



English I Syllabus 2015-2016

Summerville High School

Instructor: Melyndee Dewey

Keep your dreams alive. Understand to achieve anything requires faith and belief in yourself, vision, hard work, determination, and dedication. Remember all things are possible for those who believe. –Gail Devers

Course Overview and Philosophy:

English 1 is designed to be a college preparatory course, and, as such, this course will provide you with the intellectual challenges and workload consistent with a typical 9th grade English course. Through this class, students will become analytical, reflective readers who will answer purposeful, profound questions about life and the human condition. Each student will build upon his or her knowledge of philosophy, worldviews, and literature and play an integral role in the meaningful discussions about universal themes, human suffering, the search for self, social justice, and cultural, biographical, and historical values presented in each work. Through Socratic seminars, class discussions, reading of novels, short stories, poetry, song lyrics, and non-fiction, essay writing, extended projects, and presentations, students will gain a plethora of insight into how to build community through both fictional and non-fictional literature, and answer essential questions tied to each reading selection. Students will also study the different literary and rhetorical devices authors use to help the reader better understand their writing and will write academically discussing these tools. They will become critics of literature and non-fiction and will learn how to write meaningful theses and organize their writing effectively while always keeping the purpose of the writing assignment in mind. Throughout the year, they will become confident writers who have established their own unique styles and will be prepared for junior/senior-level writing.

STUDENTS WILL WRITE A GOOD DEAL, and will revise certain pieces of their writing into polished final drafts. During the writing process, students will be exposed to their conscious choice of diction and the appropriate use of words, their ability to create varied and effective syntactic structures, their capacity for coherence and logical organization, their ability to balance generalizations with specific and illustrative details, and, overall, their ability to combine rhetorical processes into an effective whole. This year, students will focus more on academic paragraphs, and fine-tuning writing skills in smaller paragraphs throughout the year, although at least two longer essays (the narrative and the research paper) will be assigned. Academic paragraph writing will enable them to flourish and grow as they begin to develop mature, college-ready essays in the years to come.

COMMON CORE CURRICULUM SHIFTS include a slightly different approach to English. One major goal is to allow all students the opportunity to be able to read and analyze not only fiction, but especially non-fiction, allowing students to understand *why* authors write the way they do, and help students think critically about all material they might encounter in day to day life. This is to a great advantage to our students, as we are constantly inundated with information, some good, some mediocre, some bad, and students will be able to flourish with intelligence as they learn to not just read and understand but also to analyze all types of writing and literature.

Essential Questions

Throughout the year, you will examine the following recurring questions and the reasons we write and read literature in the first place:

- What makes a story worth reading?
- What makes a character live?
- How do you tell a tale?
- What are life's big lessons?
- Can you be persuaded? And can you be fooled by persuasion?
- How does an author craft his or her work—just for *you*?

Our learning goals

Throughout the year and with practice and then mastery, students will make the following statements:

- I can identify the literal and figurative meanings of words.
- I can distinguish between denotative and connotative meanings of words.
- I can analyze structures and formats of functional documents.
- I can explain how authors use the features in order to achieve their purpose.
- I can synthesize content from several sources and paraphrase ideas and connect them to other sources.
- I can judge how believable and author's argument is and examine how the author's intent, or purpose, influences the text's structure and tone.
- I can examine the conflicts, motivations, relationships, and influences of main and minor characters of a literary work and explain how those interactions affect the course of the story's plot.
- I can explain the importance of literary devices (metaphors, similes, imagery, allegory, and symbolism).
- I can use precise language, action verbs, sensory details, appropriate modifiers, and active rather than passive voice.
- I can write a clear, controlling thesis.
- I can revise my writing.
- I can develop the main ideas within the body of a text.
- I can synthesize information from multiple sources.
- I can demonstrate an understanding of: Proper English usage, control of grammar, paragraph and sentence structure, diction, and syntax.
- I can produce legible work.

Performance Tasks:

- Highlighting and annotating novels, short stories, and non-fiction read throughout the course
- The analysis of fiction expected, but *subject to change* per teacher discretion:
 - Secret Life of Bees
 - Animal Farm
 - *Romeo and Juliet*
- Biographical narrative essay, stylistic analysis academic paragraphs, rhetorical analysis academic paragraphs, synthesis writing, researched, persuasive writing
- Grammar
- Paragraph writing and class discussion responses to reading, reading questions, presentations, and extended projects
- Weekly reading (much of which will include analysis of chosen non-fiction pieces)
- On demand, in-class writing
- Socratic Seminars
- Grammar/Vocabulary Development

Writing Expectations:

Students will continually improve their writing through in-class, timed writing assignments and process essays. They will learn how to effectively organize their ideas, support their theses, and revise their work while writing multiple drafts of response to literature, persuasive, critical analysis, and narrative essays. Both teachers and students will provide feedback so that students can write well-developed, quality final drafts that include high-level, appropriate vocabulary and a variety of sentence structures. Every assignment is critical in the development of becoming a great writer. Therefore, continual editing and feedback will play an important role in the class.

