

WHS Book Rationale

Title: *A Room with a View*

Author: E. M. Forster

- **Intended Audience**

A.P. English Literature and Composition students (seniors)—this is a college level course.

- **Brief summary and educational significance**

Edward Morgan Forster (1879–1970) is an English writer best known for his ironic novels examining class difference and hypocrisy in early twentieth-century British society. *A Room with a View* is the story of Lucy Honeychurch, a young, upper middle-class British woman who visits Italy with her cousin. While in Italy, Lucy meets other Brits, including a Mr. Emerson and his son, George. Her acquaintance with the Emersons, along with her experiences in Italy, begin to change Lucy's view of herself and her world, and those changes manifest themselves when she returns to England, to a conventional fiancé. The novel focuses on Lucy's relationships and her changing attitudes toward the expectations placed on her by English society.

- **Purpose of teaching the work and how it will be used**

We begin the year with discussion of this novel as it provides strong material for examining the way authors use the basic elements of fiction—character, plot, and setting—that students must learn to analyze throughout the year. Because the novel features an English woman affected by a journey to Italy, it offers an especially useful example of the importance of setting. It also presents an opportunity to discuss humor in literature as it provides several comical scenes and characters, along with an often mischievous tone.

- **Potential problems**

The protagonist witnesses a murder early in the novel. Questioning of authority and societal conventions is at the heart of the novel.

- **Addressing potential problems**

According to students who have read this novel, “It’s pretty tame.” Studying this novel early in the year is particularly useful for seniors as they write college essays and consider college choices because it focuses on characters deciding what influences to follow as they determine their future. The book helps foster meaningful reflection and discussion of what students believe to be important guiding principles in their own lives.