



*W.P. Davidson High School
Honors English Syllabus
Michelle Cowan*



Fall Semester 2019

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Planning Period:

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Dear parent(s):

Welcome back! I am so excited to begin a new semester with your students in Honors English 9! This is the first step of a wonderful journey of learning and growth for your child. The purpose of the course is to lay a solid foundation and set certain expectations for any student who would like to read more deeply, think more critically, and write more clearly and succinctly. This course is designed for students who are planning to attend four if not more years of college. We will focus on correct grammar usage, vocabulary development, literary analysis writing, and exposure to great works of literature. The students will learn to work on their own by reading at home, budgeting their time with long-range assignments, and producing professional-looking work.

Gone are the days of worksheets, writing in pencil or hot pink pen, and turning in work that looks like it was pulled out from under the seat of the car. We are striving for excellence. We are **HONORS** students!

The Honors Program

The purpose of the honors program at W.P. Davidson High School is to offer an alternative to the regular academic program for those interested students with exceptional academic ability and achievement or special interest and achievement.

The Central Office of MCPSS has issued the following prerequisites for entering and requirements for remaining in the honors program: "Prerequisite: Students should have earned at least a 75/C average in Honors English 8 and at least an 80/B average in regular English 8 with the recommendation of the English teacher.

****Requirement: "Students who fail to maintain a 75/C or above will be removed from the Honors English Program for the next appropriate term."****

Purpose of Honors English 9

The purpose of this course is to provide interested students a setting in which they may explore world literature, practice and improve writing skills, practice and improve critical thinking skills and use those skills in the analysis of various types of literature (poems, journals, novels, short stories, play, essays, etc.). Because of the rigorous assignment schedule and because it is expected that "honor students" possess prerequisite writing skills, basic skills such as sentence construction, paragraph construction, basic grammatical structure, etc. *cannot* be covered in this course. **Students who do not already possess these skills should be enrolled in the regular English curriculum.**

In addition to the literature and composition assignments from the school-supplied texts, every student will be required to read several novel-length works and various short stories during the course. The reading schedule will require that each student have access to **his or her own paper** copy of these texts. Sharing with another student is impossible and not allowed. Electronic books are not allowed. At least one novel will be read each quarter. The students will be assessed \$25.00 at the beginning of the semester to pay for their novels. I have found books a discounted rate, and by ordering the books in bulk I can save you quite a bit of money. I will collect the money and

purchase the books through our Davidson High School account. If you choose NOT to pay the \$25.00 class fee, then the student is on his/her own to obtain a copy of the book on his/her own. The first quarter novel is *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. The second quarter novel is *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. We will also be reading *The Odyssey* by Homer and *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare, but THEY ARE IN THE LITERATURE BOOK, SO YOU DO NOT NEED TO PURCHASE THEM. However, some students do choose to purchase a copy of *No Fear Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet*, so they have a copy at home. This is an excellent idea since we do not have enough textbooks to send home with students. This version of the play also has a modern language translation on the left side of the page and the original Shakespearean text on the right side. This helps the students understand the play better. THIS IS OPTIONAL.

Materials

1. 3-ring binder
2. Loose-leaf paper
3. Dividers: You may buy these or make your own. You will need the following divisions in your notebook: class paperwork, bellringers, vocabulary, grammar, literature, and writing.
4. Black/blue ink pens. (Any other color pen or pencil is not permitted for classwork/tests)
5. A colored ink pen (a color other than blue or black) for proofreading/grading
6. a highlighter
7. Colored pencils, crayons, and/or markers
8. a package of **lined** 4x6 index cards (for your research project)
9. \$25.00 fee for your novels

Classroom Rules

**All Mobile County Board of Education rules will be enforced in my classroom, as well as those of Davidson High school.*

1. Be on time and seated when the tardy bell rings. If you are outside the room when the bell rings, you will have to report to tardy hall.
2. Come to class prepared. No one will be allowed to leave once the tardy bell has rung.
3. Go to the restroom before or after class. You will NOT interrupt class to visit the restroom unless you are ill or can provide a doctor's note explaining a chronic illness.
4. Raise your hand and wait to be recognized before speaking.
5. Remain in your assigned seat until you are dismissed or until you are given permission by the teacher.
6. Sleeping in class equals a zero on all assignments missed while you are napping.
7. Put your name on all assignments. No name equals no credit for the assignment.
8. All electronic devices must not be SEEN or HEARD (this includes earbuds). If they are seen or heard, they will be confiscated by the teacher and sent to the school office to be picked up at the end of the school day.
9. Complete all assignments when they are due. LATE WORK IS NOT ACCEPTED!
10. Respect your peers, your teacher, and yourself.

