

Syllabus for English I (ninth grade) SY 2009-2010 *Duke Ellington School of the Arts*

Instructor: Ms. Law-Yone.

Email: msslawyone@yahoo.com

Course Philosophy: Ninth Grade English is a course designed to introduce to the student, in his/her first year of high school at Ellington, to literature and literary elements by specific genre. Students will study short stories, novels, non-fiction, poetry, and classical drama. In addition, vocabulary and grammar will be stressed. Further, this course focuses on the writing process with students writing a diversity of styles for a variety of purposes. Each day we will work on some type of writing structure. Although all ninth graders will read the same works, Honors students will be introduced to Pre-Advance Placement methods and be subject to higher expectations in the quality and quantity of their work.

This ninth grade year will be a novel-based curriculum. With each novel, we will include writing, vocabulary, unit tests, daily quizzes, group work, discussions and artistically creative activities appropriate to that novel. **It is critical that students keep up with their reading whether they are in class or not.** At this point, the novels we plan to read this school year are; Of Mice and Men, Dreams from my Father, Mythology, The Odyssey, The Epic of Gilgamesh, Black Folk Tales, Antigone, Romeo and Juliet and, perhaps Animal Farm. Each of these works brings to the student a different approach to thinking as well as observations of unique styles of writing. In addition, we will work on a poetry unit (individually) and produce a short scene from Shakespeare (in small groups).

Throughout the year, we will emphasize grammar, especially with our writing. The essays and paragraphs will be written and edited in class and typed at home. Students will need to know the importance of outlining, taking class notes and being ready to write to a prompt, in a limited amount of time. We will analyze each student's writing errors, targeting specific grammar as the need arises. We will cover sentence variety, touching the whole of all types of sentence structure and grammar. The aim of the study of grammar is to facilitate better writing and speaking.

Vocabulary will be an essential part of the curriculum. We will identify, review and study unknown vocabulary words and learn to use them in our writing.

We hope to do a great deal of **group discussion** with students actually discussing what they have gathered from their readings. These discussions will accomplish several purposes: speaking and expressing an opinion; thinking more deeply, to make a specific point; listening to other students who have, maybe, a diverse opinion as well as respecting the opinion of others; arguing, to support their own opinion.

Teaching and Learning Goals: The fundamental goals of this course are for you to learn and listen well, to communicate effectively and to value your own and other people's voices. We expect all students to respect the speaker (teacher or peer) to reach this goal.

Course Details:

Materials: You need a three- ring binder (for English only) with lined paper, the book or piece we are working on, **pens** (if I want you to use a pencil, I will provide one for you), and highlighters that you bring to class everyday. You will receive handouts and packets which you need to keep in your binder for easy reference. You may keep a school/home notebook in your binder but all materials need to be in your binder for full credit on random binder checks. Please save all your work, grades, test, handouts and packets.

Class work and Class participation: Class work includes writing notes, completing writing exercises, whole-class, group, partner and individual work. I expect even the "quiet" students to show genuine interest, curiosity and willingness to engage in the material.

Homework/Major Assignments: Homework is due as you walk in the door. Last-minute work done in/out of class will not be accepted. If you are in school for any part of the due day, you must put your homework in my box in the front office. Your final homework grade will result from the amount of homework assignments that you completed. With major assignments that are late, I will deduct one letter grade per day. It is your responsibility to contact me about a conflict or issue, prior to the due date, in order for me to make exceptions for your late work.

Grades:

- *Approximately 70% of your grade will consist of the following:* Essays, Tests, Research Papers, Presentations, Analytical/Creative Writing and Final Exams. Two or more weeks advance notice and rubrics will be given for the longer written assignments. Honors students who maintain an "A" average, can be exempt from taking the final exam and the end of the year!
- *Approximately 30% of your grade will consist of the following:* Quizzes, Homework, In-class Writing, and Participation.

Conduct: Should a problem arise, I will address the problem with the student. Hopefully, that will take care of the problem; should the problem continue, I will contact the student's art department chair, a member of the administration, and a parent/guardian. I anticipate that the student and I can take care of the problem.

Absences: The rules in the handbook apply. It is necessary for little to no tardies and absences for success in this course. If you have to be tardy or absent, it is your responsibility to contact a reliable peer or me, to get your missed work. It is important that you do not disrupt the class when you are tardy and wait until after the class to ask for instruction/work that you have missed.

Extra Help: I encourage you to seek help from me and your peers. If you need extra help, the Georgetown University students are available to help you during the lunch hour.

Reminders:

1. Turn off phones, dress appropriately, do not eat, drink or sleep in class.
2. Respect everyone in the class; speak one at a time, value choices and ideas of all.
3. Pay attention to dead lines and be in class by the time the second bell rings.
4. Use the restroom and pick up your materials prior to coming to class.

I look forward to a great year with you!

Please sign and return this page to me to be kept on file.

I (**please print** name) _____ have

read the above syllabus and class expectations for **English I** and understand the requirements.

My/our contact information is as follows:

 Signature of parent/guardian _____ Date: _____

I (**please print student's name**) _____ have

read the above syllabus for English I and understand all the requirements.

Signature of student _____ Period: ____

My student has a copy of *The Holt Reader Workbook* at home.

Yes_____ No_____

Additional information for the instructor/school:
