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Room: 260 Office: 275

Tutoring Hours: Tuesday - Friday 3:00 – 4:00

English 9 CP Syllabus

COURSE OVERVIEW

The focus of grade 9 English is studying different genres, primarily within American literature. Students will apply critical thinking, reading, and writing skills to four fundamental genres: *short stories*, *novels*, *poetry*, and *plays*. Students will learn to identify distinguishing characteristics of these genres as well as literary elements including (but not limited to) central idea, theme, setting, plot, foreshadowing, and irony. Students will work to develop and enhance their writing through various written assignments, formal and informal, short and long. Students will also enhance their reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary skills in the context of texts and through specific exercises in order to apply these skills to their assignments and tests.

The purpose of this course is to make you a better reader and a better writer, two skills that will help you be a better all-round student and will prepare you for college and beyond. To put things clearly, here is what you'll be doing: you'll read a lot and write a lot. And in the midst of all that reading and writing you will also be able to see how literature is a reflection of the world we live in and its history. You will see and explore where you currently fit in this world. You will also be able to tie everything back to our main idea, which is: Good readers and good writers do both with purpose. That may seem simple, but there are a number of skills we need to work on this year if we are to master purposeful writing and purposeful reading.

Though this is a CP-level course, but that does not mean you cannot enter the honors class in 10th grade. To change enrollment from an English College Preparatory course to an English Honors course, a student must have a year-end average of 90 (A-) or above. Students with averages below 85 (B) cannot enroll in English 10 Honors. Students with averages 85-89 may advocate for entrance.

SUPPLIES/MATERIALS NEEDED

Required:

1. A vocabulary notebook (a small \$0.99 composition book works perfectly). You must have a notebook by Monday, August 29th. You will keep this notebook in room 260 unless you take it home to study vocabulary.
2. A blue or black pen or pencil. I will not grade any work of any other color.
3. Paper
4. Your SSR book and whatever text we are currently reading

Failure to have any of the above materials during any class will result in a demerit.

As students progress through high school and beyond, organizational skills are essential.

Therefore, students should keep a separate 3-ring binder for this class only. Students should not keep materials from other classes in their English binders. I also recommend you buy a flash drive to save your papers so that you can work on them in the lab and at home.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Homework: I do not accept late homework for any reason other than a medical absence. If you come to me at 9:00 and say you “forgot to hand the homework in,” or that you “lost it” in your folder, I will not accept it and you will earn a zero. If you are emailing me an assignment, which you are free to do, you must do so by 7:00 the morning it is due. Do not bring a disk or flash drive to me. I cannot grade a disk. For each day a *major writing assignment* is late the student will lose 25% per day for two days. Any writing assignment not handed in by two days past the due date will result in a 0. I will occasionally grade homework with a v+ (100%), a v (85%), or a v- (75%).

Absences: If you are not in class please have a fellow student collect handouts and relay to you the homework for that day. Absent students are responsible for any homework not handed in the day they were absent. Upon their respective returns, absent students will find their names on the board under “Missed Work.” These students must contact me with any questions regarding homework they may have missed. The responsibility is on the student to catch up with any missed assignments.

Cheating: Passing off another person’s work as your own is strictly prohibited and, as stated in the school handbook, “illegal” (24). Any plagiarism and/or cheating on homework, papers, exams, etc. will result in an automatic grade of 0 for that assignment. You are required to cite all work that is not your own in your papers. If you are unsure about any assignment, test question, or how to properly cite references please contact me for direction. Please note that it is *your* learning and ability teachers try to improve at BCCS, not someone else’s.

Extension Policy: You may request an extension on any major assignments. You must contact me within three days of the assignment being due. You are responsible for keeping pace with the rest of the material during your extension.

Tutoring and After School: There is no homework club for grade 9. However, if you are in danger of failing a class, you will have to attend mandatory tutoring. Tutoring hours are on the first page. I keep room 260 open every day after school if you want help with any subject (I’ll do my best) or if you just want a space to do homework.

Contact: If you have any questions about anything or you want to talk to me about something, track me down whenever. I try to check my email at night so if you have a question about homework you can just email me and I’ll email you back by 9:00 pm.

GRADES*

Grades are based and weighed on the following:

Major Assessments	35%
- including, but not limited to, unit exams and revised essays	
Homework	25%
- including, but not limited to, reading response questions, paper drafts and outlines, daily reading preparation	
Classwork/Participation/Professionalism	10%
- including, but not limited to, daily participation, professionalism, "Do Nows"/"Wraps," and other work completed in class	
Minor Assessments	30%
-including single-draft papers, quizzes, projects, vocabulary assessments and recitations	

*Please note that the distribution accounts for 85% of you final grade. There is a **mid-term exam** counting for 5% and a **final exam** counting for 10% of your final grade.

CLASS RULES

Please refer to the BCCS Student Handbook for any additional policies.

- 1. Follow along when we read:** We will read out loud in this class...a lot. If we are reading something as a class and I call on you to read, you must be able to pick up exactly where we are. If you cannot, I will give you a demerit and point you to the correct spot. This will likely happen to almost all of you. It is not the crime of the century, so when it does happen, just take the demerit and pick up with the reading.
- 2. Never say "I don't know":** Your job here is to be smart and learn. If you don't know the answer to a question I ask you and you say, "I don't know," and stop there, I will give you a demerit. There is no excuse for such ignorance, just as there is no excuse for not trying. Now, there will be times when you don't know something, which is fine. But when you don't know something you should say say, "I'm not sure but here's what I'm thinking..." or "I don't know, but can you come back to me in a minute? I need a little more time." Ignorant disengagement is not an option. Choose it once and get a demerit. Choose it twice and you can leave.
- 3. Be on time:** Okay, I know this is already a school rule, but not every teacher follows it. In this class, you must be in this room working on the do now when the bell rings. If you are not, I will give you a demerit. If there is a line in the bathroom, come tell me, get started on your do now, let me check your work, and then I'll let you go to the bathroom if I think it is a good time to go. If you come into class one second late and tell me you are late because there was a line in the bathroom I will tell you that you should have held it and to give me your demerit sheet.

4. **Do not save seats:** I do not have a seating plan. We sit on a first-come, first-served basis in this class. However, if you try to save a seat, I will implement a seating plan for the next class. Also, I hold veto power and I can put someone in the desk I want. I always have a good reason for doing so.
5. **Spell correctly:** I will deduct a point for every spelling mistake you make this year. That means you could write a paragraph that earns a 10/10, but if you make five spelling mistakes, you get a 5/10.
6. **Clean around your desk before leaving:** Do not leave anything on, under, or near your desk. It is important to be responsible for your trash no matter whether you are in a movie theatre, food court, or this class room. The “someone else will do it” attitude is lazy, rude, and indicative of someone who will always rely on others too much.
7. **If someone drops something, pick it up:** Even if the dropper is closer to the object, it is polite to make the gesture of bending down to retrieve the item. Small acts such as this make our school a better place for you to learn.
8. **Make eye contact:** When someone is speaking, keep your eyes on that person at all times. If someone makes a comment, turn and face that person. When you are speaking, keep your head up and make eye contact with those to whom you are speaking. Making eye contact exudes professionalism, interest, competence, and confidence.
9. **Address people by their names:** During discussions, respect other students’ comments and be sure to address people by their first names, not by pronouns. Statements such as, “I agree with Sara because...” or “Sara made me realize that...” or “I disagree with Sara because...” prove that you are listening and not just waiting for your turn to talk. Too often we disregard the comments of others and we don’t set the atmosphere wherein we can speak freely, without fear of being wrong. We need to set that atmosphere in this class and we will do so by using first names.
10. **Be engaged:** I expect you to focus 100% of the time in class. I expect you to participate verbally, do your work, and actively engage in learning for every minute of every class. Therefore, if I ask for silence or obedience, I expect it. I will not demand something from you because I can or because it makes me feel good. This class is not about me; it’s about you and your path to college. Our time together will fly by and you need to use every minute to your advantage if you want the most out of school. You are here to learn and 100% classroom engagement is the first step in learning. If you are not willing to work and learn do not bother coming to class because I will kick you out anyway.
11. **If someone asks you a question in a conversation, ask a question in return:** Most adults can’t even do this. But when someone expresses interest in you, it is polite to express interest in the other person. For example, when if I ask you, “How was your weekend?” an appropriate response would be, “Good – we went to my aunt’s house on the beach and I saw a movie with so-and-so. How was your weekend?” Trust me – by virtue of simply expressing interest in other people, people will like you and want to do things for you. It could be the difference between getting a job or a date and not.

- 12. Don't ask for rewards:** I will give you MAPP Miles, praise, homework passes, candy and other acknowledgements for good work or simply because I like you. However, I will never give you a reward if you ask for one. You should be your best for the sake of bettering yourself, not because I might give you a reward. I appreciate when you thank me when I give you things, but you do not have to thank me for giving you things – I do it because I want to.
- 13. Accept the fact that you will make mistakes:** Learn from them and move on. You and I will both make mistakes this year. It's okay; we're humans. I will apologize and move on when I make them and I want you to do the same. Heck, you might not even have to apologize; just do your best to not to make the mistake again.
- 14. Don't take it personally:** Don't be surprised if you answer a question in class and I respond with, "No, you're wrong." I do you no favors by saying a bunch of fluff such as, "Interesting, I see where you're coming from," or "I *guess* you could argue that." If you're flat-out wrong, I'll tell you so. And it's okay to be wrong. I'm wrong all the time. The key is to acknowledge that you missed something and to find out how to turn your wrong into a right. Just don't take it personally when I confront you about being wrong. I do it because I care about your future.
- 15. Ask me why we are doing something:** I consider it your duty to ask me why we are doing something. I will do everything in my power to never give you work for the sake of giving you work. If you think something is busy work, please tell me. I won't take offence and if I can't articulate the value in an assignment, I won't make you do it.
- 16. No phones:** This is a school rule, but one worth repeating. If I see a cell phone on your person during school hours (even if I see the outline of a phone in your pocket) I will take it, give you a detention, and your parents will have to get it from Mr. Ferrara. Lock your phone in your locker as soon as you get to school.
- 17. Do not ask me to use the bathroom:** You have five minutes between classes to use the bathroom. If there is a line, come to class and inform me that there is a line and that you would like to use the bathroom after you complete your do now. I will let you. However, you may not use the bathroom or get water during class unless you have a note from a doctor stating you have a medical necessity for doing so.
- 18. No matter what, always be honest:** I will never, ever lie to you. I expect the same level of honesty from you. If you lie you allow yourself to become a slave to what other people think of you. If you live your life the right way you never have to lie. Even if you have done something wrong, it is best to admit it to me. I will respect your honesty and I will oftentimes forgo disciplinary measures due to your honesty. There is almost nothing you can do that will make me stop caring for and loving you. However, lying is one of those things. If you lie and I catch you in the lie (even a tiny lie), it is going to take a long time for me to trust you again. Tell me the truth – you'll always get it from me.