## WestPotomacCrestWest Potomac High School

## English 9 Syllabus

2014-2015

**Instructors**

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| Richard Cuminale (rwcuminale@fcps.edu)  Jana DeCoster (jbdecoster@fcps.edu)  Benita Farmer (bsfarmer@fcps.edu)  Leonard Hill (ljhill@fcps.edu)  Tia Kucera (tskucera@fcps.edu) | Claudia Lopez (mclopez1@fcps.edu)  Kelsey McGlynn (kmmcglynn@fcps.edu)  Sher Miller (sjmiller@fcps.edu)  Jean-Marie Simpson (jsimpson1@fcps.edu) |

To contact any of the course instructors, please use the email addresses above or call the main office at 703-718-2500. We pledge to return your call or email within 48 hours.

**Course Overview**

In English 9, students will read a variety of literature, explore the characteristics of different forms, and relate life situations to literary themes. The study of language will include spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and syntax. Through varied frequent writing assignments, students will build on their understanding of writing as a process. Students will also practice discussion and presentation skills.

The English 9 course will move students into high school-level reading and writing and will lay a foundation for success in upper-level high school English classes. It also begins to prepare students for the English SOL they will take in their 11th grade year.

**Course Outline**

There are several units of study that emphasize content, thinking, writing, and speaking skills, all of which are designed to intertwine and overlap. Please see an addendum to this syllabus for specific texts and assignments that students will be assigned through their course instructor.

**SERVICE LEARNING**

As part of West Potomac’s focus on character education, all 9th grade students are required to complete Service Learning through their English classes. Students will be expected to complete at least **ten hours** of community service over the course of the year.

**READING**

Each student will have access to or receive a copy of required texts. The cost to replace a lost or damaged book depends on the text. Hard copies of texts are available to students with specialized accommodations. Texts will be available to students in class, and electronic copies may be accessible through the Blackboard site.

This year we will read a variety of texts including novels and book-length nonfiction. As a class, we will read books that meet our course objectives and provide us with the opportunity to explore issues faced by society today and throughout history. A committee of administrators, teachers, and parents at your school has approved these books. As a class we will read from the following books together:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Odyssey*, Homer  *Romeo and Juliet*, William Shakespeare  *Night*, Elie Wiesel  *The Road*, Cormac McCarthy  *Animal Farm*, George Orwell | *Iliad*, Homer  *Trash*, Andy Mulligan  *Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Sherman Alexie  *Akhenaten*, Naguib Mahfouz |

Please note that some of the books you will read this year may contain mature content and/or controversial material (i.e. offensive language, violence, and/or implied or explicit sexual situations). The resources listed below can be used to see book reviews and get more information about the books we will use in our class.

* Fairfax County Library http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/
* Bartleby.com: Great Books Online http://www.bartleby.com
* Book Reporter http://www.bookreporter.com
* Book Spot http://www.bookspot.com/
* Teen Reads http://www.teenreads.com

If your parent or guardian would like to review any of these texts or request an alternate reading assignment please have him or her contact the teacher directly.

**Assessment & Grading**

The focus of assessment is to provide feedback on a student’s learning and to measure the student’s level of performance. Teachers use information generated through assessments to reflect and then make adjustments in the learning process that increase student learning over time.

The English 9 course uses a weighted grading system to evaluate students based on (but not limited to) essays, projects, tests, quizzes, classwork, homework, and participation. Homework will count for no more than 10% of a student’s grade. No other single category of assignments will count for more than 35% of a student’s overall grade.

Grades will be determined using the FCPS grading scale:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***F*** | ***D*** | ***D+*** | ***C-*** | ***C*** | ***C+*** | ***B-*** | ***B*** | ***B+*** | ***A-*** | ***A*** |
| *0-64* | *64-66* | *67-69* | *70-72* | *73-76* | *77-79* | *80-82* | *83-86* | *87-89* | *90-92* | *93-100* |

**LATE WORK**

Timeliness is an expectation. All work should be completed by the beginning of the class period on the day it is due, even if it is collected later in the class period or submitted electronically. Please note the following about submitting assignments after the deadline:

* Late work will be accepted for full credit only for excused absences. If a student is absent on the day an essay is due, he/she is expected to turn it in electronically before the beginning of the class period.
* Some assignments are time sensitive and lose instructional value after their due date. At their discretion, instructors may assign alternative assessments to evaluate mastery.
* Submitting a major assignment late means the student forfeits the opportunity to revise and resubmit the assignment for a re-grade.
* Instructors encourage students to communicate with them **before an assignment** **is due** if the need arises. Students must negotiate their need for flexibility 48 hours before the assignment deadline. An extension may be provided only upon teacher approval. Without prior agreement, late work will not be accepted for full value.
* Under no circumstances will late work be accepted after the completion of a unit or in the last week of the quarter.

