

Ms. Elysia Pohl
Creative Language Arts
2015-2016 Course Syllabus and Expectations
epohl@northlandprep.org

Course Overview

This course is designed to be offered as an elective course for 7 and 8th graders. Students will read a wide variety of genres, styles, and contexts and explore those writing strategies through their own compositions and creations. Creative expression will be the main focus of this course, and publication of completed works will occur in various formats throughout the year. Students will be encouraged to examine language arts in-depth and apply different strategies to their own language arts interactions—orally or on paper.

Journaling will be a major component of this course, and students will also compose numerous papers with varying topics and purposes. Peer interaction will be an important element of this course, with class time being primarily structured as a reading and writing workshop. As a whole class, students will focus on skills and strategies, with opportunities allotted for individual exploration of styles or strategies as determined by students.

Students will examine and practice various reading and writing techniques more in-depth than in the regular English classes. Because this is structured as a creative language arts course, students will be responsible for some of their own learning and assessment: opportunities for further study will include targeted reading and writing assignments, as well as broader topics that will allow students more creative freedom in their learning, and in their production of a final product. Production will occur in the form of class presentations, spoken performances for the NPA community, and an end-of-year book with the polished products from the year.

Required Supplies

- A 1” binder designated solely for this class
 - It should contain loose-leaf paper—college or wide ruled
 - 3 dividers (Handouts, Drafts, Reflections)
- A notebook—this will be where the majority of your ideas will be kept and is required in class everyday (spiral, composition, some other cool notebook...)
- Pencils
- Post-It Notes (the regular-sized square ones, any color is fine)
- A planner or agenda—the one the school provides is great!
- Another helpful supply that is **not** required: a flash drive (to be shared with other classes)
- A package of loose leaf paper OR Kleenex OR a \$3 donation for miscellaneous classroom supplies (these supplies are **optional** and *only* if you can help supply our classroom 😊)

Texts

- Students will be responsible for any damage to or loss of books lent by the school.
- Students may purchase any of the books we read if they would like their own

copy—they will be responsible for bringing the text to class every day. Students may also use a Kindle or other reading device under the following terms: the device must be charged and in class every day, the device is not a distraction during class, and students understand that it is their responsibility to keep their device secure throughout the day.

- The books we'll be reading this year:
 - *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll
 - *The Looking Glass Wars* by Frank Beddor
 - *Shark Girl* by Kelly Bingham
 - *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan
 - *The Lightning Thief: The Graphic Novel* by Rick Riordan
 - *The Scorpio Races* by Maggie Stiefvater (student-purchased or acquired)
 - *Dustlands: Blood Red Road* by Moira Young (*time-permitting*; student – purchased or acquired)
 - Various independent texts

Homework Assignments/Late Work

- Homework will be posted on the board and on the website daily. Students are expected to copy down the homework in their agenda/planner.
 - **On the website: red = due dates, green = in-class work, and purple = miscellaneous (holidays, special schedules, etc.)**
- Late work will result in a lunch detention and a lowered grade. Incomplete work will not be accepted.
 - *Larger projects will drop 10% for every day they are late.*
- **PLEASE NOTE:** This is a Creative Language Arts course focusing on aspects of reading and writing. This course will have the workload of a regular English class—lots of independent and class reading and lots of drafting and revising. Please be ready to commit to the workload if you commit to the class.
 - **Additionally,** this course includes a presentation/publication component. You will be asked to share some of your work at different points throughout the year.

Attendance

Frequent absences hinder students' ability to be successful in class—students should make every effort to attend class every day. However, sometimes absences cannot be avoided: the following policies are in place to help ensure student responsibility for their work during absences, as well as offer consistency for all student absences.

- If a student is absent the day an assignment is due, it needs to be turned in the day the student returns.
- If a student is absent the day an assignment is given, the student will have as many days as he/she is absent to turn it in (Ex. if a student is absent for two days when an assignment is given, the student will have two days beyond the due date to turn it in).

- o If a student has prior knowledge of a major assignment and misses days between the day the assignment was given and the due date, he/she is still expected to hand in the assignment *on time* unless other arrangements have been made.
- o Students and parents are always welcome to email me or talk to me in person if other special arrangements need to be made

Classroom Expectations

- Be on time to class! Tardiness interferes with your learning and your peers’ learning.
- Bring **all** materials to class, every day. Continual “can I go to my locker?” will be reflected in the participation portion of your grade.
- Snacks will be allowed on occasion, but please try to eat before school and at lunch. Water and tea are the **only** drinks allowed.
- Cell phones need to be silent and out of sight at all times. iPods will be allowed occasionally during independent work-time, otherwise they need to stay out of sight.
- This classroom will be a place where students feel safe, comfortable, and free to be themselves. I will not tolerate behavior that is hurtful or inappropriate. We will have many activities and discussions where all students are expected to participate—they should feel comfortable doing so without fear of judgment from their peers or teacher.

Extra Help

I will be at school from 7:45-3:45 each day. I am willing to meet with students during these times, or before/after these times with prior arrangements. If students need help with an assignment, they should come see me **before** that assignment is due. I will also offer workshops that will focus on specific skills. These will be open to all students, although some students will be invited to come for extra assistance.

Grading

Final grades for each semester will be compromised of both quarter grades, 45% each, plus the final exam worth 10%. Within each quarter grade, students’ grades will be broken up **approximately** in the following way:

- Portfolio Assignments-----50%
 - These are the largest assignments, and will occur at least once per quarter. These assignments will be complex, include a significant written component, and will include a presentation component.
- Reading Workshop-----15%
 - Students will complete individual, small group, and whole class reading workshops throughout the year. These will be student and teacher-directed.
- Writing Workshop-----15%
 - Students will complete individual and small group writing workshops throughout the year. These will be student and teacher-directed.
- Everything Else-----20%
 - Participation, vocab, organization, research, presentations, etc.

Parents and Students,

Thank you for reading through the syllabus and expectations for this course. Please once again note, *this elective course will be the workload of an English class in terms of reading and writing assignments*. Students should keep this copy in their binders for future reference. **All materials need to be in class by Monday, August 17th**. Please fill out the following information and **return no later than Monday, August 17th**.

We have read through and discussed the syllabus and expectations and understand what is expected throughout the year.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

PLEASE write legibly so that we can easily contact through email. If more than one person should be emailed (both parents, step-parents, other legal guardians, etc.), please fill in the information with that person's name, relationship to student, and email.

Parent Email: _____

Other Emails:
