***Grade 11 English Syllabus 2012-2013***

**Course Description:**

Grade 11 English will pursue a worldwide range of written works in several genres. Students will workshop writing to better understand, explain, and evaluate literary and critical works. From literary analysis to creative   
compositions, from comparative to persuasive writing, from debate to mock trial to formal presentation, students will explore various modes of discourse by which to critically analyze a literary text. Ultimately, this course will examine the intricacies of story and self, as we collectively explore cross-cultural understanding.  
  
**Course Texts:**

* *No Exit* by Jean-Paul Satre
* *The Great Gatsby* by Scott F. Fitzgerald
* *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neal Hurston
* *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi
* Selected Magical Realist short stories
* Selected contemporary poetry
* Additional handouts and readings throughout the course

**Course Aims and Objectives:**

1. Introduce students to a range of texts from different periods, styles and genres
2. Develop in students the ability to engage in close, detailed analysis of individual texts and make relevant connections
3. Develop the students’ powers of expression, both in oral and written communication
4. Encourage students to recognize the importance of the contexts in which texts are written and received
5. Encourage, through the study of texts, an appreciation of the different perspectives of people from other cultures, and how these perspectives construct meaning
6. Encourage students to appreciate the formal, stylistic and aesthetic qualities of texts
7. Promote in students an enjoyment of, and lifelong interest in, language and literature.
8. Develop in students an understanding of the techniques involved in literary criticism
9. Develop the students’ ability to form independent literary judgments and to support those ideas.

**Essential Questions:**

1. What does literature reveal about human nature?
2. How does literature broaden one’s global perspective and cross-cultural understanding?
3. How can we gain appreciation of literature through the study of craft and convention?
4. In what way does imaginative exploration foster critical thinking and identity formation?
5. How is literature applicable in our own lives psychologically, socially, and philosophically? In other words, how is literature relevant to self, society, and the world at large?

**Materials:**

It is the students’ responsibility to keep all their materials organized and ready to be collected at any time. You are expected to bring the following to class every day:

* A notebook to be used for notes/journaling/homework/etc. This notebook is to be used only for this class as it will be collected periodically to be graded. These journals will be essential to your learning and reflection, and will be significant portion of your assignments grade.
* A folder (with pockets) which will include unit readings and handouts
* The text we are currently reading
* A pen or pencil

Students are also encouraged to utilize supplies such colored post-it notes, highlighters, and other materials that support active reading and annotation.

**Homework:**

Homework will be a regular part of this course and may include, but will not be limited to, independent reading; completion of written assignments, essays, or research; vocabulary study; collaborative or independent projects/rehearsals; and preparation for quizzes and tests. Please do not be surprised if you have more than one assignment to work on at a time—for example, a piece of writing, a long-term project, outside reading to complete, or specific vocabulary to learn. You will always know about projects and major tests and essays in advance, though you can also expect regular pop quizzes. Having said that, please understand that what I assign, I fully expect will be completed thoughtfully and thoroughly and in a timely manner by you.

**Late Work:**

Depending on the assignment, late work will result in a deduction of credit each day. Late homework will result in a 2-5 point deduction per day (depending on the point value of the original assignment), whereas late projects and essays will result in a deduction of 10 points per day. Any work beyond one week late will receive a maximum of 50% credit.

**Tardiness:**

A student is considered tardy if he or she is not in his/her class when the bell stops ringing. Arriving late to class is disruptive to the learning process and disrespectful to your colleagues. It prevents you from benefiting fully from the day’s activities. If your choices result in an inability to get to class on time, you will suffer the disciplinary consequences as described in the 2012-2013 Parent-Student Handbook. Consequences include: a lowered ¨participation¨ grade, making up for the missed learning during the student´s free time, holding conferences with the parent, and Student Responsibility Conferences. After these steps, students with more than 3 tardies per quarter will be referred to the Principal for excessive tardiness (refer to *Community Responsibility and Discipline Policies*).

**Absences and Make-up Work:**

Please review the following notes on absences and make-up work from the 2012-2013 Parent-Student Handbook:

* Students are responsible to submit any work on the due date that was assigned prior to an absence except for extenuating circumstances such as extremely a serious medical condition.
* Students who miss a day of school where an assessment was given must be prepared to write that assessment on the day they return to school.
* Students excused from classes to attend school-sponsored activities, such as athletic and/or academic events, can make up missed work for 100% credit.
* Students who miss school because of an illness or approved absence as stated above may be allowed to make-up their work upon their return to school and with the permission of the teacher. For each day absent, one day for make-up may be allowed up to a maximum of five days.
* Work missed because of an unapproved absence (including quizzes, papers, tests, projects and semester exams) may only be made-up to a maximum of 60% credit.

**Classroom Expectations:**

1. *R-E-S-P-E-C-T*

* Arrive on time and prepared for class.
* Immediately settle your belongings and read the whiteboard for your first instructions and the day’s agenda, so that when the bell rings we are all ready to begin.
* Share information and ideas by raising your hand and waiting to be acknowledged, unless the activity (skits, seminars, games) requires a different form of respectful interaction.
* When others speak, show respect by listening to and looking at the speaker.
* Honor your own learning by minimizing interruptions; personal electronic devices of all kinds should be discreetly turned off and store out of sight.

