
English 9: Coming of Age in Literature and Composition
Ms. Hammond: ahammond@dublinschool.org
Classroom: FAB 1; Residence: New Dorm Apartment
2014-2015

Course Information:
The purpose of English 9 is to provide an opportunity for you to read and write deeply, inquisitively and effectively, engaging with diverse genres and styles. You will find common themes in many of the works we explore, but it is your own experience that will serve as the most important core element of the curriculum. To be successful in this course you need a curious mind and a willingness to actively engage with your classmates, your reading, your writing, your teacher and yourself as a learner. It will also help to keep in mind the following:

Course Texts:
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian. Sherman Alexie
To Kill a Mockingbird. Harper Lee
Persepolis. Marjane Satrapi
Romeo and Juliet. William Shakespeare
Annie John. Jamaica Kincaid
Of Mice and Men. John Steinbeck

Course Supplies:
College Ruled Composition Book (Writer’s Notebook—I will provide)
1 to 1 and 1/2 inch three ring binder with loose leaf paper and dividers OR a spiral notebook and folder dedicated to English 9
writing utensils (pen or pencil)
You should also bring the previous night’s reading to class for use during discussion
access to Schoology on a daily basis (I also encourage you to keep an organized written system for keeping track of assignments.)

Expectations:

Reading:
We will explore, throughout the year, the multitudinous reasons why reading is important. For now, please just trust me: reading is important! Throughout the year we will explore various forms of writing, including novels, short stories, plays, poetry, periodical articles, blogs, podcasts and films. In order to make class fun, engaging, and intellectually invigorating you need to complete the assigned reading each night. I don’t expect you to “get” all of your reading assignments on the first read—we’ll delve more deeply into our reading in class. But, in order to make the most out of deeper reading and discussion, everyone needs to have completed a first-draft reading—each time it is assigned. There are some tips to keep in mind when reading:

Read in a place conducive to reading (comfortable but not sleep-inducing)
Read Actively (more on this in class)
Annotate your text with questions, comments and connections to share in class or use in writing
Look up and write definitions of unfamiliar words

50/50 Reading:
One of the hardest parts about high school for me was that I didn’t feel like I had enough time to read books that I really wanted to read. I’m guessing you know the type: fun, high-interest books that leave you fighting to keep your eyelids open because they’re so engrossing that you don’t want to fall asleep before finishing the next chapter. In this class you will always be reading two books. One of those books will be our assigned, class text. We will read these together, grappling with the themes, form, literary devices and character development in class and through writing assignments. The other book you will choose entirely on your own. It should be a book that truly interests you and can be of any genre or length. Our class Book Flood includes titles specifically selected for their readability and captivating content. When you finish (or abandon) a book you will fill out a “one pager” assessing your reading experience. I do not intend to assign letter grades to these “one-pagers.” Instead, they will serve as a record of your free reading titles. As a class you will compete with other English 9 sections to read the most in each of the trimesters.

Writer’s Notebook:
The other main component of this course is writing. The most important aspect of writing to keep in mind is that it is a process. No one (not even prolific, wildly successful writers) produce perfectly formed written compositions on their first try. The great works of literature had to start with really rough first drafts. The key to improving your writing (and by writing I am referring to anything written down or typed—not just formal essays) is to do a lot of it. This is where the Writer’s Notebook comes in. You will write in your notebook on a daily or nightly basis. It will serve as a testing ground for your thoughts, ideas and questions. I will collect notebooks on a regular basis to give you credit for completing the assignments, but you should never be afraid to write something in your notebook because you don’t think it’s good enough. Your ideas are always good enough and your writing will become more polished through practice, patience and perseverance.

Grading:
Success in this course depends on your achievement in your writer’s notebook, tests and quizzes, essays, class projects, daily class participation, and the final exam. Although this is subject to change throughout the year, you can expect a general breakdown of your term and final grades:

10% Class Participation
25% Writer’s Notebook/Homework
25% tests and quizzes
20% Formal Essays/Projects
20% final exam

Participation:
There are many ways to be an active and valuable participant in class. Contributions to class discussion are certainly welcome and important; listening, contemplating, encouraging and questioning are equally valuable, though. I will provide verbal and written feedback about your class participation throughout the year. Please don’t hesitate to seek help from me if you have questions about your class participation. Above all, let’s respect, learn from, and have fun with each other.

Attendance:
While the Student Handbook outlines a general school policy concerning absences, you need to be aware of my personal policy. An excused absence is one that has been cleared by either your parents or the nurse for illness, or by the school for a team or group event. You are responsible for letting me know at least a day ahead (before you go sick) and for making up the work you miss during your absence. You need to check the two-week for assignments; check in with me or a classmate to

http://schoology.dublinschool.org/page/152984572
Academic Honesty:
Honesty is essential for a quality learning experience. Cheating and lying hurt mostly you, but in the case of plagiarism, harm others as well. Please read and be familiar with the Dublin School Academic Honest Policy in the Student Handbook. Please remember to always cite your sources! Work that includes cheating will receive a zero and must be re-done. It will also be brought to the attention of the Academic Dean and your advisor. If you have any questions regarding academic honesty, please ask me. If you are overwhelmed or unsure of how to proceed at any point, I will be happy to help you.

Classroom etiquette:
Please be on time, with the appropriate materials. Most importantly, remember to be respectful of others at all times.

Importance of your role in the course:
You will be successful in this course if you are curious, confident, and conscientious: curious enough to read and write deeply and voraciously; confident enough to pose questions, posit hypotheses, and engage others in conversation; and conscientious enough to be prepared for class, assignments and examinations. It also helps to have a good sense of humor!