**ABSENCES AND MAKE-UP WORK:**

* Students are responsible for checking Blackboard and/or checking in with the instructor to retrieve missed work. If computer access at home is unavailable, computer access is available to students in the library during lunch, after and before school, and during Wolverine Time.
* Make-up work is due at the beginning of the second class after the absence. In the event that a student is absent on the day an in-class assessment is given, the student will complete the assessment on his/her first class after the absence.

**REVISING/RESUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS:**

Rewriting or revising, though not available for every assignment, is an option designed to help students demonstrate mastery.

* For certain assignments, students will have the opportunity to consider the instructor’s feedback, revise, and resubmit the assignment within a specified time frame.
* In some cases, resubmission may be required by the instructor or may require attending the West Potomac Writing Center for assistance. Please note that the student must resubmit the original assignment, along with the revised version, to document learning and progress.
* At the teacher’s discretion, an alternative assignment may be offered or required in lieu of the revising the original assignment.

Because timeliness is an expectation, submitting assignments after assigned deadlines means that a student forfeits the opportunity to resubmit his or her work for re-grading.

**HONOR CODE/ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

Instructors will not tolerate cheating or plagiarism in any form.  It is the instructors’ expectation that students will not give or receive unauthorized aid on any assignment.  Students caught cheating will still be expected to complete the assigned work, or its equivalent, to demonstrate mastery of the skill or knowledge the original assignment intended to measure.  Should an instance of suspected cheating occur, instructors will follow the procedure indicated in the West Potomac High School Honor Code.  Details regarding the West Potomac honor code policy may be found at the following web site:

*http://www.fcps.edu/WestPotomacHS/academics/honorcode.html*

**OTHER IMPORTANT NOTES:**

* Progress reports are sent home every two weeks, according to the schedule published by West Potomac High School.
  + This communication may be sent electronically to email addresses supplied directly to the instructor or stored in the school’s database. It is the responsibility of parents and students to provide up-to-date email addresses, either to the school or to the instructor.
  + Alternatively, announcements may be posted on Blackboard when progress reports are distributed to students. It is the responsibility of parents and students to be enrolled in the appropriate Blackboard course and to check it regularly.
* If and when a student needs assistance, extra help is available after school, during Wolverine Time, or by appointment. Although dropping by is acceptable and welcome, students are encouraged to make an appointment to ensure the instructor is able to meet with them.
* Students are expected to keep all work, notes, and handouts until the end of the course. They will prove useful in studying for their final assessment, and students may need their prior work in the event of a grading error or discrepancy.
* Students are responsible for making sure their own work gets turned in.
* Students should negotiate any extra credit assignments with their teacher, provided all previous assignments are complete. Extra credit assignments are given at the teacher’s discretion.

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## English 9 Syllabus

## Signature Sheet

2014-2015

**Student:**

*I have read and understand the expectations and procedures described above for English 9. Throughout the year I agree to follow and support them, and when I find that I cannot follow and support them, I agree to discuss my concerns with my instructor, or a representative of the English 9 team.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Student SIGNATURE |  | PRINTED Student Name(s) |  | DATE |

**Parent/Guardian:**

*I have read the expectations and classroom procedures described above and will support them. Throughout the year I agree to support them, and when I find that I cannot follow and support them, I agree to discuss my concerns with my student’s instructor, or a representative of the English 9 team.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Parent / Guardian SIGNATURE |  | PRINTED Parent / Guardian Name(s) |  | DATE |

**Progress reports will be emailed home on a biweekly basis. To facilitate this process, please provide the name(s) and email address(es) to which the instructor should send these reports. Both parents and students are encouraged to provide an email so they can be informed of the student’s progress in class.**

**Name Email Address**

\*\*Please write any questions or concerns on the reverse of this paper.

*Alternatively, feel free to email your teacher (now or at any time in the future) at the appropriate email on the top of the syllabus.*