The Golden Rule: "If it's not yours, DON'T TOUCH IT!"

NO FOOD OR DRINKS! (only bottled water is permissible)

Consequences: Mrs. Cowan uses a behavior plan to correct inappropriate student behavior.

- **Step 1:** The student will be given a verbal warning to correct his/her behavior.
- **Step 2:** If the undesirable behavior persists, Mrs. Cowan will speak with the student outside of the classroom about his/her disruptive behavior.
- **Step 3:** The student will report to the retract room to complete his/her work in a quiet environment where he/she will not be distracted and will not distract other students. Mrs. Cowan will call the student's parent.
- **Step 4:** Some behaviors warrant Mrs. Cowan deviating from the three-step behavioral plan. If that is the case, Mrs. Cowan will send the student to office with a referral. ***This is up to Mrs. Cowan's professional discretion and is not for discussion with the student.***

Attendance and Make-Up Policy

Your attendance is EXTREMELY important. We will be working EVERY day. One absence will set you back. All of Mrs. Cowan's PowerPoint presentations, handouts, and worksheets are on OneNote, so you can print them yourself and complete your make-up work in a timely manner. If you do miss class, you will have two days to bring in an excuse in order to make up your work. You will receive a zero for any work missed due to unexcused absences or unexcused tardies. Please be aware that this includes tests and quizzes. **If your absence is excused, it is YOUR responsibility to check the make-up work notebook and/or the missing work list and turn in assignments by Friday at 3:00. Any make-up work not turned in by that point will become a zero.**

Make-up Tests and Projects

Because tests and projects are announced in advance, you will be expected to take the test on the test day or turn in the project on the scheduled date. Make-up tests following extended absences will be scheduled on an individual basis. It is imperative that you know that make-up tests **MUST BE TAKEN** any time **OTHER THAN** our scheduled class time. It is the student's responsibility to set up a time that is convenient for both of us. **Late projects will only be accepted if there is an excused absence.** If the project/writing assignment is not in my classroom at our scheduled meeting time, it is considered late. I will not accept work later in the day or after school. **If it's not there on time, it doesn't exist.**

Tardy Policy:

No student will be admitted to class after the tardy bell unless the student has a pass from an administrator. The following steps will be taken to deal with tardy students:

- Each tardy: Student is detained in tardy hall until the next class period, unless an administrator excuses the tardy.
- 3rd tardy: Parent is contacted
- 4th tardy: Student is assigned to RETRACT for 3 days
- 5th tardy: Student is suspended from school for 3 days

Students who enter class with a tardy hall pass will not be able to make up quizzes or work missed after the bell. They will receive an automatic zero on all such work.

Grading Policy:

Daily Work/Homework: 40 % of final grade
Tests and Projects: 60% of final grade

Vocabulary

Students will be using the Sadlier *Vocabulary Workshop* Level D workbooks. I will make copies of the words and exercises each week and will give them to the students each Monday. They are also available on OneNote. The students will work on the exercises for that unit during the week, and they will be due each Thursday. I will give a test on these words each Friday.

Reading Quizzes/Literature Journals

Reading quizzes will be given to assure that each student is reading the daily assignments. These grades will be recorded as a test grade. Reading Guide questions will be given in relation to a reading assignment. These questions will also serve as a means for discussion and an assessment tool. ***If you are told to read at night, you will be tested the next day.*** IF YOU DO NOT READ THE NIGHTLY ASSIGNMENTS YOU WILL FAIL THIS COURSE. IF YOU DO NOT LIKE TO READ, GET YOUR SCHEDULE CHANGED.

