

COURSE FOCUS

American Literature is designed to prepare you for the rigor of college writing. I am going to push you to critically analyze a variety of texts on a daily basis. Each quarter we will examine an American ideal/experience and examine it from the past to the present, utilizing both fiction and non-fiction writings. In addition, poetry will be a common thread throughout each unit and the student will learn how to dissect and appreciate all forms of poetry. I have high expectations for each of you and expect that you will challenge yourself to critically think and evaluate each text. Maya Angelou said, "Nothing will work unless you do."

UNITS

Below is an outline of the path we will take to explore the American experience through literature. However, I reserve the right to make adjustments as necessary to fit the needs of the student and class.

1st Quarter-The American Dream

BIG 5 short story boot camp

Define and understand the American Dream

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close/ The Catcher in the Rye-Book Clubs

Poetry

2nd Quarter

Race in America Past and Present

Slave Narratives

Essays

Harlem Renaissance

Their Eyes Were Watching God

The Great Gatsby (If you were in HONORS 9 you may have already read this text. It will be good to read it again to gain a different perspective.)

Poetry

3rd Quarter

Civil Rights

A Raisin in the Sun-read in class

To Kill a Mockingbird

Supreme Court Rulings

Poetry

Short Stories

4th Quarter

Decision Making in America-Who influences our choices?

Shakespeare's influence in America

Macbeth-read in class

Poetry

Short Stories

Essays

MATERIALS

1. Binder with notebook paper and dividers
2. Pens-blue or black ink-NO RED
3. Access to technology-bring your device if you have one (the calendar will indicate in class essay times)
4. Post it notes
5. Composition book (prefer no spiral) this will stay in the classroom
6. Google account/email

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Grading

Your grade will be

90-100%===A

89-80%====B

79-70%====C

69-60%====D

Format for Assignments

All assignments and essays will be typed. If you do not have access to a computer, please let me know and we will make arrangements to use one. You will use proper MLA citation. If you are uncertain of the MLA format, use the link provided on my website to the *Purdue Owl*. It can show you how to format your paper and how to cite your sources correctly. We also will be utilizing online tools like Google Docs and Microsoft 365. Please pay close attention to where you are to place an assignment. This year we will be attempting to eliminate paper essays and make a move toward electronic correspondence.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using someone else's work and not giving credit. It will not be tolerated. If a student plagiarizes they will receive a "0" for the assignment. The student may also be placed on an academic and/or disciplinary probation. This includes copying someone's homework assignment.

Attendance

You are required to be in class. If you are not here you can't learn. I strive to accomplish as much as I can within the classroom. COME TO CLASS!! If you are absent, you are expected to check the website as well as speak with me about work you missed. Because I do strive to accomplish most activities in class, you may be required to come before or after school so that I can reteach the lesson.

Respect

You are responsible for demonstrating respect for yourself, your classmates, and teachers/administrators. Everyone is entitled to his or her opinion and we will respond with care and thought. We are all here to learn and we want to be able to express our opinions in a safe environment. The topics we will be discussing can be controversial and personal; respect will be expected and enforced.

Personal Needs

Bathroom breaks need to be done **before and after** class not during my time. Water and snacks will be allowed as long as they are not disturbing our learning environment; if messes are left or it causes a class disruption, this privilege will be suspended.

IPODS/Cell Phones

IPODS, and other personal electronic music devices will be allowed during writing time as long as no one else can hear them and you are only listening to music. (No movies or comedians) There will be **No** sharing of headphones. If you abuse this I will suspend your privileges. Cell phones may be used for certain assignments and research. They will not be used for social texting/media.

Late Work

10% will be taken off for each day an assignment is late. Assignments are to be submitted at the beginning of the class on their specified due date. If they are not in the designated location, it is late. Make-up work will be allowed for excused absences, and you will have the number of excused days to make up work before it is considered late.

Help/Contact Information

In order to be successful, communication is the key to success. I am available during my prep periods, PD1 and PD 2, as well as before and after school. Email is the quickest and most efficient way to get in contact with me. Please use proper formatting for an email and **sign** your name. If you fail to use proper formatting, I will not respond other than to request you format your email correctly.

kspotts@northlandprep.org

"We can learn to see each other and see ourselves in each other and recognize that human beings are more alike than we are unlike." Maya Angelou

American Literature
SY2014-15
Kim Spotts
kspotts@northlandprep.org

Please sign below indicating that you have read the syllabus and return it no later than Friday, August 15, 2014.

Student's Name: _____ PD _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian E-mail _____