1. Each writing assignment will be accompanied by a grading rubric. The expectations will be clear from the onset and anchor papers (example student essays) based off of student writing will be created to help students visualize what a “high school-level” essay should look like. During workshops, students will discuss the critical elements of well-developed writing and will use 6-point rubrics that will help students assess effective critical writing. Please review each rubric carefully and check your essays before submitting them. All edited, rough drafts must be attached to ALL process essays and essays must be typed, double-spaced, and in MLA format.
2. In-class, timed essays will also have attached rubrics. Students will be graded using these rubrics and will receive feedback as to the grade earned. They will have the opportunity to edit their work and turn in completed, final drafts. This will help them become more experienced writers and is an excellent way to prepare for the CAHSEE practice exam in March.
3. Every unit will have a specific writing focus and the process paper written will be an incremental part of the grade for that unit. Students will spend time organizing their ideas, researching the style of essay, reading anchor papers, prewriting, editing their own work, peer editing, getting teacher feedback (which may be done with early-turned-in essays, class wide), revising, and completing final drafts. We will have individual writing conferences at least two times while writing each essay.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Regular Attendance:

Be here and be on time! When you are not, it has a negative impact on your participation in the class and on your grade. I will follow the Summerville policy regarding tardies, which allows you one free tardy *per semester*, regardless of if it is excused or not. Don't be late – it is rude.

Homework:

Homework may be checked each day. You will receive one *late work pass* per grading period, and may turn in one piece of work late for full credit, a pass which may not be used on work exceeding 15 points. Otherwise, work must be ready to be checked before class begins on the day it is due.

Leaving the Classroom:

Leaving the classroom is frowned upon! You're a mature student, and I assume that you are able to take care of your personal needs during your passing time. If an emergency arises and you feel you must leave the classroom for some reason, please wait until an appropriate time (not during the middle of a lecture!), and then approach me. You are allowed one bathroom break per 6-week grading period and must present your late work pass (which works for a bathroom pass) when you go. You will then fill out the hall pass clipboard with the time you left, take the bathroom pass, and you'll promptly return, signing in again with the time you returned. Only one student is allowed outside of the classroom at a time, so please be quick. Please do not leave within the first or last 15 minutes of the class.

Citizenship Grade:

It is my philosophy that a student's behavior does not reflect his or her academic grade. Therefore, any disruption to our learning environment (tardies, poor conduct, not working in groups, and breaking our classroom norms) will lower his or her citizenship grade to a “U”. On occasion, a “daily grade” may be implemented with or without warning, and can either boost your grade (if you behave well) or cause a detriment to your grade (if you behave poorly).

Grading:

Earning an “A” in our class is completely dependent upon the hard work and dedication of each of our students. Being prepared to learn and work above and beyond our “normal” expectations will result in an excellent grade. “Above and beyond” means studying the materials outside of class, continually working on the writing process, rewriting essays, retaking tests, playing an integral role in groups work, and earning “A’s” on our summative assessments as well as our end of the semester cumulative projects. For each project and essay, students will receive grading rubrics to ensure that the expectations are clear. They will also receive anchor papers (model essays) so they can see what an excellent paper looks like. Grades are computed on a point system. Grades will be posted online frequently throughout the semester. Please email me if you would like additional grade reports throughout the term. **Extra credit is rare, and will not be provided unless all other work has been turned in, even if you turn in late work for half credit.**

Grading will be broken down as follows:

100% - 90% = A	89% - 80% = B	79% - 70% = C	69% - 60% = D	59% - 0% = F
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Late Work:

All major graded assignments, papers, and projects are due on the date stated at the beginning of class. If you will be late or absent for *any* reason, email me the paper before class begins or else it will be late. If an major assignment is:

- a. one weekday late = 20% deduction
- b. every calendar day after=10% deduction
- c. Three or more weekdays late = half of the credit you would have received, and no feedback.

Late homework assignments will be excepted for up to ½ credit up until the last week of the grading period, but *will not be entered until grades are due for the term.* This means that your initial “0” will remain a “0” until grades are due.

For late work due to absences, no grade will be entered until the work is received. Work must be dated when it is turned in, and may or may not be entered and graded until the end of the grading period. If you wish to have the most accurate grade possible, make every effort to turn work in on time, even if you are absent.

Unexcused Absences: No credit will be given for work missed due to an unexcused absence.

Long-term assignments: If you are absent for any reason, you are still responsible for turning in long-term assignments on time, completing reading assignments on time, and finding out what work you missed. If you are afraid that you might become sick the night before an assignment is due, then complete it early and make sure it is handed in. Take advantage of email, friends, and siblings to deliver assignments.

Short-term assignments: a student with an excused absence may turn in work within **two** weekdays of his/her return. If you know you will be absent in advance, meet with me before you leave to determine due dates and assignments.

Make Up Exams and Quizzes:

In cases of excused absences, you may make up a test or quiz within one week of your return to school. You are responsible for setting up an appointment with me to make up the work. If you do not make an appointment or do not show up, you will receive a zero. Please check with a classmate after all absences to learn about missed work, tests, and quizzes.

Formal Written Assignments:

All essays, papers, and written projects (including writing completed in class on iPads) need to be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins on all sides, and need to include the MLA formal heading (unless otherwise stated). Use Times New Roman font at all times. Always attach rough drafts, peer editing sheets, and the rubric to final drafts.

Required Materials:

- Assignment calendar (a planner, whether self-created on your iPad, or purchased hard copy. You must have these by the beginning of next week, or points will be taken from you.
- A three ring binder with plenty of college-ruled paper
- Bound Composition Book for warm-ups writing prompts (*Composition book only*. If purchasing this is an issue, please see me. Composition books can be found rather inexpensively at Wal-Mart).
- Independent reading novel (On occasion, we will have silent reading time, and you should always be prepared with a silent reading novel, no matter the day. Please bring a novel from home or one you check out independently from the library. Otherwise, you'll be reading something you do not enjoy. This book should be brought by you within two weeks—please wait until library procedures have been accomplished by your librarian and the school before overwhelming her. You are always welcome to check out library books from the local town libraries as well, and I recommend it!)

Integrity/Plagiarism Policy:

Cheating will not be tolerated under any circumstances. I consider plagiarism of any kind to be cheating (from any source including another student, tutor, or parent). Unless an assignment is specifically designed for partners, you are expected to do your own work. If you complete work with others, you are still responsible for your own wording and ideas. Students are encouraged to seek help with proofreading or editing; however, plagiarism is unacceptable and will result in a zero on the assignment. There are two types of plagiarism: 1) inaccurate or incomplete citation of sources (unintentional plagiarism) and 2) a deliberate act of copying another's work (intentional plagiarism). Both types of plagiarism are unacceptable and will result in equal consequences, so please cite your sources carefully. *If a student is caught plagiarizing, he or she will receive a zero on the assignment.* Additionally, school-wide policy requires a meeting with administration with each plagiarized item, Saturday school, and a school-wide email sent out to warn and notify other teachers of the plagiarism.

Eating and Drinking in class:

Please refrain from eating in class because it causes distractions. Feel free to bring water to class, but be prepared to clean up after yourself. Utilize breaks if and when you need snacks.

Electronic Devices:

Your own cell phones and personal electronic devices are never permitted in class. If I see them out during this time, I will confiscate them for the school day and bring them to the office, where you can pick them up. If a student is found texting during class, you will receive an instant hour of detention. However, one reward for *entire class* positive behavior is for students to use iPads for music during quiet work time. I will let students know when they may be used. Individual writing assignments do not happen every day, and this reward will only be given on the day it is earned.

General Classroom Rules

1. Be Respectful

Treat your classmates, your teacher, yourself, and your environment kindly.

Do NOT talk down to anyone. We all have different strengths—learn from each other! There will be no put-downs, no profanity, no “shut-ups,” but rather kind words as is useful for the moment.

Raise your hand to speak

Be silent when someone else is speaking, and always track the speaker

2. Be Responsible

OWN your education. It is what you make of it!

Don't make excuses, and always do your best.

Be on time and prepared; bring a pencil, notebook, textbooks, and binder to class every day.

3. Be Thankful

Stay appreciative of others and of your environment.

Learn to look for the good in all situations.

Rather than complaining, use positive words

Know that you are extremely valued by me, and I always wish to see your greatest potential.

My Contact Information

Email: mdewey@summbears.net

*This is my preferred means of communication. Emails are quick and easy to respond to and I will return them as soon as I can upon receiving them.

Website: <http://deweysenglish.weebly.com>.

*Any homework (if applicable), and daily agenda/ assignments will be posted before the class date. If a student misses a day of class, they are to check the website, email me, or call a student for makeup work.

Phone: 209.928.4228 ext 285

Conferences: I am available before school for parent/teacher or student/teacher conferences. Please feel free to email, call, or stop by my classroom (302) to discuss your student's progress. Due to scheduling, and with your best interest in mind, I would ask that you email or call to make an appointment in advance.

Print student's name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Please sign and return this agreement, which is your first graded assignment. This is due at our next class period together.

I, _____, have read and understand the above-stated expectations
parent/guardian signature

I, _____, have read and understand the above-stated expectations
student signature

Parent Contact Phone Number: _____

Parent Contact E-mail: _____