Unit Tests

Unit tests will be given periodically. These will cover the novel/short story/poetry/play units. The literature unit tests will be exclusively multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, and short answer questions that are to be completed within one class period.

Essays

A literary analysis essay will be written after each unit. The essays are required to be typed according to MLA format and to be two full pages in length. Make sure you have access to a computer with Microsoft Word on it and a working printer. In addition, each essay must be submitted to *turnitin.com*. I

- ✓ If the essay is not submitted to *turnitin.com* by 7:00 A.M. on the due date, then the essay will receive a zero.
- ✓ A hard copy of the essay and a copy of the confirmation email from *turnitin.com* will also be turned in on the due date. If either of these items is not turned in, then the essay will receive a zero.

A copy of the essay policy is in the packet for you to read and sign. By signing this sheet, a student is acknowledging that he/she understands the requirements.

Quarter Examinations

An EQT (End of Quarter Test) will be given at the end of each quarter. In addition to a MCPSS-created EQT, honors students are also required to write an in-class essay based on one of the selections read during the term. (First quarter- the students will write about *To Kill a Mockingbird*; second quarter- the students will write about *Animal Farm*). The essay counts 25% of the EQT grade. The entire EQT grade (objective test and the essay) will count 20% of the quarter grade.

Research Project

During the second quarter there will be a major research project focusing on the historical background of one of our novels. Students will learn the research process, find sources, record data on note cards, create a typed outline, and create a presentation to share his/her results.

Cheating/Plagiarism Policy:

- Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated.
- Any instance of plagiarism or cheating in Honors English 9 will result in a grade of 0% on the entire assignment.
- If the cheating involves more than one person, everyone involved will receive a 0% on the

assignment. Let your friends do their OWN work.

-In cases of cheating/plagiarism, the teacher will insist on punishment to the fullest extent allowed.

- 15% plagiarism or higher on any essay submitted to *turnitin.com* will result in a zero.

A Final Note...

Remember WHY YOU ARE HERE. We are both here to accomplish one vital goal: **Your learning. DO YOUR PART.**

The class rules are in this syllabus. Heed them. It is very important that you take your education seriously during your ninth grade year. Laziness and a low grades will greatly impact your GPA, and it is VERY DIFFICULT to raise your GPA later in high school. Your grades are not an "ancient Chinese secret." I simply add up the points you have earned on all your work and divide by the total number of points possible. Your tests will be worth more than daily work, for instance. You will get one progress report each quarter; no more will be printed unless requested by a parent. I update grades in I-NOW every day. Parents and students may check the grades anytime they choose. Your I-NOW PIN number is your computer log-in for MCPSS and your password is the same as your MCPSS computer password. Grades are merely "a race for the points." Study. You'll be glad you did! ☺

Student/Parent Contract

Student: By signing this paper, I hereby certify that I have read and understood the expectations and goals of Mrs. Cowan's English class. I give my word to adhere to the disciplinary and academic standards that are set forth in this syllabus.

If I cannot abide by the contract, I understand the consequences of my behavior may result in my failing this class. I also understand that if I do not abide by the rules and conditions of this class, I will be subject to the disciplinary actions set forth in Mrs. Cowan's discipline plan, and the *Davidson High School Code of Conduct*.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent: By signing this letter, I hereby certify that I have read and understood the expectations and goals of Mrs. Cowan's English class. I understand what is expected of my child, and I understand how my student will be graded.

I also know how to contact Mrs. Cowan if I have any questions or concerns.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Class Participation Policies

Class participation encompasses a variety of responsibilities and duties that each student should display on a regular basis. Your class participation grade will be worth 100 points each term. The following scales will be used to determine your grade.

Please be aware that when a student has been detected cheating on an assignment, a zero will be assigned for the work, and the class participation grade will be lowered by one letter grade at the end of the term.

