

Writing Through Literature
2008-2009 Syllabus
Riverside University High School

Ms. Hartke
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Room # 111C, Hr 2, #113, 3-4
(Room # 402 6-7, 8, 9)

Course Description/Overview

Welcome to Writing Through Literature! This course is intended to prepare you for English 12. You will be learning skills that will help you in college and the rest of your life. We will be reading a variety of texts, from different places, times, and genres. This course will also focus on developing your skills as writers, including building vocabulary and grammar knowledge. We will be writing as much and as often as we can. We will use literature and writing to better know ourselves and our world. Throughout this year, we will consider what reading and writing are good for.

Essential Topics/Questions

- How is literature relevant to our personal lives?
- Why is writing and reading well so important to everyday life?
- What can you learn about values of people – various cultures and eras as well as your own – by studying the literature they produced?
- How did American authors develop their own voices?
- What role do grammatical conventions play in effective communication?
- How can words and ideas be organized for the greatest rhetorical effect?

Materials

Reading material
Riverside Student Handbook/Agenda
Two pocket folders (provided by Ms. Hartke)
One composition notebook
Single subject notebook
Loose leaf paper
Pens (blue and black) and pencils
Highlighters

My Responsibilities as Your Teacher

I will treat each individual with respect.
I will create a safe and positive learning environment for all students
I will carefully consider the importance of each concept/work taught, making each lesson and assignment meaningful and of importance.
I will be accessible to students and parents to discuss student progress.
I will have high expectations for every student.

Grading

A= 100-90% B= 89-80% C= 79-70% D= 69-60% U= 59-0%

Your marking period grade is earned through a percentage of points you receive out of the total possible points. You will be graded on the following:

1. Weekly participation
2. Reading journal completion
3. Writing produced
4. Word study/Language warmups
5. Self-evaluations
6. Goals met

At the end of each mark period, we will have teacher-student conferences in class. You will be assigned a day to have an interview with me. We will evaluate your writing and progress in class, specifically how well you met your goals for that mark period. We will also use this time to set new goals for the new mark period. For the first mark period, I will set some general goals for you:

- Find a subject to write about
- Order and collect information
- Present information/message with clarity
- Use writing customs
- Prepared daily for class
- Participation and effort in writing and reading

Homework

Homework will be assigned throughout the year. Any assignment given will be written on the board in the designated location. Be sure to check it and accurately write down all assignments and due dates. Class activities that are not completed in class will be assigned as homework. Sometimes, time in class will be given to work on assignments. Please use this time wisely to complete work, or else the privilege of completing these tasks in class will be taken away. All work should include a complete heading and is due at the beginning of class on the due date. If you know in advance that you will be absent and unable to turn in an assignment, please let me know as soon as possible, so we can make alternative arrangements.

Possible Topics and Texts of Study

College Application Essays

Edgar Allan Poe & Alfred Hitchcock

Resumes

J.D. Salinger – *Catcher in the Rye*

Cover Letters

Letters to the next president

Biographies

Creative Writing

Walter Dean Meyers – *Fallen Angels*

Editorials

Ray Bradbury – *Fahrenheit 451*

Multigenre research papers

Memoirs

Portfolio

This list is not in chronological order, and it is subject to change

Ms. Hartke
WTL
9.2.08

Your Assignment: Share this syllabus with your parent or guardian. Then, please, fill out this page completely and return it to me for credit. Signing this paper confirms that you have read the aforementioned material and that your parent/guardian has been informally introduced to Ms. Hartke via letter. Please tear off this sheet and return it for 10 homework points by Thursday, September 4th.

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Welcome to Writing Through Literature! Please take the time to review the class syllabus with your child. While we will discuss the syllabus in class, it is also important that you are aware of the class objectives and expectations. This class will require hard work and dedication on the part of the student, as s/he prepares for Senior and university-level course work. Remember, we are preparing your child for success, and success requires work!

I believe an open flow of communication from the start is necessary, as I want to work with you to create a successful experience for your son/daughter. If you have any concerns, please feel free to contact me. I am available before or after school, by appointment, to meet with you or your child. Additionally, I am willing to meet with students during these times for extra help with class work. Please set up these appointments and meetings with me at least a day in advance. I will try to resolve any unpleasant issues in the classroom with your child first, but I will not hesitate to call home if necessary.

Please ensure that your child has the required class materials (as listed on the syllabus) by Thursday, September 4th. Also please note that parent/teacher conferences are the week of October 13th. Please check your school calendar for specific days and times. I look forward to meeting you there!

Email: hartkedm@milwaukee.k12.wi.us
Phone: 414.906.4900

Thank you,

Ms. Hartke

Student's Name: _____ Hour: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Contact Preference: 1. Email _____
2. Telephone (home) _____
3. Telephone (work) _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____

Relationship to student: _____

Concerns (Medical/Other): _____

DID I MISS ANYTHING?

Question frequently asked
by students after missing a class
Nothing. When we realized you weren't here
we sat with our hands folded on our desks
in silence, for the full two hours

Everything. I gave an exam worth
40 per cent of the grade for this term
and assigned some reading due today
on which I'm about to hand out a quiz
worth 50 per cent

Nothing. None of the content of this course
has value or meaning
Take as many days off as you like:
any activities we undertake as a class
I assure you will not matter either to you or me
and are without purpose

Everything. A few minutes after we began last time
a shaft of light descended and an angel
or other heavenly being appeared
and revealed to us what each woman and man must do
to attain divine wisdom in this life and
the hereafter
This is the last time the class will meet
before we disperse to bring this good news to all people
on earth

Nothing. When you are not present
how could something significant occur?

Everything. Contained in this classroom
is a microcosm of human existence
assembled for you to query and examine and ponder.
This is not the only place such an opportunity has been
gathered

but it was one place

And you weren't here