

Syllabus: Introduction to Literature



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Snapshot: Course Overview

Welcome to 9th Grade English! This semester, we will be exploring literature and various perspectives to get your feet wet for what lies ahead in your academic pursuits in English language arts. I want you to always do your best. I want your priorities to be based on intrinsic interests and your own desire to learn more and attain wisdom about yourselves, other people, and the world around you at large. I want your experience in my classroom to be an entertaining interlude in life. I want you to try things- try a new writing style- try reading from a different genre than you are accustomed to reading. I want you to be creative and divergent. My class is an opportunity to experiment, consider new perspectives, formulate your own perspectives, develop your tastes in literature and writing styles, and express your voice. This year, we will be reading different forms of literature including novels, poems, and short stories. We will have writing assignments, presentations, and projects that correspond and enhance what we are reading in and out of class. In addition, we will focus on vocabulary building and grammar. We have a lot to cover this year and my job is to make it interesting- that is what I aspire to do.

Snapshot: Course Description

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to a high school level literature and composition. You will be provided with a foundational basis of knowledge in both reading and writing skills. Novels, short stories, poems, and song lyrics will be analyzed throughout the duration of this year. You will be expected to convey knowledge through completing projects, papers (writing assignments), varied assessments, and small group and independent presentations. In addition to literary analysis, you will be expected to improve upon writing skills, presentation skills, grammar, and basic vocabulary usage. I award hard work and effort. Do your best and this class will prove beneficial to you in the future.

Snapshot: Grading Scale

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-
94-100%	90-93%	87-89%	84-86%	80-83%	77-79%	74-76%	70-73%

Literature: STORIES TO BE DISCOVERED

- ***To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee | The Classic**

Harper Lee's classic novel explores inequity in race and social standing through the viewpoint of two children. This text lends itself to critical interpretations and the analysis of character development.

- ***The True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie | The Young Adult Novel**

This story gives a unique account of individuals trapped between two worlds and two distinct cultures. It highlights the advantages and disadvantages of cultural differences and insight. In addition, it incorporates visuals in a way that really inspire imagery and comprehension.

- ***Romeo & Juliet* by William Shakespeare | The Tragic Play**

This classic tragic is predictable, but a play that is a must read.

- ***The Odyssey* by Homer | The Epic Poem**

This epic poem is a classic. In this unit, we will also explore Greek mythology. This text explores values that we see in contemporary society today. It questions the criteria involved in labeling heroic behavior. The plot revolves around Odysseus' journey home and all of the complications that he faces. Like many narratives about the journey, the events that occur along the way are just as important as the final outcome.

- **Independent Reading | The Element of Choice**

While I think it is important to read texts as a class and derive collective understanding, I also believe that it is important that you read things that interest you. Even if you do not like reading, practice will not be too detrimental.

Literature: POEMS TO BE DISCOVERED

- "We Wear the Mask" by Paul Lawrence Dunbar
- "I Wanna Hear a Poem" by Coleman
- "Harlem" by Langston Hughes
- "anyone who lived in a pretty how town" by ee cummings
- "One Art" by Elizabeth Bishop
- "Chicago" by Carl Sandburg
- "This Bridge" by Shel Silverstein
- "American Pie" by Don McLean
- "Mathematics" by Mos Def
- "A Certain Slant of Light" by Emily Dickinson
- "The Writer" by Richard Wilbur
- "Desolation Row" by Bob Dylan
- "We Real Cool" by Gwendolyn Brooks
- "The Second Coming" by W.B. Yeats
- "Hard to Take" by Luci Tapahonso
- "It Couldn't Be Done" by Edgar Allan Guest
- "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost
- These may be revised at a later date



Memo: Class Website & Online Socratic Seminars

You can access our class website at: <http://msfougeroussenaahs.weebly.com>. To keep up with course readings and associated assignments, you can reference this website. Therefore, if you have access to the Internet and are absent, this can be a resource to you. Throughout the year, you will also be working with online forums. We will create a classroom WordPress. This WordPress is an online forum for Socratic Seminars. Socratic Seminars are discussions that are initiated and conducive to critical questioning when analyzing a piece of literature of a topic at hand.