THE "A" STUDENT TYPICALLY:

- Attends class regularly.
- Arrives to class on time.
- Completes all assigned class work and homework.
- Is attentive during lectures or class discussions.
- Takes notes when required.
- Brings all materials to class daily (notebook, books, pens)
- Takes the initiative regarding make-up work after an absence.
- Follows directions.
- Demonstrates a respectful attitude toward teachers and peers.
- Answers class discussion questions.
- Volunteers answers when appropriate.
- Raises pertinent questions where appropriate and listens to others.
- Maintains a high level of self-motivation and serves as an example to others.

THE "B" STUDENT TYPICALLY:

- Attends class regularly.
- Arrives to class on time.
- Completes all assigned class work and homework.
- Is attentive during lectures or class discussions.
- Takes notes when required.
- Brings all materials to class daily (notebook, books, pens)
- Takes the initiative regarding make-up work after an absence.
- Follows directions.
- Demonstrates a respectful attitude toward teachers and peers.
- Answers class discussion questions.
- Volunteers answers when appropriate.

THE "C" STUDENT TYPICALLY:

- Attends class regularly.
- Arrives to class on time.
- Completes most assigned class work and homework.
- Is attentive during lectures or class discussions.
- Takes notes when required.
- Brings all materials to class daily (notebook, books, pens)
- Takes the initiative regarding make-up work after an absence.
- Follows directions.
- Demonstrates a respectful attitude toward teachers and peers.

THE "D" STUDENT TYPICALLY:

- Attends class regularly.
- Completes some assigned class work and homework.
- Takes notes occasionally.
- Brings all materials to class often. (notebooks, books, pens)
- Does not take the initiative regarding make-up work after an absence.
- Sometimes follows directions.
- Demonstrates a respectful attitude toward teachers and peers.

THE "E" STUDENT TYPICALLY:

- Does not attend class regularly, excused or unexcused.
- Does not take notes.
- Does not complete assigned class work or homework.
- Does not bring all materials to class often. (notebooks, books, pens)
- Does not take the initiative regarding make-up work after an absence.
- Seldom follows directions.
- Demonstrates a disrespectful attitude toward teachers and/or peers.
- Disrupts class.
- Sleeps in class.

Honors English 9-Turnitin.com Plagiarism

Students at Davidson High School are required to submit each essay to the anti-plagiarism website: *turnitin.com*. This is to ensure that each student's work that he/she submits is truly his/her own original work. **Essays MUST BE SUBMITTED NO LATER THAN 7 A.M. ON THE DATE THE PAPER IS DUE.** Since students are given all essay prompts at least a week prior to the due date, there should not be any late papers.

Printing the turnitin.com email confirmation or "receipt" of the paper's submission ensures that the student has proof that he/she followed assignment protocol. (In cases of extreme emergency, if a student **ABSOLUTELY CANNOT** upload his/her paper to the turnitin.com website due to technical difficulties, the student should email Mrs. Cowan a digital copy of the paper to mcowan@mcpss.com. *This is only a last resort after all other measures have failed and need not become a habit in the future.*)

A student may only have UP TO 15% plagiarism in his/her paper. If the plagiarism report indicates 15% plagiarism or higher, Mrs. Cowan will not grade the assignment, resulting in a zero for the essay.

The directions needed to use the website were provided to your child earlier in the semester. **PLEASE HEED THEM.** *If a student fails to upload his/her paper to the website and print out the email confirmation (receipt), he/she will receive a zero on the assignment.*

THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY!

I understand the plagiarism policy and will follow it accordingly.

Student's Signature

Date

Parent's / Guardian's Signature

Date

Go to *turnitin.com* and create an account. Enter your email address and a password. Make sure to fill this information in below so that you have no excuse for forgetting your email address and password. Then, add your appropriate class:

<u>Class</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Class ID</u>
Honors English 9	_____Block	_____
Honors English 9	_____Block	_____
Honors English 9	_____Block	_____

Class password: cowandhs1

Your school email address: _____

Your personal password: _____

Once you have added this information you do not need to know the section number or the password unless you have to re-add the class later in the year. From now on, all you will need in order to log-on is your Mobile County email address and personal password. Make sure you keep this paper for future reference.