1. *BE HONEST*

* Sure, you´re not going to love every book we read, and if that´s the case, that´s okay. What I ask is that you respectfully provide specific evidence to explain how or why the text has given you that impression etc.
* Discuss academic problems with teachers and advisors instead of concealing them. You might be surprised how often getting their perspective can help you get a handle on the hard stuff.
* Understand and adhere to the PASB Honor Code as stated in the 2012-2013 Parent-Student Handbook.
* Talk to me. Ask questions. Tell me what you need. If we are doing something in class that you don’t get, I won’t know you’re struggling unless you talk to me. My email address is on the last page of this syllabus. Learn it! Use it! Leave me a note or speak to me in person. Please!

1. *STAY HUNGRY*

* Stay curious.
* Take initiative.
* Ask questions.
* Make predictions.
* Challenge others.
* Challenge yourself.

**Grading:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Percent** | **Category** | **Assignments** | **Grading criteria** |
| **40%** | **Essays /**  **Projects** | -In-class essays  -Drafted essays  -Creative writing  -Presentations  -Group projects | *-In-class essays graded for ideas, clarity, organization*  *-Revised essays also graded for mechanics and voice*  *-Projects and creative writing graded to rubric*  *-Essays and projects marked down for each day late* |
| **25%** | **Tests/**  **Quizzes** | -Reading quizzes  -Grammar quizzes  -Vocabulary quizzes  -Essay exams | *-Quizzes graded according to points*  *- Essay exams graded to rubric* |
| **20%** | **Assignments/**  **Notebook** | -Journal entries  -Poetry responses  -Annotation assignments  -Study questions  -Vocabulary HW  -Grammar HW  -Notes | *-Homework assignments checked on due date*  *-Journals will be collected and graded on a regular basis*  *-Late assignments will be accepted for 50% credit*  *-Assignments graded to rubric or to the following scale:*  **5***= Excellent: neat, careful, thoughtful*  **4***= Average: complete, on time*  **3***= Poor: late or messy*  **2***=Unsatisfactory: incomplete, late, or very messy* |
| **15%** | **Discussion/**  **Participation** | -15% Discussion  -5% Professional practices | *-See participation rubric and evaluation system*  *-Student is prepared and speaks English in class:*  **5***= Always;* **4***= Usually;* **3***= Sometimes;*  **2***= Rarely;* **1***= Almost never;* **0***= Never* |

**Your grade is important, but not as important as what you actually learn**. Please understand that everything we do together is designed to offer you opportunities to become as resourceful and successful as possible. Please use your time and your power to choose wisely. One choice you can often make is to re-do and re-submit a piece of work—I will be happy to discuss this option on a case-by-case basis. In fact, I may nag and annoy you on this very subject if it appears to me that you have allowed yourself to do less than your best.

**Essay Expectations with Sample MLA Formatting:**

First M. Lastname

Ms. Brostoff

Grade 11 English

31 July 2012

**Intriguing Title**, Centered with Appropriate Capitalization

The following few paragraphs serve to elucidate Ms. B.’s expectations, while demonstrating appropriate MLA formatting. You will be expected to use MLA formatting for all typed assignments in this class. Assignments that do not follow MLA formatting will automatically **lose 5 points.** Indent at the beginning of a paragraph. Margins should be **one inch**. The font should be **Times New Roman, size 12.** Your essay should be **double-spaced**. Always refer to the author by his or her last name and***italicize* or underline the title** of the book or play.

Indent new paragraphs. Assignments should be **printed and stapled BEFORE class** begins; otherwise, they will be counted as **late**. Your essays will range in length, but should generally be a minimum of 5 paragraphs. I don’t count examples, sentences, or paragraphs. **Structure exists to support strong thinking.** There are many ways – chronological, thematic, by character – to organize an argument. Just be sure that you **understand *why* you have organized your paper as you have.** Pay attention to your **topic sentences and clinchers,** which should serve to tie the paragraph together and transition to the next.

More significantly, **I am looking for strong substantiation and complex insights, centered around a strong thesis that presents a compelling inference about the text and answers a question of how or why as well as so what. Your essay’s goal, of course, is to** **thoroughly, perceptively, and creatively support your thesis**. **Avoid excessive repetition or plot summary. Be sure you have significant of textual evidence,** both examples and direct quotations. I will look carefully at how ideas develop in your paper, how one idea builds upon the next. I would like to learn from your paper. It’s not important whether or not I agree with your perspective. I want to be intrigued and see strong evidence to support *your* thinking*.*

**Most importantly, please care about what you are writing.** Take the time to devise a topic that you like, one that is genuinely compelling to you. **Good writing comes from strong thinking and strong thinking comes from genuine caring.** Share your conviction!

Please be sure you´ve **cited all of your quotes correctly** and **proofread** for grammar and spelling. Remember to **edit for dead words** and **use transition language** to strengthen the fluidity of your argument! **Creative titles and hooks** grab the reader´s attention, and the end of your conclusion should **leave the reader thinking** long after he/she puts down your essay. Of course, **you may always ask questions about my comments and you may always choose to** **rewrite a paper for extra points.**

**Dear Students,**

Please take a few minutes to read through and discuss the attached syllabus for Grade 11 English. Please email or come talk to me if you have any questions or comments. Sign and return the lower portion of this page to me by Thursday August 2nd.

Again, if you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to let me know. I am here to help you develop as readers, writers, thinkers, and ultimately, as people. The best way to reach me is through e-mail and I will do my best to reply to your inquiries within 24 hours of receiving them. I look forward to challenging, engaging, and inspiring year with you!

Sincerely,

Alexandra Brostoff

[alexandra.brostoff@gmail.com](mailto:alexandra.brostoff@gmail.com)

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**I have read this syllabus and understand the course expectations.**

Student’s Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(please print)

Student’s Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_