

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT CLASSROOM CONTRACT 2011-2012

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All students must complete 4 years of English.

The Regents exam is taken in June of each student's junior year.

ENGLISH COURSE OFFERINGS

English: (Grade 9) In this year long course students will be introduced to a variety of authors and writing styles through a humanities curriculum answering the essential questions, "What makes us human? How do we share our stories?" Texts studied will include play(s) by Sophocles, the study of mythology, and Beowulf. There is an on-going writing instruction, which concentrates on the teaching of the structure of the paragraph, as well as a strong focus on the incorporation of literary elements and the controlling idea in a paragraph structure (ELA Regents preparation). In addition, there is instruction on vocabulary, grammar, literary elements, critical thinking, and analysis of text, test taking and study strategies, note-taking skills, organizational skills, an introduction to research skills, and vocabulary. Each freshman student is directed on engaging in and completing a mythology project in the fall and a creative writing project in the spring.

English: (Grade 10) Students will be exposed to World Literature, which may include *Frankenstein*, *Macbeth*, *Kaffir Boy*, *1984* and *Metamorphosis*, in addition to the mandated texts, *A Doll's House*, by Henrik Ibsen and *Night*, by Elie Wiesel. Student in the sophomore year will answer the essential question, "How is one's identity influenced by society?" Through the writing process, students will be instructed on how to write, re-write, edit and publish a critical lens essay (ELA Regents preparation.) Instruction includes vocabulary, grammar, research skills, citing works to create a bibliography using the MLA format, critical thinking and analysis of text, and poetry. Each sophomore student is directed on engaging in and completing projects entitled "The Creative Exploration of Identity Project" in the fall and "The Memoir Project" in the spring. The projects will incorporate writing, public speaking, technology, student creativity, and research.

English: (Grade 11) This course covers American literature from Native American folk tales to World War II and students will answer the essential questions, "What is justice?" and "What is the American Dream?" Texts read include *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *The Scarlet Letter* or *The Crucible*, and *The Great Gatsby* as well as works by Hawthorne, Emerson, Whitman, and Steinbeck. Through the writing process, students will learn how to write a comparative and Thematic Essay in addition to a strong focus on the critical lens essay, in preparation for the English Language Regents, which they will take in June. Instruction continues to include vocabulary, grammar, research skills, citing works to create a bibliography using the MLA format, critical thinking and analysis of text, and poetry. Each sophomore student is directed on engaging in and completing a Comparative Essay and/or a Thematic Essay in the fall and a Personal Essay in the spring. The personal essay is a part of the College Application Process unit, which also includes instruction from guidance in creating a bio page in preparation for the student resume.

English: (Grade 12) Students are exposed to a myriad of writers, poets, essayists and playwrights. Texts studied by all students include Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, Shakespeare's *Othello* or *Hamlet*, and *the Alchemist*, by Paulo Coelho. Students will begin the fall semester by focusing on perfecting their personal essay and their college resume for their college applications. Students will answer the essential questions, "How do we discover ourselves through literature?" while exploring the themes of "Waking up to the reality of the world we live in" and "The Quest and Journey". In addition, each student will complete a Pre-College Research Paper; the process for this will begin the late fall and end in late spring.

AP English: (Grade 12) This is a survey course meant to deepen the appreciation a student has for literature, as well as prepare them for the Advanced Placement Literature and Composition Exam. The yearlong course covers literature from the 11th century to the 21st century, mostly from Great Britain. Works and authors that may be covered include Chaucer's, *The Canterbury Tales*; Shakespeare's *Hamlet*; Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*; Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, as well as works of the Metaphysical, Romantic and Victorian poets. **

Journalism: (Grade 12) Students will study the fundamental principles of gathering, writing, reporting, and editing the news, in addition to publishing four editions of our Frank Sinatra School of the Art's newspaper, *The Bennett*. **

****All Senior English Classes will continue to work on essay writing and creative writing and complete the College Application Process Unit, which focuses on the completion of the personal essay and student resume.**

GRADING

CLASSWORK:

20% of Grade

- All classwork, written or oral, completed in groups or individually is graded and contributes to the class participation grade.
- Written and oral classwork must be neat, thorough, include a proper FSSA heading and demonstrate significant effort in order to receive a satisfactory grade.
- Student must be prepared for class in terms of both subject and materials. (See supplies requirement).
- Punctuality and attendance have a significant impact on a student's classwork and grade.
- Classroom behavior—active participation, personal conduct, and contribution to the classroom environment also influence this grade.

