



Ms. FITE

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ENGLISH 9 2020-2021

COURSE OVERVIEW:

Welcome to Freshman English! This year we will read and discuss a variety of genres in order to develop communication and analytical skills. By reading, thinking critically, listening, speaking, researching, and learning how to be a good digital citizen, we will be preparing to meet college and industry level expectations. This course is designed to be more challenging than middle school English. Please come with a willingness to learn and rise to the challenges.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:

I strive to build a community that engages students and fosters the development of academic growth and interpersonal relationships. I utilize social and emotional learning, inquiry-based learning, student-lead learning, and gradual release of responsibility strategies in order to help students build the skills and resiliency they need to become lifelong learners.

In the classroom, this looks like students sharing ideas, asking questions, reading and engaging with the material, connecting the content to the real world, learning how to disagree respectfully, trying on new perspectives, turning their thoughts into written and spoken words, and providing rationale to support their claims. I try to instill in my students to value progress over perfection, and the learning environment I strive to create helps students feel supported and safe enough to try something new – *it is okay to not know how to do something (or to not do it well), but it is not okay to not try.* We're here to develop and strengthen reading, writing, listening, speaking, and critical thinking skills that will help students prepare for success beyond the classroom. I give students the tools and demonstrate how to use them, but it is up to students to practice using them. This will determine student success.

OFFICE HOURS: My office hours are subject to change and, when on campus, are noted on the board. During distance learning, I am available 8am-8:50am on Wednesdays and before and after class whenever possible. Please email me to set up an appointment and get a link for a meeting. It is expected that ***students take responsibility*** for their own learning. Communicate with me when you have questions. Seek extra help often. This is not your parents' responsibility. ***No one can help if you do not make your needs known.*** You can also always reach me via email. I do not reply after 3pm, on weekends, or evenings.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

9th grade English focuses on the topics of Human Nature and Identity. Some Essential Questions we will be exploring and discussing throughout the year are:

- How does our journey shape our identity?
- How does a character's journey influence the human identity?
- How does the author use literary devices to convey her/his message?
- What is the significance of archetypes in literature?
- How do these archetypes help us understand human nature?

TENTATIVE TEXTS:

Texts are subject to change. Students are welcome to purchase their own copies of these texts.

- *The House on Mango Street* - Sandra Cisneros
- *Anthem* - Ayn Rand (9th)
- *Romeo and Juliet* - William Shakespeare
- Springboard Textbook by College Board
- In addition to these titles, students will read various short stories, nonfiction texts, poems, and other works that complement the themes, concepts, and ideas in our main texts.

MATERIALS:

- Notebook for English class (you will need this in distance learning **and** when we return to campus).
- Pens/pencils
- Highlighters
- Post-it's for annotation

CLASS EXPECTATIONS AND KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Be prepared – have necessary materials present, assignments completed, and be ready to contribute to class discussions by asking questions or sharing your thoughts.
- Be respectful – rude language and gestures, harmful or degrading (racist, sexist, homophobic/transphobic or otherwise offensive) language will not be tolerated. Class (both online and in person) is intended to be a safe space for all of us. Violating the trust or safety of your peers or teacher will be met with consequences. Similarly, any unauthorized photos, recording, or in the case of distance learning, screenshots are also a violation of the class' trust and will warrant disciplinary action.
- Read, annotate, study, ask questions, participate, take note, organize – former students all agree that this is the best way to succeed in this class!
- Falcon Way: Be involved, be respectful, be responsible, and be safe.
 - Profanity or disrespectful language or actions *will not be tolerated and will receive disciplinary action*. Let's keep this a friendly place for everyone.
- **Obey all school wide rules.** CV school policies are distributed to all families and are also available in the Parent/Student Handbook on the school website.
- Be in your seat or in our Zoom ready to learn before class starts. See the **CVHS Truancy and Tardy Policies**.
- Zoom meetings will begin at the scheduled start time. Students are expected to stay the entire time (minimum of 30 minutes).
- **Have integrity. DO NOT CHEAT.** See the **CVHS Academic Honesty Policy**.
- Adhere to CV's policies regarding Distance Learning and Zoom norms.
- Please note that teachers are *court mandated reporters* – if there is any reason to believe that a student's mental or physical wellbeing are in danger or that a student may be a danger to themselves or others, we must report it. Any reports made are done out of an abundance of caution and care.

GRADING POLICIES:

Category	% of Total Grade
Participation (class discussion, preparedness, class notes, etc.)	10%
Classwork/Homework (e.g. writing practice, discussion questions, listening and speaking, assigned reading, annotating, etc.)	30%
Quizzes and Tests (e.g. reading comprehension quizzes, vocab, etc.)	20%
Essays and Projects (take home essays, in-class essays, presentations, etc.)	40%

Grade scale: 90-100%= A, 80-89%= B, 70-79%= C, 60-69%= D, 0-50%= F. *Please note that as an English teacher, I read a great deal (which takes longer online). Please be patient with me as I grade work. **Little to no extra credit is offered. They best way to earn the grade you want is to do the work, study, ask questions, be engaged in class, and ask for help.

- **Late work is NOT accepted.** After an EXCUSED absence, full credit will be given for the make-up work if you **ask for the assignment on the day you return**. It is your responsibility to get missed work for excused absences.
- Quizzes may only be made up if the absence is excused AND the quiz is made up within **two days** of your return.
- If you know you will be absent when an assignment is due, arrange to turn in the assignment **on or before** the due date.
 - For each day that your **essay or project** is late, you will receive **-10%** (one full letter grade) off of the grade you earned.
Note: It is better to turn an essay or assignment in late and receive SOME points, than to receive a zero! More importantly, it is better to get in the practice than to choose to skip it!
- **Essay rewrites:** If you receive a 70% or below on an essay (**excluding end of semester/finals essays**), you may rewrite it for **up to** one letter grade higher. Any rewrites must be turned in within 1 week of receiving the graded assignment, and **we must have a meeting prior to your submitting a rewrite**.

