third Essay (Book Report) Due	Pp. 28-30	Lessons 13-14
11	11/14 or 11/15	<i>The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm</i> by Nancy Farmer Life and Works of A.E. Housman A.E. Housman Poem "To an Athlete Dying Young"	Creative Writing (3)	Pp. 31-33	Lessons 15-16
12	11/21 or 11/22	<i>The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm</i> by Nancy Farmer Life and Works of Emily Dickinson Emily Dickinson Poem "There is no Frigate like a Book"	Book discussion and analysis	Pp. 34-36	Review for Lessons 13-16
13	12/5 or 12/6	Life and Works of Agatha Christie <i>Murder on the Orient Express</i> by Agatha Christie Life and Works of Langston Hughes Langston Hughes Poem "Theme for English B"	Fourth Essay (Book Report) Due	Pp. 37-39	Lessons 17-18
14	12/12 or 12/13	<i>Murder on the Orient Express</i> by Agatha Christie Life and Works of Jack Prelutsky Jack Prelutsky Poem "Be Glad Your Nose is on Your Face"	Creative Writing (4)	Pp. 40-45	Lessons 19-20
15	12/19 or 12/20	<i>Murder on the Orient Express</i> by Agatha Christie Life and Works of Judith Viorst Judith Viorst Poem "Mother Doesn't Want a Dog"	Book discussion and analysis	Grammar Review	Review for L17-20