Memo: Quote Wall of Inspiration

In my class, we will use a board for your favorites quotes... favorite poems... favorite song lyrics... any thoughts... good book titles... favorite poems, etc. I encourage you each to find who your favorite authors and poets are and what inspires you and motivates you! I also want you to feel that this wall space is a way for you to express what you believe, so post your own work as well. Make sure that it is school appropriate.

Memo: Bell Work

Each day, I expect you to come into class and be ready for the day's lesson. To help you get into the focused routine, I assign bell work to be completed at the beginning of each class session. Mondays and Wednesdays will revolve around building your vocabulary. Tuesdays and Thursdays will be free write journaling days. Fridays will be a wild card. You will be required to keep a journal for my class. You are given creative freedom to decorate or organize this journal in the way that you see best. Your responses can be in ink or pencil. In regards to Tuesday and Thursday journaling time: We will start journaling as soon as the bell rings. Come in and be prepared. The prompt will be projected on the front board. I will explain the prompt at the start of class. I understand that in a class full of twenty students, sometimes it is hard to have your voice heard... especially if you tend to be more introverted. Journaling allows you to give me insight into who you are and the way you think. I will check your journal every other week. This is your space to be creative. If you are just not in the mood to write about the prompt, feel free to free write. However, you must be writing for the full duration. We all experience the dreaded Writer's Block. However, you can write down the lyrics to your favorite song or you can write down vocabulary terms and definitions. The purpose of journaling is to get your thoughts out on paper, to help you get focused for class, and to give you a space to talk to me. Information on vocabulary bell work will be explained in class.

Drum Roll: Writing Assignments

- **Narrative & Memoir Writing**
First Nine Weeks | Information Provided at a Later Date
- **Journaling & Reflective Writing**
All Year Long | Information Provided at a Later Date
- **Informative & Research Writing**
Second Nine Weeks | Information Provided at a Later Date
- **Argumentative, & Persuasive Writing**
Third Nine Weeks | Information Provided at a Later Date
- **Literary Analysis & Close Reading**
Fourth Nine Weeks | Information Provided at a Later Date

Attention: Classroom Expectations

We are a learning community. Therefore, in order to maximize learning opportunities and experiences for everyone our learning community, there must be a collectively established and consistently maintained set of organizing principles that shape our classroom and foster effective learning. This contract outlines my expectations for our learning environment. I maintain the right to add to this contract as the year progresses. If changes are made, they will be brought to your attention. A new discipline policy contract will be initiated if changes are made.

- 1. Be Seated.** Be in your seat when the bell rings. Rationale: We have fifty-five minutes to cram in learning. The faster we start class, the more content we will cover during class time. The more content covered in class, the less homework or out-of-class work for you. In congruence with Attendance Policy: Each time you break this policy, I will write you up as if it were a tardy. Take this seriously and we will not have any problems. Extenuating circumstances- talk to me so that I understand the situation from both sides. See the NAHS handbook for attendance and tardy policy and discipline procedures.
- 2. Come Prepared.** Come to class with your 1 or 1.5 inch binder, the text that I indicate (on the board and the day before in class), loose-leaf paper, your writer's notebook (journal), and a writing utensil everyday unless I tell you otherwise. Rationale: To do the activities in class, you need to have the necessary materials. If you have to leave for your locker everyday, you are missing class time. If you are missing class time, you are missing the lesson. If you are missing the lesson, you are not going to be as prepared as you should be in order to do your best. You have **three** passes a semester. Use them wisely. If you forget something, use a pass and go get it. After you use all three passes, there will be consequences. I also can say no even if you have a pass. When you use your passes, use them at appropriate times. I must sign off on the pass before you can leave.
- 3. Stay Organized.** Organize your binders with five tabs. In addition, by the end of the semester, you will have the information with the following sub-tabs or corresponding notes taken in and out of class. Sub-tabs will be created as the year progresses, but you should have all five main tabs in your binder by the end of week one. Rationale: This class is designed to give you a foundational understanding of Pluralistic literature. My goal is to prepare you for college and further academic pursuits. This binder, if kept properly, will be a valuable resource to you later. I will do binder checks once every nine weeks. The discipline procedure in this case is a deduction of points that factor into your final grade for the semester. Tabs need to include: **Literature, Poems, Vocabulary, Writing, and Exams.**
- 4. Do YOUR Best.** Do your best and I will award your effort. This entails doing your assignments. Your best entails your best work- not someone else's best work. Rationale: I want to see your work, your thoughts, your ideas, and your level of understanding. It is okay to build from published works and from ideas that have been established in the past. It is okay to be inspired by different perspectives, but you must put your own spin on it and give credit where credit is due. You cannot be creative without being a little divergent. In congruence with **Academic Integrity Policy**, there will be **no** tolerance for plagiarism. See the NAHS handbook for expectations and discipline procedures regarding the academic integrity policy.
- 5. Be Respectful.** This means respecting the teacher, respecting your classmates, respecting the school, respecting materials, and respecting yourself. Rationale: This has come to be a cliché, but it is a necessary component in an effective learning environment. Respect. Code switching is a thing. You need to know when it is appropriate to speak and in what ways. You need to know when it is appropriate to listen. Respect is an indicator of your level of social integrity. I will NOT tolerate disrespect. However, there are different levels of disrespect and discipline procedures will vary according to the level of disrespect conveyed. Inappropriate language is disrespectful. I have a zero tolerance policy for any type of bullying. See the NAHS anti-bullying policy for more information and discipline procedures.

End of Class Procedure

I dismiss you, **NOT** the bell. Most days, I will give you the last minute of class to pack up your items and write down your homework assignment, which will be written on the board and will usually be posted online as well.

Make-Up Work Policy

There is a binder on the bookshelf for individuals who are absent for any reason and need to makeup work. In the binder, I keep extra copies of handouts used in the lesson. You will be given a day to make up work for each day you are absent. If you fail to turn in work past that time frame, there will be a ten percent deduction per day late. I understand that things come up. Nonetheless, it is your responsibility to ask for make-up work and an explanation of the assignment. You may speak to me before class begins, during journaling time, after class, or after school. You must speak with me if you need an extension on an assignment. COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL.

Turning In Assignments

When you first walk into the room, there will be a table with a place to turn in assignments, sharpen pencils, get a tissue, leave feedback on my teaching via notecard, borrow a pencil, or pick up a worksheet for the day's lesson. This landing station is available and accessible to you; utilize it.

Class Agenda

I will write the day's agenda on the board each day so that it is visible to all. Beneath the agenda, I will write the necessary class materials needed for the day's lesson (if necessary). While I will tell you the day before what you will need for the next class session, I will also write it on the board so you can double check if necessary.

Cell Phone & Food/Drink Policy

You should never let me see your cell phone or headphones in my classroom. If I see it or hear it go off, I will take it and you will not get it back until the end of the school day. If you want to avoid losing your phone for a day, do **not** bring it to class. Also, I do **not** allow food or drinks in my classroom.

In addition, I follow the NAHS Handbook for all other discipline procedures.



Just For You: Class Survival Guide

No. 1 Think Outside of the Fence- Do NOT Limit Yourself.

Rationale: Creativity is one of the most important skills to master. It sets you apart from everyone else and yet ties you together with other brilliant minds. Sometimes, it is a matter of seeing something from another perspective. Consider all options- then exercise your choice when deciding which to run with.

No. 2 Find a Focal Point- What Intrinsically Motivates You?

Rationale: You can have more than one focal point, but find at least one. Find something that you love- a writing style, a particular author, a recurrent theme, a vocabulary word, etc. Whatever it is- make sure that you invest in it.