EXAMS/ESSAYS/RESEARCH PAPERS/PROJECTS/QUIZZES:

60% of Grade

- Classroom tests are based upon the assigned homework, class discussion, and board notes, and should be seen as opportunities to reinforce and evaluate learning.
- There will be a final and a midterm exam as well as unit tests and quizzes
- If you are absent for an exam, you **must** submit a note from your parent/guardian the day that you return from your absence. **The test may not be taken until a note is submitted.**
- Students will be required to write research papers, projects, and essays during the semester and sometimes to present them to the class.

HOMEWORK:

20% of Grade

- Homework must be clear and neat in the *required format* (Student name, Title of Assignment, Date, Class Period, Teacher's and School's Name) and it must be written on 8 1/2"x 11" loose-leaf paper.
- Homework is assigned on a daily basis and must be submitted on the **date that it is due**.
- **Late homework will not be accepted** except in the case of illness or extenuating circumstance, in which case a note must be provided. Students will receive a one-day extension with an absence note if the homework was assigned during the student's absence.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/ PLAGIARISM

Make sure you read the following and discuss the import of its contents: in signing the student contract, you are acknowledging the following:

I understand that plagiarism is the act of submitting a paper that, in part or in whole, includes the work or another person— work that I did not create. This includes, but is not limited to, copying other words, images, sound bites, art work, ideas, phrases or paragraphs from another source/person without indicating precisely that these words or ideas come from a source other than myself. I understand the seriousness of this offense and in signing below I am stating that I will not plagiarize from other people or sources and will not allow others to plagiarize from my academic efforts. I understand that if I do submit plagiarized work, I will be held responsible and comply with disciplinary action set forth by the school administration and the Department of Education's discipline and intervention regulations.

ABSENCES

- Three (3) latenesses result in a scheduled detention.
- *Regardless of reason for absence: sickness, family emergency, blackout, school trip, or performance, students are required to make up all work*
- An unexcused absence (cut) will result in a "0" for that day—class work as well as any exam or quiz scheduled for that day.
- A lateness of 20 minutes or more with-in any classroom period constitutes a cut.

PREPAREDNESS FOR CLASS

Parents: You can greatly influence your child's ability to succeed. Classroom misbehavior will not be tolerated, as it affects both the individual student's performance and the classroom environment, and will be treated accordingly.

Students: Students are required to be prepared for class every day. As students are frequently absent from class due to performances and studio trips, it is essential for students to get the notes missed from a fellow student and to include it in the notebook. *Make sure you have the contact information for at least two other students in each of his/her class. The following supplies are highly recommended and should be brought to class every day:*

Supplies for Class

- 8 1/2" x 11" three-ring binder style notebook with extra loose-leaf paper
- FSSA's daily planner (distributed in school)
- Plastic pockets for handouts
- Black or blue ink (only) pens and pencils
- Mini-stapler
- Three hole punch
- 3 x 5 Index cards attached with rubber band or in zip lock bag
- Marble composition notebook for some teachers.
- Dictionary at home and a pocket dictionary for the classroom.
- Highlighter

CLASS ETIQUETTE

These policies exist to maximize learning and community spirit. Failure to follow them may result in disciplinary action and/or lower grades. They include *but are not limited to* the following guidelines:

1. Arrive on time and be ready to work when the bell rings.
2. Act respectfully to the teacher and to fellow students at all times.
3. Unless speaking quietly to your classmates in pairs or groups, raise your hand to speak. Do not call out.
4. Pay attention and follow directions quickly and quietly.
5. Take care of the classroom environment—clean and straighten up after all activities.
6. Obey all school rules and follow your teacher's instructions, in particular:
7. No eating or drinking (except bottled water) is permitted in the classroom.
8. Headwear (except religious) is prohibited. Clothing must be appropriate to school and follow expectations outlined in the annual school bulletin.
9. All electronic devices are not to be used or displayed in the classroom. *They will be confiscated as per Department of Education regulations.*

HELPFUL WEB RESOURCES

The following websites offer extensive hands-on practice of lessons learned in class.

www.regentsprep.org

www.nysedregents.org

Dictionary.com

Thesaurus.com

Merriam-Webster.com

www.essay-writing-tips.com

***You may contact your teacher via email or via PupilPath.com.
You may view your assignments and grades on PupilPath.com.***

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