



Duke Ellington School of the Arts
Department of English
Course Syllabus (Fall 2010)
English I: Survey of Classics, Myths, Cultures, and
Genre

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*“Every legend, moreover, contains its residuum of truth, and the root function of language is to **control the universe** by describing it.”*

~James A. Baldwin

Course Description:

English I : Survey of Classics, Myths, Cultures, and Genre is a course designed to provide students with the foundation they need to “control the universe” through **powerful literacy**.

What is powerful literacy?

In his book *Literacy with an Attitude*, educational theorist Patrick J. Finn describes powerful literacy as a literacy that “involves creativity and reason—the ability to evaluate, analyze, and synthesize what is read.” Building powerful literacy skills in high school prepares students for all post-secondary pursuits.

In a unique environment like Ellington, it is important for students to be given a space to discover parallels between academic and arts subjects. Students will be encouraged to explore the relevance of English Studies and how it relates to their life and their art.

Conducted as a reading/writing workshop, we will study and analyze a variety of texts that span several genres and cultures. Students will be required to read and respond to texts regularly, in and outside of class. They will participate in group discussion, sharing their opinions and perspectives while respecting and considering those of their peers. The course will also focus on strengthening grammar and building vocabulary.

Course Objectives:

Students will develop skills and habits that will improve reading comprehension, vocabulary enrichment, and writing proficiency.

Student progress will be studied and monitored through one-on-one instruction and frequent student-teacher conferences.

Evaluation

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- **develop** and **demonstrate** lines of **reasoning** in **speaking** and **writing**
- **write accurately** and **precisely** for an audience
- **write effective paragraphs** and **effective essays**
- **recognize** and **define literary elements** appropriate for ninth graders
- **respond** to **literature** in a **variety** of **ways** and for a variety of **purposes**
- **note information pertinent** and **helpful** to achieving success in English I
- **support opinions** with **facts** and **form** careful **opinions** supported with **details**.
- **analyze** various forms of **literature** by **making connections** with other subjects in school.

Readings:

Frankenstein, Mary Shelley (**Townsend Library Edition**)

The Odyssey, Homer (**Townsend Library Edition**)

Romeo and Juliet, William Shakespeare (**No Fear Shakespeare Series**)

We will also read Greek mythology, Black folk tales, and several short stories.

Materials:

You must bring the following materials to class **every day**:

- a three-ring binder (2" wide) to be used for English materials only.
- black or blue ink pens
- a composition notebook
- lined paper (college or wide-ruled)
- Post-it notes (for active reading) and flashcards (for vocabulary)
- Class readings

Other Requirements:

Students are required to register for **Engrade** and **Gmail** accounts.

Engrade is Ellington's adopted online grading system. Registering with Engrade will allow students to access their grades (for all of their classes) from any computer or device with internet access.

Students and parents may send questions regarding the class through Engrade's messaging feature, which is my preferred method of communication. Parents are also encouraged to register for an Engrade account so that they may monitor their child's progress in the class.

Google offers several free services that will help your student stay organized, efficient, and **green**. By signing up for a **Gmail** account, students can benefit from an online calendar, word processor, a database of hundreds of articles and books, and many other services (**did I mention it's FREE?**) Submitting assignments through Gmail eliminates the need for thumb drives and cuts down on printing costs. It also allows students to have access to all of their files via the web, whether it be at home, at the library, or from a Smart Phone. If you have any concerns about these requirements, please feel free to contact me.

Attendance:

Attendance is **mandatory**. Students who are frequently late or absent from class cannot benefit from the regular classroom instruction they need to be successful at Ellington. The community handbook states that "Students and parents/caregivers are held accountable for reporting all absences **within 72 hours** of the student's return."

Making up work after absences:

Classwork, homework, and participation points make up more than 50% of your grade. Students are responsible for getting their own make-up work from the teacher on the **first day back** from the absence. If you are absent, **you must provide documentation in order to receive the work you missed**. Please refer to your community handbook for examples of excused and unexcused absences and tardiness.

If you have an unexcused absence, you have a grace period equal to the number of days of your absence in order to complete the work assigned in class on those days.

Assignments that are due on the date of an excused absence are due the first day upon returning from the absence. You will **NOT** be given extended time on previously assigned papers, essays, and projects unless you contact Ms. Yarborough and receive permission.

All make-up work must be given **directly** to Ms. Yarborough.

Late Work:

- The **only** late assignments I will accept are essays, papers, and projects. These major assignments will drop one letter grade (10%) per day for five days. No credit will be given after the fifth day. **No late homework or classwork will be accepted for credit.**
- All classwork should be turned in by **the day after it is assigned** in order to receive credit.
- If you have **extenuating** circumstances preventing you from turning in an assignment or assignments on time, see Ms. Yarborough at least **48 hours BEFORE** the paper is due.

Grading:

Students will be graded on the following DCPS scale:

- A = 93-100
- A- = 90-92
- B+ = 87-89
- B = 83-86
- B- = 80-82
- C+ = 77-79
- C = 73-76
- C- = 70-72
- D+ = 67-69
- D = 64-66
- F = 63 and below

Class Policies:

- “Respect others, respect yourself.”
- Come to class prepared to learn every day
- Raise your hand
- Listen to and follow directions
- Be responsible
- Respect all property. (School property, personal property, and other's property)
- Listen to others and participate in class discussions and activities
- Turn all cell phones/electronic devices on silent mode and keep them out of sight.
- Eating/Drinking in the classroom is prohibited (water is the **ONLY** exception)

Students who regularly follow class policies and promote a **positive** and **productive** learning environment for themselves and their peers will be rewarded. Consequences for breaking class policies will be determined by Ms. Yarborough. Students who continually need further reinforcement of class policies may require parental or administrative involvement.

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

Student /Parents Signature and Parent Contact Information

I, (please print parent's/guardian's name) _____,
have read the above syllabus and class expectations for English I
and understand my requirements.

My/Our contact information is as follows:

Name (s) _____

Phone (s) _____

Email (s) _____

Signature of parent/guardian:

_____ Date: _____

I, (please print student's name) _____, have
read the above syllabus for English I and understand all of the
requirements.

Signature of student _____ Period: ____