No. 3 Discover Two Favorite Books- One From Class- One From Elsewhere.

Rationale: Even if you do not like any of the books we read (and you have to read them in order to claim that), then which was your less least-liked book. If you don't like to read, well, humor me. If you were teaching this class, what book would you want others to read?

No. 4 Develop the Ability to Talk Extensively About Three Authors.

Rationale: One day you will be meeting or catching up with someone and there will be an awkward moment when you don't know what to say and the conversation lulls. Then, you will remember this ridiculous demand that your English teacher persisted upon you developing in high school... and you will be saved.

No. 5 Take Handwritten Notes.

Rationale: Yes, this is because I am an old soul at heart. I would even encourage cursive. However, in addition to my nostalgic views on handwriting, there are neuro-scientific studies that reveal: one retains information better if they take notes by hand versus typing. Food for thought.

No. 6 Write Letters... Old School... Mail Them.

Rationale: Save the post office. Letters are a great way to quickly reflect on something. They have a predictable format and help you get into the habit of organizing your ideas. Plus, people love snail mail. Nostalgic factor again.

No. 7 Eat Nutella When Studying Gets Boring.

Rationale: Scientifically proven to aid in curing the dreaded Writer's Block. Not really. This is totally biased and subjective. However, when I was writing papers in college, the process was a lot more pleasant with a bowl of pretzels and a jar of Nutella. Disclaimer: I am not a health teacher.

No. 8 Take Photographs of Things That Remind You of What You're Reading.

Rationale: I want you all to be photographers... This is just another way to reinforce learning and help you retain textual details. Send me your school appropriate photos and I will print them out and put them on a bulletin board collectively as a class.

No. 9 Keep a Reflective Journal.

Rationale: Cognitive Neuroscience. Better Retention. These are informal. Just write. Don't worry about grammar or spelling or advanced word choice. Teaching is the highest form of learning. If you can teach it to someone else, you have a pretty good grasp of the content or you are excellent at acting. Prepare entries as if you were explaining your thoughts to other people. Draw, sketch, take pictures, write poems, write songs, essays, etc. Be Creative. Be Free. Express.

No. 10 Do NOT Limit Expression.

Rationale: Books are not the only form of expression. Movies, music, advertisements, visual/fine arts, theatre, dance, television, media resources, commercials, websites, etc. are all literacies. Critique them, agree with them, hate them, whatever- just justify your answer thoroughly.

No. 11 Try to Think Holistically.

Rationale: Start to put the pieces together. How does everything situate itself in relation to the texts and literacies covered in class? Think 360. Connect the dots.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Classroom Expectations

Organizing Principles & Rules

Ms. Kaylie Fougrousse

Honors English 10

We are a learning community. Therefore, in order to maximize learning opportunities and experiences for all students in our learning community, there must be a collectively established and consistently maintained set of organizing principles that shape our classroom and foster effective learning. I endorse the importance of creative spaces structured by guidelines. My syllabus outlines my expectations for our learning environment. I maintain the right to add to this contract as the year progresses. If changes are made, they will be brought to your attention. A new discipline policy contract will be initiated if changes are made.

Student Signature

I, _____, read this contract and agree to abide by the guidelines provided within. I understand the discipline procedures that will be taken if I violate Ms. Fougrousse's classroom policy. I acknowledge that Ms. Fougrousse has the right to revise this discipline plan as the semester progresses with adequate explanation of revisions to the class.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

I, _____, read the syllabus and agree that the discipline procedures are fair. If I have any questions regarding any discipline procedure, I will contact the teacher and set up a conference time.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Contact Information

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Email: _____

The best time to reach me is:

Teacher Signature

I, _____, will be consistent and fair when implementing this discipline policy. I will always give students an explanation as to why they are being disciplined. In addition, I will be sure to implement positive consequences when students show exceptional responsibility and maturity. I hold the right to revise this policy as necessary and will give students and parents notice of any changes.

Signature: _____

Date: _____