

WHS Book Rationale

Title: Dracula

Author: Bram Stoker

- **Intended Audience**

English 12

- **Brief summary and educational significance**

A young Englishman named Jonathan Harker travels through Transylvania on a business trip where he is imprisoned by an ancient Vampire, Count Dracula. While imprisoned, his fiancée and friends unknowingly face the Vampire back home in England. Eventually he escapes and joins a band of men determined to hunt down and kill Dracula. They are aided by Jonathon's now wife, Mina Parker. In the end, Dracula is in fact killed and Mina and Jonathon go on to begin a family, despite the loss of their dear friends Lucy and Quincey.

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

Dracula is an epistolary novel, meaning that it is composed from letters, journal and diary entries, telegrams, and newspaper clippings. The novel is meant to have a slightly journalistic feel, as it is a harrowing account supposedly written by the people who witnessed the book's events. It is often referred to as the consummate Vampire novel and is one of the few horror books to be honored by inclusion in the Norton Critical Edition series. The novel is a strong example of the Gothic style. Good and evil, concepts lost or caricatured in other books and films, are presented clearly and present great opportunities for examination and discussion. The book also provides opportunities to connect to other classic and modern texts explored in English 12 including, but not limited to: *Grendel*, *Hamlet*, "Rime of the Ancient Mariner", etc.

Potential problems: Sexuality, racism, sexism, vampires,

Addressing potential problems

The above are addressed through student inquiry-based projects which include student readings of professional literary analysis as well as class discussion about historical context and significance including the development of the "new woman", and Eastern European immigration.